

H1N1 VACCINATIONS

BACKGROUND: Since last spring, the Charleston County School District (CCSD) has been working with the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC), parents, and local health officials to control and prevent the spread of seasonal and H1N1 (also referred to as “Swine”) flu. School nurses and teachers have encouraged proper hand-washing and sneezing. Parents and staff have been advised to stay home if sick with a fever and cough—and to keep children home if they show symptoms of the flu. **Now, in a major new step toward protecting the health of every child, DHEC is providing free vaccinations in CCSD schools.**

Why are these H1N1 flu shots important? H1N1, like seasonal flu, can cause people—especially children and those with other health conditions—to get very sick. Health experts agree that vaccinations are the best way to protect children against the flu.

When will the vaccinations be available? Beginning in early November and throughout December and January, vaccinations will be scheduled in every CCSD school. The order of schools will be random, beginning with elementary schools, followed by middle and high (the order will be posted at www.ccsdschools.com). Schools will be notified of their vaccination dates, and letters and consent forms will be sent to all parents.

Are vaccinations required for school attendance? No, but they are recommended to keep your child from getting sick with the flu.

What else do I need to know?

- Vaccinations are **free of charge**, but you must fill out a **Consent Form** in order for your child to receive the shot.
- The shot has been approved as safe by the Food and Drug Administration.
- Parents also have the option of scheduling a free vaccination at a clinic by calling DHEC at 953-0090.

Any questions? Please call DHEC at 1-800-277-4687, contact your child’s school, or visit the H1N1 page at www.ccsdschools.com.