

Perkins County Schools are utilizing information based on input from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, local health professionals, and school administrators to provide the following information to parents and the community regarding the spread of influenza among students and staff.

The following are the recommended school responses provided by the CDC under conditions with similar severity as in the spring of 2009.

- Stay home when sick: Those with flu-like illness should stay home from school and not return until they are fever free for 24 hours without the assistance of a fever reducing medication.
- Separate ill students/staff: Those who have flu-like illness will be sent to a room separate from others until they can be sent home and may be asked to wear a surgical mask if possible.
- Hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette: Wash hands frequently with soap and water and cover nose and mouth with tissue or shirt sleeve when coughing or sneezing.
- Routine hand cleansing: School staff will conduct the routine cleaning of high use areas. CDC does not believe any additional disinfection of environmental surfaces beyond routine cleaning is required.
- Early treatment of high-risk students and staff: Those with high-risk of influenza complications should speak with their health care provider at the first signs of symptoms and receive the recommended treatment early. High risk people include pregnant women, those with asthma or diabetes, those with compromised immune systems or those with neuromuscular disease.
- Consideration of selective school dismissal: Although there are not many schools where all or most students are considered high risk (i.e. a school for medically fragile students or for pregnant students) a district may decide to dismiss such a school to protect these students.

The CDC recognizes that the decision to dismiss students should be made locally and should balance the goal of reducing the number of people who become seriously ill or die from influenza with the goal of minimizing social disruption and the safety risks to children sometimes associated with school dismissal.

Based upon the experience of jurisdictions that had wide flu outbreaks in 2009, the potential benefits of preemptive dismissal of students from school was often outweighed by negative consequences (i.e. students left home alone, health workers missing shifts to stay home with students, students missing meals, and interruption of students' education).