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PRESS Release

For Immediate Release

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Lee County Health Department Recommends to Re-Open Spring Creek Elementary

Fort Myers, FL- Based on new federal guidelines concerning school closures due to H1N1 (swine flu) cases, officials from the Lee County Health Department (LCHD), Lee County School District (LCSD), and Lee County Emergency Management announce that Spring Creek will re-open on Thursday, May 7, 2009.

"We have more information on the swine flu virus today than we did only one week ago, with symptoms being very mild among those affected" said, Judith A. Hartner, M.D., M.P.H., M.P.A. "Consequently, re-opening Spring Creek Elementary makes sense."

However, the LCHD predicts that swine flu is still circulating in Lee County. Therefore it is the responsibility of all Lee County citizens to protect themselves, their neighbors and others in the community by behaving responsibly to minimize the spread of disease. A virus that may only cause sniffles and mild inconvenience in one person may put the next into the hospital.

Consistent with CDC recommendations, the LCHD and LCSD agree that the primary means to reduce spread of influenza in schools is to focus on early identification of ill students and staff, staying home when ill and good cough and hand hygiene etiquette. Students, faculty or staff with influenza-like illness (fever with a cough or sore throat) should stay home and not attend school or go into the community except to seek medical care for at least 7 days even if symptoms resolve sooner. Students, faculty and staff who appear to have an influenza-like illness at arrival or become ill during the school day will be isolated promptly in a room separate from other students and sent home.

For more information about swine influenza, visit www.doh.state.fl.us or www.cdc.gov (CDC). Also, the Lee County Health Department has set up a Swine Flu Hotline where callers can speak with health department staff to answer their questions on swine flu at (239) 461-6180. The state has information lines established where callers can receive additional swine flu information at 1-800-775-8039 or 1-800-342-3557.

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