



## QUEEN ANNE'S COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH State of Maryland

206 N. Commerce Street, Centreville, Maryland 21617-1049  
Tel: 410-758-0720 ● 410-778-0993 ● Fax: 410-758-2838

### School-Age Influenza Campaign: K - 12

Dear Parent,

Maryland children in grades Kindergarten through 12th are eligible to receive a **FREE FLU VACCINE** this fall through a partnership of state and federal government agencies.

The vaccinations will be jointly coordinated by Queen Anne's County Department of Health and the Queen Anne's County Public Schools. Health professionals will administer the vaccine to healthy children. FluMist® is given by nasal spray and uses a weakened form of the flu virus to help provide protection from illness. The flu shot is given in the arm and is a dead form of the virus that helps provide protection from illness.

**FluMist is the form chosen to be given if your child receives vaccine at school. If your child does not qualify for FluMist because of health related issues, he may receive a free flu shot which is offered at the Queen Anne's County Department of Health's many clinics.**

This special program available to kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade students, offers both the flu shot and the FluMist® free of charge so that you and your child can choose which method of flu vaccine you prefer. Children usually find a nasal vaccine easier to tolerate since there is no shot involved and it doesn't hurt. FluMist® is a well-tested, safe vaccine that is very effective in this age group. The flu shot is safe, effective and well-studied to protect against the flu virus as well. It is the method of choice for people who have chronic illness, such as asthma, or diabetes or for those who don't like the nasal delivery method.

Vaccinating the school-aged population is an effective way to reduce the incidence of flu among all age groups in the community, according to recent studies. Children have a higher rate of infection during flu season than adults and they are often the primary source of infection for other family members. Influenza can be especially dangerous for younger siblings and grandparents whose immune systems are not as adept at fighting infections. By vaccinating children, we will help protect the entire family. If our children are healthier, they miss less school time, and their parents miss less time from work.

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This program provides us with an opportunity to raise awareness of the importance of vaccinating children as a way to control the spread of influenza. We hope this program will encourage parents to have their children vaccinated every year.

Information packets about the School-Age Influenza Campaign: K –12, including the Influenza Vaccine Consent Form in a fillable form, vaccine information sheets, Notice of Privacy Practice and frequently asked questions will be distributed electronically at school and sent home with students in grades K – 12 who do not have access to a computer. The free vaccine will also be offered to children in grades K – 12 in conjunction with the Queen Anne’s County Department of Health’s regular flu clinics to be held throughout the flu season.

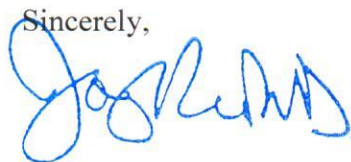
It is important to know that no child will be vaccinated unless the Influenza Vaccine Form has been reviewed, completed and signed by the parent or guardian. Also, children under 9 years of age who have never received FluMist or a flu shot before will need a second vaccination in approximately 4 weeks to be completely protected against the flu. The health department will return to the school to administer second doses for the children who need it. If your child needs a 2<sup>nd</sup> flu vaccine and does not receive it at the school, he may come to any of the Department of Health’s many scheduled clinics.

**Please return the completed, printed and signed Influenza Vaccine Consent Form to the school by September 14, 2018 if you want your child to receive the FluMist nasal vaccine. DO NOT RETURN THE FORM IF YOU DO NOT WANT YOUR CHILD VACCINATED.**

**The dates for the in-school flu clinics will be announced at a later date.**

\*\*\*If your child received an MMR or varicella (chickenpox) shot in the 28 days before the FluMist in-school clinic, they will be given the FluMist when we return to school for the 2<sup>nd</sup> doses. \*\*\*\*

If you have any questions regarding this letter, please contact the Queen Anne’s County Department of Health communicable disease staff at 410-758-0720.

Sincerely,  


Joseph A. Ciotola, Jr., M.D.  
Health Officer