

September 21, 2009

Dear Parents,

Fort Collins High School has a significant number of students reporting illnesses, and we want to remind parents and students steps you can take to reduce the spread of flu. **We want to keep the school open to students and functioning in a normal manner during this flu season. We need your help to do this.**

**Prevention is the best strategy, and here's how you can help:**

- **Teach children to wash their hands** often with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand rub. You can set a good example by doing this yourself.
- **Teach children to cover coughs/sneezes and not share personal items** like drinks, food or unwashed utensils, and to cover their coughs and sneezes with tissues. Students should cover their coughs or sneezes using the elbow, arm or sleeve instead of the hand when a tissue is unavailable.
- **Clean surfaces and objects that your child touches frequently** with appropriate cleaning agents.
- **Know the signs and symptoms of the flu.** Symptoms of the flu include fever (100 degrees Fahrenheit, 37.8 degrees Celsius or greater), cough, sore throat, a runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, and feeling very tired. Some people may also vomit or have diarrhea.
- **Do not send children to school if they are sick.** Any children who are sick while at school *will be sent home*.
- **Keep sick children 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 infected.
- **Get your family vaccinated** for seasonal flu and H1N1 flu when vaccines are available. According the Center for Disease Control (CDC), a vaccine specific to H1N1 may not be available until mid-October. They are recommending the vaccine be made available to individuals in priority groups, including school-aged children.

Poudre School District is working closely with the Larimer County Department of Health and Environment and other city, county and state agencies to monitor flu conditions and make decisions about the best steps to take concerning schools.

**If your student is out of school due to illness, please call the FCHS Attendance Line at 488-8021, and leave a message with the cause for the absence. In addition, students can get information about missed class assignments by e-mailing their teachers, checking the blackboard sites or call the teacher directly.**

Sincerely,

*Mark Eversole*

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Principal