

April 30, 2009

Dear Parents,

Due to recent events regarding the swine flu virus, school and public health officials are providing the following information to parents of school age children.

At this time, some schools have been closed due to the possibility of swine flu infection. Public health officials have advised that schools can remain open and students can continue to attend school, as long as they are not sick and do not have flu symptoms. Further school closures will be determined through local coordination with public health officials.

We are working with the School Medical Director and local health officials to monitor the situation and will make all decisions in consultation with them and state officials. We will notify parents if the situation changes and it becomes necessary to close additional schools.

If schools are closed, please do not make arrangements—such as sending children to a friend’s home or group childcare—that will put them in close contact with other children. It is important to plan ahead. Have a family discussion now to consider options in advance of a school closing.

Flu spreads easily. If you think your child is getting the flu, it is important that he/she does not attend school, group childcare, the mall, sporting events or anywhere large crowds gather. This will reduce the possibility of spreading the germs to other people.

Flu-like symptoms include: fever (over 100 degrees F.), cough, sore throat, runny nose, or stuffy nose. Additional symptoms may include muscle pain, tiredness, and sometimes vomiting or diarrhea.

Below are a few simple steps that will help your children reduce their risk of getting the flu and protect others from infection.

- Teach your children to wash their hands often. Washing with soap and hot water for at least 20 seconds is ideal (that’s about as long as it takes to sing the “Happy Birthday” song twice).

- Teach your children the proper use of hand sanitizer. Gels, rubs, and hand wipes all work well, as long as they contain at least 60% alcohol. Hand wipes must be disposed of properly. Always read and follow label instructions when using hand sanitizer.
- Teach your children to keep their hands away from their face and avoid touching their mouth, nose, or eyes.
- Teach your children to cover coughs and sneezes with tissues and throw away the tissues or by coughing into the inside of their elbow. Cough or sneeze into your sleeve—not your hands!
- Help your children to learn these healthy habits by setting a good example and always doing them yourself.

Please stay informed by paying attention to media reports. You can also get information at <http://www.cdc.gov/swineflu>, <http://health.utah.gov/epi/SwineFlu/> ,

Thank you for your cooperation in keeping our children and our schools healthy.