

**Griffin-Spalding County School System**  
**216 S. Sixth Street**  
**Griffin, Ga. 30224**  
**770-229-3700**

**Preparing for the Flu**  
**(Including 2009 H1N1 Flu)**

The following information contains the new guidelines that apply to any flu virus circulating during the 2009-2010 school year, not only 2009 H1N1 flu. The new guidance recognizes the need to balance the risks of illness among students and staff with the benefits of keeping students in school. It offers specific steps for school staff, parents and students to take given the current flu conditions as well as for more severe flu conditions.

The CDC defines flu- like illness as having the following symptoms:

Fever 100 or > and *one* of the following:

- |             |              |
|-------------|--------------|
| Cough       | Muscle Aches |
| Body Aches  | Tiredness    |
| Sore throat | Headache     |

**Action Steps for Schools to Prevent the Spread of Flu:**

Take the following steps to help keep students, teachers, and staff from getting sick with the flu. These steps should be followed **ALL** the time, and not only during a flu pandemic.

- **Educate and encourage students and staff to cover their mouth and nose** with a tissue when they cough or sneeze. Also, provide them with easy access to tissues and running water and soap or alcohol-based hand cleaners. Remind them to cover coughs or sneezes using their elbow instead of their hand when a tissue is not available.
- **Remind teachers, staff and students to practice good hand hygiene** and provide the time and supplies for them to wash their hands as often as necessary.
- **Send sick students, teachers, and staff home** and advise them and their families that sick people should stay away from others as much as possible, stay home and not attend school or go into the community (except to seek medical care or for other necessities) for at least 24 hours after they no longer have a fever or signs of a fever (without the use of fever-reducing medicine). Ill students should not attend alternative child care or gather in other neighborhood and community settings outside of school.
- **Some viruses and bacteria can live on hard surfaces** such as desks, tables, and doorknobs up to two hours. Clean these surfaces and items regularly with an approved disinfectant.

### Preparing for the Flu continued

- **Move students, teachers and staff to a separate room** if they become sick at school until they can be sent home. Limit the number of staff who takes care of the sick person.
- **Have Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) such as masks** available and ensure the equipment is worn by school nurses and other staff caring for sick people at school if severe conditions are present.
- **Encourage early medical evaluation for sick students and staff** at higher risk of complications from flu. People at high risk of flu complications who get sick will benefit from early treatment with antiviral medications.
- **Review fact sheet** “How to Stop the Spread of Germs” (attached)
- **School nurses will monitor and document** the number of students and staff who are absent and, in particular, those whose symptoms meet the definition of flu like illness.
- **The School Nurse Supervisor will monitor** the CDC website as well as communicate with the Spalding County Health Department on a regular basis.

*If the flu conditions become MORE severe, schools should consider adding the following steps:*

- **Extend the time sick students, teachers or staff stay home** for at least 7 days, even if they feel better sooner. Those who are still sick after 7 days should continue to stay home until at least 24 hours after symptoms have gone away.
- **Allow high-risk students, teachers and staff to stay home.** These students, teachers and staff should make this decision in consultation with their physician and/or health professional.
- **Conduct active fever and symptom screening** of students, teachers, and staff upon arrival at school. Any sick student, teacher or staff should be separated from others, offered a mask, and sent home.
- **Find ways to increase social distances** (the space between people) at school such as moving desks farther apart, or postponing class trips.
- **Consider how and when to dismiss students** by working closely with the Spalding County Health Department and state public health officials. If the decision is made to dismiss all students, notify CDC and the state health and education agency by reporting the school or school district dismissal at [www.cdc.gov/fluschooldismissal](http://www.cdc.gov/fluschooldismissal).