



**FAIRFAX COUNTY
PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

**Island Creek Elementary School
7855 Morning View Lane
Alexandria, VA 22315
Phone: 571-642-6300
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November 29, 2009

Dear Parent or Guardian:

The Island Creek Elementary School community, along with Fairfax County and the commonwealth of Virginia, is seeing an increase in report of influenza-like illnesses. According to the Virginia Department of Health, Virginia has reached the classification of "widespread" for influenza-like illnesses, and almost all of the influenza virus circulating in the state at this time is 2009 H1N1 influenza. Island Creek Elementary School continues to work closely with FCPS and the Fairfax County Health Department as we face the challenges of an active flu season.

Influenza-like illness is widespread in the community, and therefore it is in the schools. Because of this, Fairfax County Public Schools is not sending out notification to school communities regarding a single confirmed case of influenza or a group of confirmed cases at particular school. The medical community is testing only a small number of influenza cases, so information on confirmed versus unconfirmed cases is not helpful. However, the Health Department continues to monitor absenteeism at individual schools and to monitor the severity of illness caused by 2009 H1N1. If the virus begins to cause more severe illness than what we are currently experiencing, FCPS will work with the Health Department to implement appropriate response measures.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) encourages school systems to remain open whenever possible due to the social and economic impact that school closures have on the community. FCPS continues to follow this guidance.

The symptoms of H1N1 flu are similar to the symptoms of seasonal flu and include fever plus a cough and/or a sore throat. Persons with influenza-like illness should stay home for at least 24 hours after they no longer have a fever, or signs of a fever, without the use of fever-reducing medicines. We encourage everyone in our community to help keep the flu from spreading by washing hands regularly and covering coughs and sneezes.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Susan Z. Owner', written in a cursive style.

Susan Z. Owner, Ph.D.
Principal