Dear Parent/Guardian,

Flu season is here and the best way to keep our students healthy is to immunize them against the influenza virus. The Effingham County Health Department will schedule a voluntary flu vaccination clinic at each county school in the upcoming months. During these clinics, all enrolled students in Pre-K through high school graduation are eligible to receive either the flu shot or nasal spray vaccine. These clinics will be set up with minimal interruption to the school day. We want to make it as convenient as possible for parents to have their students immunized against flu this year.

Please review the Vaccine Information Statement (VIS) about the two types of flu vaccines. If you would like for your student to be vaccinated at a school-based flu clinic then you should complete, sign, and return the Parental Consent Form to your student’s school as soon as possible. **If this consent form is not filled out completely, signed, dated, and returned before the event date, your student will not be vaccinated at the school-based clinic.** Additional copies of this form and the VIS can be downloaded from the internet at [www.gachd.org](http://www.gachd.org) under the “Immunizations and Vaccinations” tab.

All children are eligible to participate in the clinics regardless of insurance status. We are asking for insurance information and a copy of your insurance card because we may be able to bill your insurance for a small administration fee. However, if your insurance does not agree to pay the fee or you do not have insurance, you will not be billed by us or your insurance. We are collecting this fee when possible so that we are able to use the funds to support the school-based flu vaccine clinics this year and in the future by purchasing vaccines and supplies and hiring nursing staff.

You should fully answer the medical questions on the consent form. Whether or not your child can receive the vaccine and the type of flu vaccine, nasal or injectable, that your child receives will be determined by the nurse based on your answers to the questions on the parental consent form. If all questions are not answered, then the student will not be vaccinated at the school clinic.

The flu virus is easily spread through coughs, sneezes, and by touching something with the virus on it and then touching your eyes, nose, or mouth. Those in close proximity to one another on a regular basis, as in our schools, are more vulnerable to getting and spreading the flu virus. The flu vaccine is safe and effective and can help protect your child from illness, hospitalization or worse. Less illness from flu means fewer days of missed school and few days of missed work.

We would like to thank you in advance for assisting us in keeping all of our students safe and healthy. Should you have any questions regarding the flu vaccine or these clinics, please contact the Effingham County Health Department at 912-754-6484. The staff at the health department look forward to working with you to keep our children healthy this year. For additional information please visit the CDC’s influenza web site at [http://www.cdc.gov/flu/parents](http://www.cdc.gov/flu/parents).

Sincerely,

Diane Z. Weems, M.D.
District Health Director, Coastal Health District