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## PRESS RELEASE

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### **Newberry Schools Use AlertNow to Combat H1N1 Worries**

**NEWBERRY, S.C.**— The Newberry County Schools is comprised of approximately 6,000 students in grades K-12 between 14 schools. Implemented to rapidly sending messages in emergency situations, the AlertNow system proved useful for communicating in the event of a major health crisis, most notably last year's H1N1 influenza epidemic. Like other schools across the country, Newberry Schools faced significant obstacles regarding H1N1, but overcame challenges by increasing communication efforts.

Using AlertNow, schools are able to deliver voice, e-mail or text messages at a rate of more than two million per hour to telephones, mobile phones, PDAs or any Internet-enabled device. This enables schools to contact parents immediately with accurate, time-sensitive information during emergencies. In addition, AlertNow can also be used to deliver routine messages to enhance parental involvement, increase student attendance and bridge language barriers between parents and schools.

At the height of the outbreak, constant media reports about the H1N1 virus heightened awareness and caused alarm within the community. To address concerns of students, parents and staff, Newberry Schools' Superintendent, Bennie Bennett, sent out recorded messages detailing measures for protecting students' health and well-being.

"The AlertNow system proved to be a valuable resource in notifying our employees and parents about the precautions we were taking within our school district," said Superintendent Bennie Bennett for Newberry Schools. "We were in constant contact with the local and state Department of Health and Environmental Control offices as well as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The ability to provide a consistent message in a short period of time was important so that the incorrect information did not get out to our community."

Capable of calling 2.5 million numbers in an hour, AlertNow provides an instant, proven communications solution to notify parents and staff within minutes. The ability for schools to communicate immediately and reliably during a crisis has proven invaluable to the Newberry Schools.

"We received several calls and emails from our parents and staff on how much they appreciated receiving updated information daily. I really think the communication helped to lower the level of concern in our community," said Bennett.

With so much proven success, the Newberry School district has expanded its use of the AlertNow system. Not just for emergency communication, AlertNow is used by Newberry Schools to send messages to parents with individual school news, reminders, events and even child nutrition.



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AlertNow delivers more than nine million messages per month on behalf of more than 30,000 school administrators in all 50 states throughout the country.

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