
Township of Union Public Schools

The Presidential Model School District

Theodore A. Jakubowski, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

September 2009

Dear Parents and Guardians:

As we begin the new school year, I wanted to assure you that we have been working with the Union County Health Department, the Center for Disease Control (CDC), the Union County Superintendent of Schools, and other school districts to prepare for the possible increase in the Novel H1N1 influenza (swine flu) that is anticipated this fall.

Our top priority in the Union Public School District is to keep our staff and students safe and healthy. We continue to receive health updates from the New Jersey Department of Education, and the New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services regarding changes in protocols and procedures. Ms. Linda Ionta, our Supervisor of Nurses, continues to meet with the Township Health Officer, John Ferraioli, and other town officials, to discuss precautions and procedures in the event of an outbreak in our area. She has already met with all of our nurses, and I assure you they will be monitoring the students in our buildings.

Mr. Magliacano, our Director of Operations, has also met with his custodial and maintenance staff. We have checked our hot water temperature and have initiated our flu season cleaning procedures. As a school district, our classrooms and common areas will be cleaned on a daily basis with a disinfectant cleaner that is effective in killing the H1N1 germs. The CDC no longer recommends closing a school with confirmed cases. Instead it advises that classrooms and common areas be disinfected regularly, as we had done last spring.

In one final effort to keep our students as healthy as possible, we ask that you assist the district by talking with your children, regardless of their ages, about hand-washing and basic hygiene. If you would like to send some liquid hand sanitizer or a package of disposable antimicrobial wipes to school with your child, please feel free to do so. Regular hand-washing is the number one recommendation of all health organizations and medical professionals when asked how best to prevent influenza and other contagious illnesses from spreading. According to the CDC, up to 80% of infections are transmitted by our hands.

Attached is a letter from the Union County Department of Health and the County Superintendent for your review. It will provide you with all of the information needed to address any concern you may have.

As always, I appreciate your cooperation and support and assure you we will take every precaution to insure the safety of your children.

Sincerely,



THEODORE A. JAKUBOWSKI, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools



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Carmen M. Centuolo, Ed.D., County Superintendent

September 3, 2009

Dear Parent,

As you may know, flu can be easily spread from person to person. Therefore, we are taking steps to reduce the spread of flu in our schools. We want to keep the school open to students and functioning in a normal manner during this flu season. **But, we need your help to do this.**

We are working closely with the New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services and Local Health Departments to monitor flu conditions and make decisions about the best steps to take concerning schools. We will keep you updated with new information as it becomes available.

If the flu becomes more severe, schools may take additional steps to prevent the spread such as:

- conducting active fever and flu symptom screening of students and staff as they arrive at school,
- making changes to increase the space between people such as moving desks farther apart and postponing class trips, and
- dismissing sick students from school.

For now we are doing everything we can to keep our school functioning as usual. Here are a few things you can do to help.

- **Teach your children to wash their hands** often with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand rub. You can set a good example by doing this yourself.

- **Teach your children not to share personal items** like drinks, food or unwashed utensils, and to cover their coughs and sneezes with tissues. Covering up their coughs or sneezes using the elbow, arm or sleeve instead of the hand when a tissue is unavailable.
- **Know the signs and symptoms of the flu.** Symptoms of the flu include fever (100 degrees Fahrenheit, 37.8 degrees Celsius or greater), cough, sore throat, a runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, and feeling very tired. Some people may also vomit or have diarrhea.
- **Keep sick children at home** for at least 24 hours *after* they no longer have fever or do not have signs of fever, without using fever-reducing drugs. Keeping children with a fever at home will reduce the number of people who may get infected.
- **Do not send children to school if they are sick.** Any children who are determined to be sick while at school *will be sent home*.

Each of our school districts and health departments in the county are collaborating on influenza prevention measures and guidelines regarding vaccine administration. For more information, visit www.flu.gov, or call 1-800-CDC-INFO for the most current information about the flu. For more information about flu in your community and what your school is doing, visit your school district website or call your local health department. We will notify you of any additional changes to our schools' strategies to prevent the spread of flu.

Sincerely,



Lester Jones
Director, Union County Office of Health Management

Carmen M. Centuolo, Ed.D.

Carmen M. Centuolo, Ed D.
Executive County Superintendent of Union County Schools