



Dear Parents:

Many of you have heard news reports about cases of swine flu in the U.S. and other countries. As a precaution, we want to share some basic information with you about swine flu, how we're responding and what you can do as well, because your child's health and safety are our top concerns.

Swine flu is a respiratory disease of pigs that does not normally infect humans; however, human infections with swine flu do occur. This current strain of swine flu has begun to spread from human to human, causing illness. You might note that you cannot get this strain of flu from eating pork or pork products. The symptoms of swine flu in people are often similar to regular seasonal flu and include fever, lethargy, lack of appetite and coughing. Some people with swine flu also have reported runny nose, sore throat, nausea, vomiting and diarrhea.

Gwinnett County Public Schools has a close relationship with the East Metro Health District. If any local cases of swine flu are discovered we will be notified and provided direction on steps to take. Likewise, if our teachers and nurses see students with flu-like symptoms, we will share this important information with the Health Department.

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. Below are everyday actions you and your family can take to stay 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 hands cleaners are also effective.
- **Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth.** Germs spread that way.
- **Try to avoid close contact with sick people.**
- **If your child gets sick, please keep them home from school** and limit contact with others to keep from infecting them. If your child is ill and has recently traveled to an area affected by swine flu, or has been in contact with someone who has been infected with swine flu, contact your child's healthcare provider immediately.

If you would like more information about swine flu, visit the website of the East Metro Health District at www.eastmetrohealth.com or the CDC at www.cdc.gov.

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