

Dear Salem Families

Throughout the school year, and especially during flu season, our employees work to promote and ensure student wellness in our schools. Our custodial staff members also work diligently to disinfect and clean commonly touched surfaces and prevent the spread of illnesses.

The Salem School Division also works closely with Virginia Department of Health (VDH) to monitor the impact of community health issues in our schools.

At this time, doctors across Virginia are submitting weekly summaries of influenza data to VDH. Local health department offices are monitoring this data and working closely with school systems to assess the prevalence of influenza in our communities and schools.

If there are any health issues that require parent notifications or school closure, the VDH will work with us to develop procedures to deal with these types of situations.

In an effort to promote healthy habits for students, families and staff, please remember the following:

- The single best way to protect yourself is to get a flu shot. Most people 6-months and older need vaccinations.
- Individuals should stay home from school and work when sick.
- Avoid close contact with unhealthy people.
- Wash hands often with soap and water for 20 seconds, especially after changing diapers.
- When coughing or sneezing, cover your mouth and nose with a disposable tissue or sneeze into your upper sleeve. Do not use your hands.
- Dispose of facial tissues that contain nasal secretions after each use. Wash hands afterwards.
- Avoid touching the eyes, nose or mouth.

- Avoid kissing, hugging, and sharing cups or eating utensils with those who are sick.
- Routinely clean commonly touched surfaces like toys and doorknobs.
- If your child has Asthma, please ensure that they are on their appropriate regimen, that their asthma medications are up-to-date and that the school or daycare has his or her medications available.
- If your child has difficulty breathing, or experiences new or worsening wheezing, consult with your child's doctor immediately.

Please also find attached the Center for Disease Control (CDC) *Flu Guide for Parents*.

Darryl D. Helems, Ph.D.

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Salem City Schools