

August 18, 2009

Dear Parents,

Welcome back to school! We are excited about this school year and the many new opportunities for our students.

While flu season may not be foremost in your minds at the beginning of the school year, we want you to know that we have been thinking about and planning for flu season. As you know, flu can be easily spread from person to person. Therefore, we are taking steps to reduce the spread of flu in Lakehill Preparatory School. We want to keep the school open to students and functioning in a normal manner during this flu season. Listed below are some of the steps the school is implementing to reduce the spread of flu in our school.

- Encouraging respiratory etiquette by providing staff and students education and reminders about covering coughs and sneezes, and easy access to tissues, running water and soap, and/or alcohol-based hand cleaners.
- Reminding staff and students to practice good hand hygiene and providing the time and supplies for students and staff to wash their hands when needed.
- Sending sick students and staff home. Advising students, staff, and families that sick people should stay at home until at least 24 hours after they no longer have a fever or signs of a fever. This should be determined without the use of fever-reducing medicines (any medicine that contains ibuprofen or acetaminophen). They should stay home until at least 24 hours after they no longer have a fever even if they are using antiviral medicines.
- Revising policies and incentives to avoid penalizing students who stay home when they are sick (e.g., canceling perfect attendance awards).
- Cleaning surfaces and items that are more likely to have frequent hand contact with cleaning agents that are usually used in these areas. Additional disinfection beyond routine cleaning is not recommended by CDC.
- Removing students and staff who become sick at school from the classroom until they can be sent home. Limiting the number of staff who take care of the sick person and providing a surgical mask for the sick person to wear if possible.
- Having Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) such as masks available and ensuring it is worn by school staff caring for sick people at school.
- Encouraging sick students and staff at higher risk of complications from flu to get a medical evaluation as soon as possible. Taking antiviral medicines early might prevent severe complications from the flu.
- Working closely with Dallas County Health Department to monitor flu conditions and make sound decisions about the best steps to take concerning our school. We will keep you updated with new information as it becomes available.

If the flu becomes more severe, Lakehill Preparatory School may consider adding the following steps:

- Extending the time sick students or staff stay home to at least 7 days, even if they feel better sooner.
- Allowing high risk students and staff to stay home.
- Conducting fever and symptom screening of students and staff.
- Finding ways to increase social distances (the space between people).
- Continuing to work closely with health officials to decide how and when to close the school if necessary.

For now we are doing everything we can to keep our school functioning as usual. Here are a few things you can do to help.

- **Teach your 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 your children not to share personal items** like drinks, food, or unwashed utensils.
- Teach your children to cover their coughs or sneezes with a tissue or to use their elbow, arm, or sleeve instead of their hand when a tissue is unavailable.
- **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.
- **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 who may get infected.
- **Do not send children to school if they are sick.** Any child who is determined to be sick while at school *will be sent home.*
- For more information, visit [www.flu.gov](http://www.flu.gov), or call 1-800-CDC-INFO for the most current information about the flu. We will notify you of any additional changes to our school's strategy to prevent the spread of flu.

Sincerely,

Lara Gajkowski  
Assistant Headmaster