



# CARROLL

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## INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

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*David J. Faltys, Ed.D., Superintendent*

September 2, 2009

Carroll Parents,

Welcome to the 2009-2010 school year. We are excited about having your child enrolled this fall and want you to know that we have been planning and preparing for a wonderful school year. It is our goal that your child has a healthy and productive year of learning. Still, we know there are concerns about a resurgence of the H1N1 flu virus. Last April, schools all across the nation were faced with an unprecedented wave of school cancellations and closures. This fall, health officials have changed their stance and are no longer sending samples away to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) for confirmation of the H1N1 virus. All Type A Influenza cases are being considered and treated as "presumed" H1N1.

**Carroll ISD already has multiple confirmed Type A Influenza cases at several campuses.** Symptoms of Influenza A (H1N1) include mild fever (99-102), cough, upper respiratory infection, sore throat, muscle aches, headaches and in some cases, upset stomach, vomiting and diarrhea. Students or staff experiencing two or more of the symptoms above should seek a doctor's care immediately AND report their illness/symptoms to the school nurse. In some instances, symptoms have been mistaken for allergies because fever did not occur at the onset. Most of the cases this past spring were treated effectively with Tamiflu if treatment began within the first 48 hours. Siblings and family members are often prescribed Tamiflu as a preventive measure.

Although the symptoms are relatively mild, the disease is considered highly contagious and can cause serious complications in some patients. A vaccine is being tested and administered for healthcare providers and first responders, but is not yet available to the general public. For that reason, our staff has been closely monitoring health-related information and guidelines from the Center for Disease Control (CDC), as well as state and county health departments and the Texas Department of Public Safety.

Carroll ISD has added a comprehensive **Pandemic Flu Response Plan** to our existing Emergency Operations Plan and we are pre-ordering necessary cleaning and hygiene supplies to deal with the flu outbreak. We are also taking steps to educate staff, parents and students about the importance of good hygiene and staying home when experiencing flu-like symptoms. If at all possible, vaccinate your family against the flu and when it becomes available, ask your healthcare provider about getting the H1N1 vaccination, as well. Identify if you have children who are at higher risk of serious disease from the flu and talk to your healthcare provider about a plan to protect them during the flu season. Children at high risk of

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serious disease from the flu include: children under 5 years of age and those children with chronic medical conditions, such as asthma and diabetes.

The first step in our process to educate parents is to provide you with a CDC tip sheet for helping to prevent the spread of the flu virus. Tip sheets are also being provided to every CISD staff member. You can find this and more information on the district's web site. Simply visit <http://www.southlakecarroll.edu> and click on the **Dragon SafetyZone** icon in the middle left side of the page. There you will find regular district updates and national web sites for more information. **Throughout the 2009-2010 school year, this will be your clearinghouse for H1N1/Influenza A updates and news.**

The safety and well being of your student is our top priority. Good health and hygiene are essential to ensure effective learning. Carroll ISD will be encouraging frequent hand-washing with soap and water for all adults and students. We will also be providing extra classroom tissues and alcohol-based hand wipes during the fall flu season. In addition, we ask that you notify the school nurse if your child is considered high-risk because of asthma, a respiratory condition or other pre-existing factors. Students who come into the school clinic with two or more flu-related symptoms will likely be given a mask to wear as a precaution until the parent arrives to pick up the student. Parents will be asked to pick up sick children immediately. In addition, our school nurses may be wearing masks as they treat ill children. While the masks do not prevent H1N1, they are a recommendation of the CDC and should not alarm, but rather comfort parents.

We ask that parents keep students home who have fever or any two of the symptoms listed above. In addition, **all cases of H1N1 or Type A Influenza should be reported to the school nurse.** Monitor siblings of infected children as well. Sick students should not return for 24 hours after fever subsides (without the use of fever-reducing medications). Social distancing and isolation are important steps in the prevention of a flu outbreak, according to the CDC. Carroll ISD's leadership team will continue to monitor the situation and consult with state and county officials about when to implement these strategies. Parents will be contacted in the event more extreme steps are taken to cancel activities or close school.

It is our hope that the steps we have taken to plan and prepare for the worst will be helpful in preventing or avoiding a significant flu outbreak all together. We appreciate your help in partnering with us regarding this important health response. CISD will utilize our parent/staff notification system, emails, the web site, newsletters and printed letters to keep you informed of our decisions and action responses to H1N1 this fall. Our school nurses provide a wealth of knowledge and expertise for Dragon families and staff. Don't hesitate to contact them if you have any questions about our plan. In the meantime, please take the time to read the attached tip sheet and talk about this issue with your family. It could mean the difference in ensuring a healthy and enjoyable school experience for your child.

Sincerely,



David J. Faltys  
Superintendent