

September 18, 2009

Dear Key Communicator:

Since the H1N1 (Swine Flu) outbreak last spring, the Center for Disease Control (CDC) continues to describe this new strain of flu as a highly contagious pandemic flu that can last up to 72-96 hours, if not longer. Currently, the district policy for the maximum number of days that a student may be absent during a semester and qualify for high school exam exemptions is three (3) days.

Out of concern for the public health of this community, **the high school exemption policy will be modified for the 2009-2010 school year to allow a maximum of five (5) days of absences each semester.** Five days will allow students who experience the H1N1 illness to remain home until they are fever-free for 24 hours. If the illness lasts five days, a student will have the benefit of at least one weekend, or seven days, to recover from the illness. The change in this policy will help decrease the spread of the H1N1 virus among both students and staff. The reasoning behind this decision is twofold: (1) students began this year with an understanding that they could earn an exemption and (2) we do not want to encourage students who are ill to attend school in an effort to earn the exemption. Keep in mind, students must do their best to attend school everyday that they are not ill; there is no clearly established time frame for the duration of the H1N1 flu virus and those absent more than five days, regardless of the reasons, will not be eligible for an exemption.

As we move into the time of the year we typically call flu season, encourage those around you to practice healthy living. This is one of the best defenses against the H1N1 virus. For more information about H1N1, please continue to monitor the district website at www.cfishd.net.

Sincerely,

David Anthony, Ed. D.
Dr. David Anthony, superintendent
Cypress-Fairbanks ISD