

LIVING

EUCCHARIST

Diocese of St. Petersburg

May 1, 2009

Dear Parents/Guardians:

I write to you again to assure you that the health and safety of your child(ren) enrolled in our (inter)parish/diocesan early childhood centers, elementary, and secondary schools are our primary responsibilities that we assume seriously. In light of the recent directives from the Center for Disease Control (CDC) regarding the response to a confirmed case of H1N1 (Swine Flu) for educational entities, the Catholic School Office has developed an action plan to address this situation in one of our school or centers. The principals and directors met today and the plan was explained to them. The principals and directors will be meeting with their respective faculty and staff members to set in motion preparations for a responsible response. Within the next few days you should receive details specific to your school and/or center from the administrator.

What follows are the highlights of the plan that was developed that would have an impact on you and your family.

1. Parents are encouraged to keep their child at home if the child is ill. You are encouraged to have your child visit the doctor if he/she exhibits flu-like symptoms.
2. When you call to inform the school that your child will be absent, the school representative will inquire as to the nature of your child's illness.
3. If your child is in school and becomes ill and/or exhibits flu-like symptoms, the child will be isolated from the other students and you will be notified to come and pick up your child.
4. The principal/director will require written verification from your family physician that your child has been tested and does not have H1N1. The form can be obtained in the local school's office.
5. In the event that a child is confirmed to have H1N1 the school will be closed for a period of seven (7) days. During that time of quarantine, no employee or student may enter the facility. The entire school will be cleaned according to the

directives given by the CDC. All activities scheduled to occur during the seven day period will be cancelled.

6. You are strongly encouraged to develop a plan for child care in the event that a school or center is required to close for a period of time.
7. Teachers will be required to prepare lesson plans for the seven days to allow the students to continue their work at home. The manner in which the school/center makes these assignments available to the students will vary by location.
8. If you have a child in Holy Family Catholic School, for example, and an older child at St. Petersburg Catholic High School and there is a confirmed case of H1N1 at St. Petersburg Catholic High School, the younger child will be unable to attend school at Holy Family until the quarantine has been lifted at the high school.
9. Since the Catholic school facility in a parish may be used by ministries other than Catholic school education, should an individual from another ministry contract H1N1, the school will be forced to close for a seven day period.
10. If after a seven days school closure, another case of H1N1 is verified in a school, the school will follow the procedures as listed above.
11. In accordance with the CDC directive, this plan will remain in effect for 90 days.

This communication is not intended to cause panic among the members of our Catholic school community. Rather, it is meant to inform you of decisions which may interrupt the education of your child for a brief period of time should the need arise.

It is my sincere hope that all of our administrators, faculty and staff members, students, and you remain healthy in the days ahead. I would ask you to remember in your prayers those who have contracted H1N1 and their families. If we continue to be conscious of the need for frequent hand washing and guaranteeing that the appropriate sneezing protocols are utilized, then H1N1 should not disrupt our lives.

Sincerely yours,



John L. Cummings, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Catholic Schools and Centers