

Goochland schools puts flu response plan into action

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By Tara Morgan

GOOCHLAND, VA (WWBT) - Goochland County Public Schools has taken several steps to respond to the swine flu. A letter will be sent home with students Friday discussing the plan and preventative measures.

Teachers and staff have been told to prepare for school closures should that possibility become a reality.

Hope for the best and prepare for the worst. The mantra at Goochland schools as swine flu sweeps the nation and now the Commonwealth.

"We're thinking about what we need to do if it came to closing schools," said Schools Superintendent Linda Underwood.

Underwood says that decision won't be taken lightly and would come after discussions with state and county health officials and the Virginia Dept. of Education.

Underwood says teachers are being told as they leave each day to prepare for the next as if it were a snow day.

"Take your work take your list your materials home with you because if we had to close we would have to think about what to do to continue instruction while we're closed," said Underwood.

A closure here doesn't necessarily mean no activity. Should there be a need for mass distribution of antiviral drugs Goochland High School would be the nerve center for the county. The bus loops would be turned into a drive-thru for people to receive medication.

Chelsea Pleasants says her three children are scared, but she's gone over good hygiene practices with them. Underwood says teachers are doing the same thing in the classrooms.

"I think it's better to be prepared and proactive but I don't think it's a need for hysteria," said Pleasants.

Meantime, people are calling area Patient First clinics with questions about swine flu or they're stopping by all stuffed up wanting to know what to look out for.

Most of those cases end up being allergies but Patient First officials say it's always best to err on the side of caution and talk to your doctor.