



DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
Domestic Dependent Elementary and Secondary Schools
DDESS PUERTO RICO DISTRICT
Superintendent's Office
Building 566
Fort Buchanan, Puerto Rico 00934

August 18, 2009

MESSAGE FROM SUPERINTENDENT TO PARENTS AT FORT BUCHANAN

Late Friday afternoon we received information that a student at AMS had been confirmed with a strain of the seasonal flu (influenza A). The parents took appropriate steps by seeking medical attention and keeping the student at home on Friday. With all the recent media reports about the H1N1 flu virus in the media, we wanted to let you know that DoDEA continues to monitor any reports of influenza closely. Our school principals and nurses here at Fort Buchanan are in regular communication with the local military health facility and the command regarding any reports of influenza. Our schools are an integral part of the community planning process for any potential pandemic or outbreak that may occur.

At this time, there are no special precautions or actions that need to be taken by the Fort Buchanan schools. Additional cleaning measures were carried out in AMS on Friday evening even though any virus on school surfaces would have died within two hours of the contact with the surface. We will follow the advice, guidance, and direction of military medical professionals and commands should an outbreak occur, and prompt notification will be provided to parents.

The Center for Disease Control and other public health agencies recommend some simple practices to ensure a healthy environment for all. You may want to review these with your child.

- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. Alcohol-based hand cleaners are also effective.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs spread this way.
- Influenza is thought to spread mainly person-to-person through coughing or sneezing of infected people.
- Try to avoid close contact with sick people.
- If you feel sick, stay home from school or work to prevent spreading illness. Consult with your health care provider if you are concerned about your symptoms.

Parents are asked to keep children home with a fever or other signs of illness. Children should be free from all symptoms for 24 hours before returning to school. If you have questions, please contact your school nurse or healthcare provider. The federal government also has a good website with information on planning for individuals and families at <http://www.pandemicflu.gov>.

The health and well being of our students is our top priority. I want to assure you that we will work collaboratively with the military commands to do everything possible to work through this global concern.


Michael A. Gould
Superintendent NYVA/PR