

Dear Parents,

We have heard of schools in other districts being impacted by an unusually large number of absences due to influenza. While this is not the case for Rankin County School District, we are being proactive by monitoring the situation and following the Centers for Disease Control guidelines (CDC). Below is a summary of key points suggested by the CDC that parents and schools can take to prevent the spread of influenza.

**Centers for Disease Control Key Points to  
Prevent the Spread of Flu in Schools:**

- **Encourage students, parents, and staff to get a yearly flu vaccine**—Teach students, parents, and staff that the single best way to protect against the flu is to get vaccinated each flu season. It is not too late to get the flu shot.
- **Stay home when sick**—Students and staff with flu-like illness should stay home until fever free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medicines. They should stay home even if they are using antiviral drugs.
- **Separate ill students and staff**—Students and staff who appear to have flu-like illness should be sent to a room separate from others until they can be sent home. CDC recommends that they wear a surgical mask, if possible, and that those who care for ill students and staff wear protective gear such as a mask.
- **Hand hygiene**—CDC recommends that students and staff be encouraged to wash their hands often with soap and water, especially after coughing or sneezing.
- **Respiratory etiquette**—CDC recommends covering the nose and mouth with a tissue when coughing or sneezing (or a shirt sleeve or elbow if no tissue is available) and throwing the tissue in the trash after use.
- **Routine cleaning**—School staff routinely cleans areas that students and staff touch often with the cleaners they typically use. Special cleaning and disinfecting processes, including wiping down walls and ceilings, are not necessary or recommended. (The RCSD uses healthcare disinfectant products that are registered with the EPA for bacteria, molds, mildews and viruses, including the Influenza A Virus.)

Thank you,

RCSD Administration