

GUIDELINES FROM TEXAS EDUCATION AGENCY AND CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION

Administrators in CISD have had frequent contact with TEA and the state health department while monitoring communications with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Campuses and buses have been sanitized, and hand sanitizer distributed to employees. Hopefully these steps will prove helpful as we remain focused on the health and safety of our students.

At 2:00 p.m. May 5, 2009 the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) updated their recommendations in response to Influenza A (H1N1) virus, swine flu. The recommendations include:

- School closure is not advised for a suspected or confirmed case of novel influenza A (H1N1) and, in general is not advised unless there is a magnitude of faculty or student absenteeism that interferes with the school's ability to function;
- Students, faculty or staff with influenza-like illness (fever with a cough or sore throat) should stay home and not attend school or go into the community except to seek medical care for at least 7 days even if symptoms resolve sooner;
- Parents and guardians should monitor their school-aged children, and faculty and staff should self-monitor every morning for symptoms of influenza-like illness;
- Ill students should not attend alternative child care or congregate in settings other than school;
- Students, faculty and staff should stringently follow sanitary measures to reduce the spread of influenza, including covering their nose and mouth with a tissue when coughing or sneezing (or coughing or sneezing into their sleeve if a tissue isn't available), frequently washing hands with soap and water, or using hand sanitizer if hand washing with soap and water is not possible.

The complete update and list of recommendations may be accessed at www.cdc.gov/h1n1flue/K12_dismissal.htm

On May 5, 2009, the Texas Education Agency issued a letter stating, "Based on new CDC guidance, both TEA and the Department of Health Services are recommending that schools reopen. Commissioner of Education Robert Scot said, "Within the last 24 hours, the new information made it clear that we can follow standard procedures for dealing with the flu."

The TEA letter continues, "The new CDC guidance says, 'New information on disease severity warrants revision of the school closure guidance. Most U.S. cases have not been severe and are comparable in severity to seasonal influenza.'"

With those recommendations, staff at CISD will continue to monitor cases of influenza as we always have. School nurses and nurse's aides handle several cases each year and will provide excellent guidance for you and your student.

Thank you for your continued support.