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# Mitchell Community Schools

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October 21, 2009

To: MCS Parents and Staff

From: Mr. Lantis 

RE: H1N1 Flu Virus

Beginning in early October, Mitchell Community Schools has seen an increase of student absences with flu like symptoms. Since October 5, 2009, MCS has been averaging 247 students absent or 12.6%. Over the last five days we are averaging 295 students absent or 15%. As you can tell, our absentee rate is climbing.

On November 5 and 17, 2009, we have scheduled H1N1 vaccination clinics for all MCS students at the Burris Elementary School gymnasium from 4:00 p.m. until 8:00 p.m. The vaccination will be free for our students. We hope that enough flu vaccine arrives by November 5 to hold the clinic. We will notify you if the clinic has to be cancelled.

The nasal mist vaccine is effective against the H1N1 virus within 7 to 10 days after being given. The regular shot vaccine is effective between 7 to 14 days. So, some of the students will not be protected from the virus until late November.

To help protect our students and the general public we are cancelling large school programs and/or presentations for the month of November, 2009. By eliminating an entire grade level or school from being in a gymnasium or auditorium with a large number of people from the general public, we hope to help stop the spread of the virus. The Lawrence County Health Director agrees with our actions to help keep our students in school and hopefully help in reducing person to person flu transmission. One of the suggestions from the Center for Disease Control to assist in not spreading the H1N1 virus is to limit your contact with others. Hopefully some of these cancelled programs can be re-scheduled later in the school year.

Athletic events will be allowed to continue because of contract obligations and it is voluntary if students attend.

In late November, 2009, we will again analyze our situation with student absences and the H1N1 pandemic and hopefully we can return to normal activities in December.

Thank you.

October 21, 2009

Parents,

The following programs will be canceled at this time:

November 11	Veterans Day Program
November 12	Second Grade Music Program
November 20, 23, & 24	Grandparents Day Programs

December activities will be re-evaluated at the end of November and a decision will be made at that time.