



Holmes County School Board

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SUPERINTENDENT

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January 23, 2018

The School District would like to share this colleague letter about the flu virus from the State Surgeon General Celeste Philip, MD, MPH:

Seasonal flu activity is on the rise, both in Florida and throughout the U.S. During this time it is important to help protect yourself, your family and others from getting the flu and other infectious viruses. If, despite your best efforts, you or a family member contracts the flu virus, you or that family member should stay home until you are well.

Staying home helps prevent the spread of flu to co-workers or classmates. Even when you are not feeling so ill that you need to rest and recuperate, you may still be contagious and should stay at home. This will reduce the likelihood that your cold or flu virus will enter the workplace and infect others. You should also speak with your supervisor about going home if you feel yourself coming down with a cold or flu while you are at work.

Symptoms of flu include fever or chills and cough or sore throat. In addition, symptoms of flu can include runny nose, body aches, headache, or tiredness. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends that people who are very sick or who are at very high risk of serious flu complications and get flu symptoms should be treated with antiviral drugs as soon as possible. **Contact your health care provider when you become ill with flu-like symptoms to determine if antiviral treatment is right for you. Treatment is most effective when started within 48 hours so calling as soon as you become ill is important.** Please stay home if you are sick until at least 24 hours after you no longer have a fever (100 degrees Fahrenheit or 38 degrees Celsius) or signs of a fever (have chills, feel very warm, have a flushed appearance, or are sweating). This should be determined without the use of fever-reducing medicines (any medicine that contains ibuprofen or acetaminophen). Remember that not only can healthy behaviors help prevent your chances of getting the flu, they can also help you fight the cold and flu infection. These include:

- Get your flu vaccine. Although flu vaccines can vary in effectiveness from season to season, they continue to be the best way to prevent influenza infection and serious influenza complications. It is not too late to get vaccinated this season.
- Wash your hands regularly.
- Avoid unnecessary touching of your eyes, mouth, and nose as you can easily contract the flu just by touching a surface an infected person has touched.
- Cover your mouth and nose when you sneeze or cough using a tissue or your upper sleeve, but not your hands. Wash your hands immediately afterwards.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces.
- Drink plenty of fluids.
- Eat nutritious foods.

Sincerely,

Terry L. Mears