

# Media Release

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**August 19, 2009**

The St. Johns County School District (SJCSD) is working closely with the St. Johns County Health Department (SJCHD) and the Center for Disease Control (CDC) to make sure schools are prepared for the H1N1 flu virus, also commonly known as swine flu.

This new flu, which began infecting persons this spring, targets children from six months up to 24 years of age. The SJCHD expects that schools will be seeing influenza-like illness (including H1N1 Swine Flu) when students return to class on August 24. Preparations for a vaccine that will protect against H1N1 Swine Flu are underway but will not be available for several months.

The goal of the school district is to take the necessary precautions to reduce the number of students that become infected until the vaccine is available. Parents are encouraged to recognize the symptoms of influenza-like illness so that they keep ill children out of school and help stop the spread of the disease.

Symptoms include a sudden onset of fever (100 degrees or higher), cough, runny nose, sore throat, all over body aches and upset stomach. Symptoms usually last four to five days but the virus can be spread for up to seven days after the onset of symptoms.

CDC guidelines recommend that students with flu-like illness stay home until they are fever free for 24 hours. This should be determined without the use of fever-reducing medications, such as those containing ibuprofen or acetaminophen.

If a child exhibits flu-like symptoms, parents should keep them home from school and from all after school activities. Parents should also teach their children to follow basic hygiene including covering coughs and sneezes, washing hands with soap and water and using hand sanitizer.

For more information about H1N1 Swine Flu, visit [www.cdc.gov/H1N1](http://www.cdc.gov/H1N1) or [MyFluSafety.com](http://MyFluSafety.com) or contact the St. Johns County Health Department at (904) 825-5055. After August 24, a toll-free H1N1 Swine Flu information line will also be available in Florida at 1-877-FLA-FLU1 (1-877-352-3581). You may also contact Health Services in the Student Services Department at (904) 547-7628 with any questions or concerns.

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