



April 28, 2009

Dear Students, Parents and Guardians:

Health officials affirm that there will be cases of flu in our community and schools this school year. While the Council Bluffs School District has not been informed of any confirmed H1N1 cases among students or staff members, the flu virus is in our community and metro area. With school in session, we wanted you to be aware of steps we are taking and steps you can take to protect the health of our students and limit the spread of flu and other illnesses in the Council Bluffs Schools.

Due to the expected number of cases, we will not be sharing with parents every time a new case is reported. However, if we have a large number of students absent from one particular school or a particular class or we have any reason to be alarmed we will certainly share information with parents.

The School District routinely works with the Council Bluffs Health Department to monitor illnesses to look for trends, and to determine when specific local responses to significant illness are required. Our school nurses are staying informed and monitoring numbers of student illnesses as well. We have increased the sanitizing in schools to include more frequent cleaning of doorknobs and other commonly touched surfaces using the most effective cleaning products.

Let me assure you that the health and well-being of our students is our top priority and we are doing everything possible to help prevent the spread of illness. We want to keep the schools functioning in a normal manner during this flu season. **But, we need your help.**

Sincerely,

*Superintendent Martha Bruckner*

### ***How Parents Can Help:***

- **Remind your children to wash their hands** often with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand rub. You can set a good example by doing this yourself.
- **Remind your children not to share personal items** like drinks, food or unwashed utensils, and to cover their coughs and sneezes with tissues or using the elbow, arm or sleeve instead of the hand when a tissue is unavailable.
- **Know the signs and symptoms of the flu.** Symptoms of the flu include fever (100 degrees Fahrenheit, 37.8 degrees Celsius or greater), cough, sore throat, a runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, and feeling very tired. Some people may also vomit or have diarrhea.
- **Keep sick children at home** for at least 24 hours *after* they no longer have fever or do not have signs of fever, without using fever-reducing drugs. Keeping children with a fever at home will reduce the number of people who may get infected.
- **Do not send children to school if they are sick.** Any children who are determined to be sick while at school *will be sent home.*

If the flu becomes more severe, we may take additional steps to prevent the spread.

For more information, see the letter from the C.B. Health Department on the back of this sheet and visit [www.flu.gov](http://www.flu.gov), or call 1-800-CDC-INFO for the most current information.

Links to this and other pertinent information and resources can be found on the district website at [www.cb-schools.org](http://www.cb-schools.org).