

September 1, 2009

Dear Parents/Guardians,

As you may know flu is spreading easily from person to person and school-age children are among the groups most affected. We are taking steps to prevent the spread of flu in Holy Spirit School. Currently, flu conditions in the United States are expected to become more severe; especially, this fall. We want to keep this school open and functioning as normal for as long as possible. We need your help to do this.

We are working closely with the Stamford Department of Public Health and The State of Connecticut Department of Public Health to monitor flu conditions and make decisions about the best steps to take. Since the flu conditions are expected to be more severe, we are now implementing the following steps to prevent the spread of flu within our school:

- Extending the time those with a confirmed case of HINI should stay home to at least 7 days, even if they feel better sooner. People who are still sick after 7 days should continue to stay home until at least 24 hours after their symptoms have gone away.
- Conducting active fever and symptom screening of students and staff upon arrival at school. School staff will ask students about symptoms suggestive of a respiratory infection such as fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body aches and fatigue. Any student who has at least 2 of these symptoms will be separated from others, and sent home as soon as possible.
- Making staff, parents, and students aware of the signs and symptoms of the flu. Symptoms of the flu include fever (100 degrees Fahrenheit, 37.8 Celsius or greater), sore throat, a runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, and feeling very tired. Some people may also vomit or have diarrhea.
- Keeping sick children with flu-like symptoms 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.
- Reminding parents to not send children to school if they are sick. Any children who are determined to be sick while at school will be sent home.
- Requiring students and/or staff who have an ill household member to stay home for 5 days from the day the first household member gets sick. This is the time period they are most likely to get sick themselves.

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 our community, visit the health department website www.ct.gov/dph. Please call the school if you have any additional questions about what our school is doing.

We will notify you of any additional changes to our school's strategy to prevent the spread of flu.

Sincerely,

Pat Torchen