

September 1, 2009

Dear Parents,

Welcome back. We are planning for a healthy and safe 2009-2010 school year. You are aware of the CDC and media reports that Novel H1N1 influenza is expected to be a health issue this school year. Here at CPS we are taking steps to help reduce the spread of flu. We are working closely with the County Health Department to monitor flu conditions. We will keep you updated with new information as it becomes available. Our goal is to keep our school open and functioning in a normal manner. We need your assistance to do this. Here are a few things you can do to help.

Teach your children to wash their hands often and well 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 and eating utensils.

Teach your children to cover a cough or sneeze using their elbow, arm or sleeve instead of a hand when a tissue is not available.

Know the signs and symptoms of the flu. Symptoms of the flu include fever (100 degree 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.

When you call the learning line to report your child's absence please tell us if your child is out sick due to flu-like symptoms such as those mentioned above. Be specific. This will help us monitor any new cases of flu-like illness in the school.

Keep sick children at home for at least 24 hours after they no longer have fever or do not have signs of a fever without using fever-reducing drugs such as Tylenol or ibuprofen. Keeping children with 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.

It has always been our goal to keep the lines of communication open between our homes and school. In light of an impending severe flu season this two-way communication will be vitally important. We will keep you informed but we also need to be informed.

For more information go to the CDC website www.flu.gov or call 1-800-CDC-INFO for the most current information about the flu. If you have any questions or concerns please do not hesitate to contact me at 735-7283 or mbowlby@cpsnj.org.

Sincerely,

Mary Ellen Bowlby, RN

School Nurse