

GETHSEMANE LUTHERAN SCHOOL and H1N1 PREPAREDNESS – September 2009

Dear Parents,

Any flu is spread easily from person to person and school-age children are among the groups most affected. We are taking steps to prevent the spread of flu in Gethsemane Lutheran School. Currently, flu conditions around the world have become more severe in the form of H1N1. We want to avoid this strain and keep the school open and functioning as normal for as long as possible. ***We need your help to do this.***

We are working closely with the Maricopa County Health Department, the Arizona Health Department, and the CDC to monitor flu conditions and make decisions about the best steps to take. We are now implementing the following steps to prevent the spread of flu within our school.

During the summer vacation, we have thoroughly cleaned the school premises and shall continue a heightened cleaning regime for as long as H1N1 danger persists.

However, we do require you to pay attention to and carry out the following measures to reduce the risk of spreading any illness, but especially H1N1:

- If your child has a fever, cough or symptoms of influenza, he/she should not attend school and should seek medical care immediately. Check your child's body temperature *before* sending him/her to school. If you are unable to stay home with your child or find someone to stay with them, Chandler Regional Medical Center operates a program called **Sick Kid Care** for infants up through age 13. You can contact them at 480-728-3353.

- If your child develops symptoms of H1N1, you must *notify the school office*. School staff will ask *students with at least 2 symptoms* suggestive of a respiratory infection such as fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body aches and fatigue (some people may also vomit or have diarrhea) to be separated from others, will be offered a surgical mask, and *sent home* as soon as possible.

- If your child has H1N1, he/she should not attend school unless he/she has fully recovered. No child should return to school unless they have had at least *a full 24-hour period* without a fever or any flu symptoms – that is at least one full day symptom free.

- Recurring symptom and fever incidents will require students to stay at home for at least a 7-day period. *Keeping your sick child at home is the responsible thing to do.*

We are all accountable for ensuring diligent hygiene and health practices that prevent the spread of disease, including thoroughly washing hands regularly with soap. As parents and teachers, it is important that we encourage our children to eat healthily and to adhere to a balanced life, with adequate sleep and exercise. It is very important that children do not share personal items like drinks, food, or unwashed utensils, and to cover their coughs and sneezes with tissues.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation and support in providing a safe learning environment for your child. Enclosed in this mailing is a Flu informational guide provided by Maricopa County Health Department. For more information, visit 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,

Wendell L. Robson, Principal