

This information has just been released.

## CDC: No need to close schools for swine flu

UH-Downtown student suspected of having illness tests negative

By ERICKA MELLON and JEANNIE KEVER Copyright 2009

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Schools with confirmed or suspected cases of swine flu no longer need to shut down, officials with the Centers for Disease Control said today.

The CDC said last week that schools needed to close for 14 days — sending parents scrambling to find child care and school officials trying to plan for the end of the school year.

Richard Besser, acting director of the CDC, said the agency is pulling back its guidelines in part because the disease isn't as severe as initially thought.

“The change in the school closure guidelines reflects our increased understanding about transmission ... that we're not seeing the most severe strains that we were initially concerned about,” Besser said.

Also, he said, the disease has spread beyond schools and into communities so it doesn't make sense to simply keep children home from school. He did say, however, that sick children and parents should stay home for seven days.

Meanwhile, the University of Houston-Downtown officials received good news this morning on the flu front — a student diagnosed last week with a “probable” case did not have the virus.

Classes ended last week and final exams at the school begin Thursday. The campus health clinic remains open for students or staff who feel ill.

The UH-Downtown case involved a student who had recently traveled to Mexico and was sent home last Wednesday after visiting the health clinic complaining of flu-like symptoms. Preliminary test results indicated the student had a virus consistent with swine flu. Campus officials said last week that the student was recovering.

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