

SCHOOL DISTRICT OF PALM BEACH COUNTY
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS
PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
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FluMist Vaccine Program For Elementary Students Underway

The previously announced FluMist Initiative has begun. The program will run from October 5th through November 20th.

The Palm Beach County Health Department submitted and received a grant from the CDC as a part of the stimulus package to administer regular flu vaccine to elementary students. This initiative is a collaboration among the Health Department, School District and Health Care District.

The Health Department has hired a vendor to provide teams of nurses to go into the schools to provide the FluMist. They will pick up the vaccine that is stored at the Health Care District pharmacy and bring it with them in refrigerated units to each school site.

The preparation entailed sending out consent forms in September to all parents of all the elementary school students PreK through 5th grades. All the schools assigned a school staff coordinator who processed all the consent forms, arranged the school setting appropriately for the vaccine administration day, and coordinated pulling the students from their classrooms, assigning staff to monitor the students and respond to any needs of the nurses giving the vaccines.

The school nurses reviewed the consent forms for chronic health conditions that might disqualify a student from receiving the vaccine in school and a letter went to the parent explaining and encouraging the parent to take the child to the doctor for his/her flu vaccine.

All 106 regular elementary schools are participating. About 30,000 doses will be administered.

The schedule is as follows: Team arrives at the school at 8:30am and the Flu Clinic runs from 9-1pm depending on the number of students whose parents signed the consent forms. A letter goes home with the student to the parent letting them know that their child received the flu mist.

Since the Health Department must adhere to the vaccine quantity requested in their grant, they can't take last minute requests for FluMist from schools or parents at this time. However, the Vaccine For Children program at the Health Department continues to provide free flu vaccine for students in need.

(Media note: Due to student medical privacy requirements, existing parent permission forms allowing students to be photographed are not sufficient for coverage of flu mist vaccinations. Schools would need to obtain specific permission from parents before their child will be allowed to be photographed receiving the vaccine. Media anticipating requesting photography of flu mist administration should make the request in advance to give schools who may want to participate in media coverage an opportunity to contact parents.)

For more information, contact Dr. Cathy Burns at 434-8791.