

Lockport Elementary School District
808 Adams Street
Lockport, Illinois 60441

“Education is our connection to the future”

November 19, 2009

District 91 Parents and Guardians,

In cooperation with the Will County Health Department and area hospital’s educational agents, District 91 is taking the necessary precautions to promote the health and welfare of our students and staff by updating our pandemic plan to include the H1N1 Influenza. Fortunately, it is now known that the H1N1 Flu causes mild illness in most individuals, similar to the seasonal flu we see every year. However, there are certain children with underlying health conditions that may be at increased risk for serious complications from the H1N1 Flu. These include, but are not limited to:

- Those with long-term health difficulties with:
 - Heart disease
 - Lung disease (including asthma)
 - Kidney disease
 - Metabolic disease (such as diabetes)
 - Liver disease
 - Anemia or other blood disorders
- Those with a weakened immune system
- Those with certain muscle or nerve disorders (such as seizure disorders or cerebral palsy) that can lead to breathing or swallowing problems

If your child has any of the conditions listed above, you should call your medical provider to discuss whether any additional action is needed.

Part of our plan includes keeping you updated with new information as it becomes available. For now we are doing everything we can to keep our school functioning as usual. This involves monitoring flu conditions and numbers and making decisions about the best steps to take concerning our schools. **But, we need YOUR help too.** Here are a few things you can do at home.

- **Teach 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.
- **Teach your children not to share personal items** like drinks, food or unwashed utensils.
- **Teach your children to cover their coughs and sneezes with tissues.** They should cover their coughs or sneezes 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 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 household members in a separate room** in the house as much as possible to limit contact with household members who are not sick.
- **Keep sick children at home** for at least 24 hours after they no longer have a fever or do not have signs of fever, without using fever-reducing medicines. You may also want to consider keeping all siblings at home if any of them are sick.
- **Plan ahead for child care at home** in case your child gets sick. Any children who are determined to be sick while at school will be sent home.
- **Report on the absence hotline** if/when your child will be out of school due to flu-like symptoms and please be specific.
- **Request homework** so that your child does not fall too far behind.

The District 91 Board of Education has expressed to administration the need for teachers to provide extended time to make up missing assignments for any student that exhibits influenza-like illnesses. At this time, a doctor's note in not needed to document the illness and/or return to school. This is being done in an effort to encourage parents to err on the side of caution regarding keeping their ill child home without causing an additional economic burden. Remember, we WILL call you to pick up your child at school if they are sick. Please do not be alarmed if you see a medical mask on your child while they wait in the office to be picked up. We are trying to do everything we can to reduce the spread of the flu virus.

Please note that individual suspected/confirmed cases of H1N1 will not be announced to parents due to (1) Many doctors are not testing for H1N1, (2) There is a history of false negatives with the H1N1 test, and (3) We want to avoid creating a false sense of security if no cases are announced when undiagnosed cases are likely.

We appreciate your assistance during this time. We will continue to be proactive and will notify you of any additional changes to our school's strategy to prevent the spread of influenza.

For more information, you can call 1-800-CDC-INFO or visit:

Our District web site	www.d91.net
Will County Health Department	www.willcountyhealth.org
Illinois Department of Public Health	www.idph.state.il.us
Center for Disease Control and Prevention	www.cdc.gov

Sincerely,

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