

Influenza Policy for Highlands Christian Academy 2009-2010

Highlands Christian Academy will continue to receive guidance from the Center for Disease Control (CDC) regarding influenza during the 2009-10 school year. Based on the severity of the 2009 H1N1 flu-related illnesses thus far, this guidance is designed to decrease exposure to regular seasonal flu and 2009 H1N1 while at the same time limiting the disruption of regular activities and learning in the school.

At this point, with the most recent information available, the CDC is encouraging schools to remain open. If it becomes necessary for HCA to close, we will contact you immediately with additional information.

HCA will be implementing increased preventative procedures during this school season. Please take special note of the following information and policies being put into place in order to protect our students, families, and staff.

Symptoms of H1N1 may include fever and cough – and may also include sore throat, body aches, headache, chills, runny nose, fatigue, and diarrhea. If your child shows these symptoms, it is HCA policy that you keep him or her home and see a doctor before bringing him or her to school. If your child is diagnosed with H1N1, it is essential that you notify the school immediately so we may take proper steps of precaution.

CDC Recommended Prevention at Home

- Please teach your students good hygiene which includes coughing and sneezing into their elbow, and not into their hands.
- Discuss with and teach your students to never share a drink.
- Instruct your students to wash hands with soap often, keep hands to self, and limit physical contact with other students.

Influenza Prevention at HCA

- Kindergarten and elementary students will wash hands during restroom breaks. They will also use hand-sanitizer such as Purell before lunch and other times during the day.
- Secondary students are encouraged to wash hands often and, likewise, use hand-sanitizer kept in their lockers. This step alone may make a significant difference in the health of our secondary students.
- All students in the school are requested to provide personal supplies of hand-sanitizer and tissues.
- Classrooms and offices will be disinfected on a daily basis at HCA.

Policy for Sick Students at Home

- Sick students may not come to school. If your child feels ill in the morning, please keep him or her home to see what develops. Students with flu-like symptoms (see box above) should be kept home until seen by a physician. Any student with a fever near to or over 100 degrees and above may not come to school. The CDC recommends, and HCA requires, that individuals with influenza-like illness remain at home until at least 24 hours after the fever naturally breaks, without the use of fever-reducing medications.

- If your HCA child is diagnosed with H1N1, you will be expected to notify the school immediately and keep him or her home until cleared by a physician to be in school. A doctor's note will be required upon return to school.
- If another family member is diagnosed with H1N1, please notify the school. The CDC recommends that students with H1N1 in the home stay home for a period until seen and cleared by a doctor to be at school.

Policy for Sick Students at HCA

- Please understand our policy: **SICK STUDENTS MAY NOT BE IN SCHOOL!**
- The CDC stresses the importance of early identification of ill students and staff. If a child comes to school sick, or becomes sick at school, he or she will be isolated from other students, and a parent will be called.
- If your child has a temperature near to or over 100 degrees, or appears to have other contagious symptoms, you will be expected to pick him or her up, or provide alternate transportation, within 30 minutes. This policy is important to protect the health of our HCA school community. Please prepare ahead of time for situations when you might not be available to arrive within that time.
- Students must be fever-free without the use of fever-reducing medications for 24 hours before returning to school. This means that if your child is sent home with a fever on Monday, he or she may not be at school on Tuesday – and may only return after being fever-free for 24 hours. There will be no exception to this policy which is put into place to protect the students, families, and staff of HCA.

This policy has been put into place to protect the students, families, and staff of HCA.

When a student comes to school sick, the health of fellow students and staff is at risk. As school staff, we will stay home when we are ill so others are not exposed, and we implore you as parents to do the same with your children. It is our prayer that the HCA family will have a safe and healthy school year. Please pray with us for the health and well-being of all our students and staff.