

Mahwah Township Public Schools

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October 15, 2009

Dear Parents/Guardians,

We wish to update you on what the school district has been doing to address concerns related to the H1N1 flu, and specifically, the concerns related to absences and continuity of instruction. We continue to receive regular updates from the New Jersey Department of Education, Center for Disease Control and Prevention, Mahwah Board of Health, and our school physician, Dr. Everett Schlam. We have aligned our plans with their recommendations regarding the H1N1 flu and its potential impact on schools.

We continue to emphasize daily cleaning at our schools, particularly on shared surfaces. We also urge you to review with your children the steps they can take to avoid the flu. These include: wash or sanitize hands frequently; avoid touching the face, nose, and eyes; cover coughs and sneezes with tissues, and dispose of them properly; and, if a tissue is not available, cough into the sleeve or elbow.

For students exhibiting flu-like symptoms including fever, coughing, nausea and/or vomiting, aches and pains, and fatigue, the following health office protocols will be implemented:

- The student will be directed to the school's health office for assessment by the school nurse.
- The school nurse will evaluate the student's symptoms and will enact these steps should the symptoms be consistent with those of H1N1:
 - Isolate the child from healthy students and require the individual to wear a paper surgical mask.
 - Call the parent/guardian to come immediately to school and take the student home.
 - The student must remain home for a minimum of 24 hours after the fever/symptoms subside.
 - Upon return to school, the student must report to the school nurse for follow-up.
 - If a student returns to school before the end of the 24 hour symptom-free period, the school nurse will again require the parent to take the child home immediately.

We must emphasize that it is very important to have all of your contact information updated at all times, including an alternate contact, in case you have difficulty coming immediately to the school.

The Department of Education is strongly suggesting that schools remain open, but in the event that we must close, the following plan has been established to maintain continuity of instruction for all students:

- The schools have developed emergency lesson plans specific to grade levels and subjects. You will be notified of closings by One Call Now. At that time, we will post the lesson plans on your child's school's website for you to access.
- Students receiving special services may receive more specific lessons, depending on their IEP needs, directly from their instructors. That packet will be sent home with the child.
- For families without Internet access, or if a child with special needs should already be absent and does not receive a packet to bring home, copies of the lesson plans will be made available at the Township of Mahwah Borough Hall, 475 Corporate Drive, Mahwah. You will be informed through a One Call Now announcement about picking up these materials. Please make sure that your child's school knows if you do not have Internet access at home.
- Students will be held accountable for completing this work if the NJ Department of Education allows these days to count toward the required 180 days of school. Consequently, please be sure to have some basic school supplies at home for your child's use.

Our primary concern is the health and well being of all of our students and their families. We look forward to working with you to keep your children healthy and on track with their academic progress. To relieve any pressure students may feel about staying home, we have eliminated all perfect attendance awards. If any questions or concerns arise regarding your child's illness and the attendance policy, please call your child's school.

Sincerely,

Charles V. Montesano, Ed.D.
Superintendent