

Dear Parents/Guardians:

Many of you have heard news reports about swine flu spreading across the United States and the world. As of today, April 29, there are no known cases of swine flu in Georgia. Atlanta Public Schools will continue to monitor the regional and national situations carefully.

We want to share some basic information with you about swine flu, how it is spread, how to protect against it and how APS is responding, because your child's health and safety are very important to us.

The symptoms of swine flu often are similar to the symptoms of regular seasonal flu, and include fever, lethargy, lack of appetite and coughing. Some who have contracted swine flu also have reported runny nose, sore throat, nausea, vomiting and diarrhea.

Atlanta Public Schools has a close relationship with the Fulton County Department of Health and Wellness. If any local cases of swine flu emerge, we will be notified. If our teachers and nurses see students with flu-like symptoms, we will share this important information with county authorities. Our school nurses also are doing all that they can to prevent an outbreak among our students.

But perhaps the most important relationship is the one we have with you. We need your help to prevent the spread of illness in our schools – not just swine flu, but any kind of virus. There are some simple everyday actions that the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends to keep your children and yourselves healthy.

-- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it.

-- Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. Alcohol-based hand cleaners also are effective.

-- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth unnecessarily to prevent spreading germs.

-- Try to avoid close contact with sick people.

-- If your child gets sick, please keep him/her home from school and limit contact with others to avoid spreading infection. If your child is ill and recently has traveled to an area affected by swine flu, or has been in contact with someone who has been infected, contact your child's healthcare provider immediately.

If you would like more information about swine flu, call the CDC hotline at 1-800-232-4636.

Additional information is available on the CDC Web Site:

http://www.cdc.gov/swineflu/?s_cid=swineFlu_outbreak_internal_001

The APS Web site also contains useful information:

<http://www.atlantapublicschools.us/1861101118113928800/blank/browse.asp?a=383&BMDRN=2000&BCOB=0&c=55499>