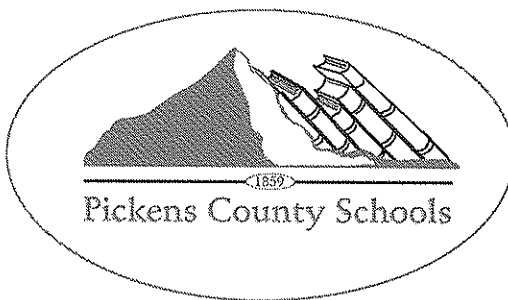


Michael L. Ballew  
Superintendent

Tommy Qualls  
Asst. Superintendent



**Board of Education**  
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August 28, 2009

Dear Parents/Guardians,

Recently we had two students and one staff member diagnosed with H1N1 flu. All three individuals have been treated and are back at school. Letters were sent home from the school notifying parents, and we contacted the Pickens County Health Department. We also received and shared information with other government agencies. This includes our Department of Education, the Governor's Office, our State Health Department and the CDC. All of these agencies recommend that schools not be closed.

Every agency has told us that the H1N1 flu will be more prominent and widespread this fall and winter than it was last spring and this summer. These agencies also tell us that this flu is not as dangerous as they originally thought in the spring, but it is serious and needs to be treated like the regular flu.

Our school system is taking measures to help minimize flu in our schools. In addition to our regular cleaning, schools are sanitized and disinfected on a daily basis. This includes treating desk surfaces, light switches, door knobs, or any surface contacted by students.

The school system sent a letter home with each student from our District Health Director Harold Pitts. This letter describes the flu symptoms to look for and tips on how to help prevent getting the flu. Please refer to this letter, contact our local health department, or contact your doctor for additional information. You may also check our website at <http://www.pickens.k12.ga.us/>.

Since being told that flu will be more widespread this fall, it is likely that each school will eventually have a case of H1N1. We will send a letter home the first time we have a H1N1 case in a school, but another letter will not be sent for additional cases. Once you are notified that we have a case of H1N1 in your school, please realize that there may be more cases that occur.

School staff will be constantly monitoring the H1N1 flu with our local, state, and federal agencies. If any change occurs that requires additional information to be sent home, we will immediately send this information to you.

We realize that everyone has concerns, and rightly so. The safety of our students is the top priority in dealing with this flu. We want to work with you, our local health department, our state and federal agencies to help minimize the H1N1 flu in our school system. Please contact your school or the local health department if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Michael L. Ballew  
Superintendent

