

Comal Independent School District

NEWS RELEASE

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Release Date: Aug. 19, 2009

Comal ISD following CDC H1N1 virus guidelines for 2009-10 school year

Since April 2009, the state of Texas has been responding to an outbreak of the H1N1 virus. Because of local cases, Comal ISD closed for six days in April and May.

Since that time, Comal ISD officials have been working with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the state health department and the Comal County health department to plan for H1N1 prevention and to respond to any future virus outbreaks.

Comal ISD officials have informed Comal ISD officials that physicians are testing ill patrons for the influenza A virus and are no longer routinely testing for H1N1 influenza. Comal ISD's lead nurse Amie Ploe said Comal ISD is working with the Comal Health Department in developing surveillance for students who are out sick.

"If any of our students are sick, we may not know whether or not it is the regular flu or H1N1, but we need to be cautious and treat all flu-like illness the same," said Ploe. "We need to ask questions when they call in sick about whether or not they have a fever, if they've been to the doctor, if they've received a diagnosis of influenza A and other questions of that nature."

The CDC recommends people with influenza-like illness remain at home until at least 24 hours after they are free of fever or signs of a fever without the use of fever-reducing medications.

"It's important that parents follow all CDC recommendations and guidelines if their child is sick," said Ploe. "We will send children home from school if they come in with a fever, and will ask parents to comply with keeping their student home until flu symptoms and the fever are resolved."

Ploe said district officials are asking parents to be mindful of good hygiene in the home, to educate their children on how not to share germs, and to be aware of symptoms of the flu and whether or not their children are experiencing any of those symptoms. General information about H1N1 and how to help prevent it can be found on the Health Services page of the PARENT section on the district website at www.comalsid.org. Links to CDC websites, and state and local health departments containing information about H1N1 can also be found on the Health Services page.

“We will be in close contact with our local and state health departments as recommendations regarding the virus continue to come in and vaccines become available, and we will continue to communicate any new information with our parents, students and staff,” Ploe said. “We highly recommend that parents visit the district website frequently to continue to receive the most updated information and for general H1N1 references.”

Comal ISD Superintendent Dr. Marc Walker said the district is taking extra measures to ensure that another outbreak does not occur.

“As always, student safety and health is a priority,” Walker said. “We are doing everything we can on our end to make sure we don’t have another Swine flu incident by implementing all CDC recommendations regarding the H1N1 virus, keeping up-to-date state and local information about the Swine flu on our website, taking extra measures of cleanliness in our schools, and communicating with our families. We appreciate your cooperation in helping us during this time.”

A letter outlining the measures Comal ISD is taking and additional information about the H1N1 virus will be sent out to all Comal ISD parents in early September. For more information, visit www.comalisd.org.

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