

# *Cameron Parish School Board*

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## *Stephanie Rodrigue, Superintendent*

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August 31, 2009

Dear Parents,

Last week, in your back-to-school update packet, you received the latest information from the Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals on the flu. That information was developed in conjunction with the Center for Disease Control. The information that you received included the following procedures that we have had in place since the Spring, as well as the good personal hygiene and school cleanliness practices that we have always had in place and continue to implement:

- Educating and encouraging students and staff to cover their noses and mouths when sneezing and coughing (we have plenty of tissue available);
- Reminding students and staff to wash their hands as often as necessary (we have all the supplies available);
- Asking students and staff who are sick to stay home;
- Regular good cleaning of the schools, especially those most likely to be touched by students and staff;
- Daily calls to parents of students who are absent with reasons recorded.

Unlike most parishes in Louisiana, we are very fortunate that the Cameron Parish School Board agreed to fund a Registered Nurse in every school last school year, in addition to additional LPNs at some of our schools. The School Nurses are assisting the school administration in reinforcing all the student and employee hygiene practices and school cleaning procedures.

While it is important to keep you informed, it is also very important to protect your child's and your family's right to privacy. For that reason, we cannot tell you who has the flu, if the child is in your class, etc. In addition to that important constitutional right, as I am sure you are aware through the media this weekend, local physicians are not performing the HINI (Swine) Flu test. They are basically telling those diagnosed with Type A flu that, since it is early in flu season, it might be Swine Flu. The treatment is the same. Overall, all information through Public Health indicates that the Swine Flu is mild. (There are, obviously, more serious implications when an adult or child has other serious, complicated, or additional health problems. Your personal physician can assist with that info for your own child, if it applies.)

I realize that when you are out and about in the community, you are hearing lots of rumors and some negative comments. (Last week, the rumor was that we had 17 cases of Swine Flu in one school. There were none.) As of today, Cameron Parish does not have one case of Swine Flu, according to the Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals – the official reporting system. We have 11 students out within the parish that parents themselves have reported have been to the doctor and the doctor diagnosed Type A flu.

I hope that this information helps you to understand that what you are hearing on the street and in the stores in our parish is probably gossip. I also hope this helps you to understand that information about your child's health is very confidential and we are serious about protecting your family's right to privacy. Finally, I hope that you understand that our staffs are practicing and promoting good hygiene and cleanliness.

Thank you for your time in reading and understanding this information.

Sincerely,

Stephanie Rodrigue, Superintendent