

August 13, 2009

Dear SDR Parents and Guardians:

As we enter the new school year and the new traditional influenza season, we expect Wisconsin to continue seeing cases of the new pandemic flu, known as H1N1. Our school staff and public health officials are working to keep our children safe and healthy and we'll be more successful with your help.

The most important thing you can do is to keep your child home if he or she is ill. If your child is so sick that you would normally seek medical care, please do so. The new pandemic flu is very similar to ordinary seasonal flu. Each morning, parents and caregivers should check their children and other family members for flu symptoms such as fever (> or = to 100 F), cough, or sore throat. A few cases of pandemic influenza have begun with nausea, vomiting, and/or diarrhea symptoms.

All sick students should stay out of school for at least 24 hours after they are free of fever, without the use of fever-reducing medications. Students will likely be home 3-5 days. Ill students should not attend alternative childcare. If a child or adult is ill with other symptoms, they should stay home at least one day to see how the illness develops and until completely well for 24 hours. Children who are ill upon arrival at school or become ill during the school day will be sent home. Children and adults who are ill should stay home and not go into the community unless they need medical care. **Please remember to notify your student's school of all flu-like absences and symptoms or confirmed cases of pandemic flu. This year we have instituted a new attendance call in procedure. When your child will not be in school, PLEASE listen carefully to all of your options, when you connect to the automated call-in system. The system has been designed to help us in providing a healthy school environment for all students. Thank you for your cooperation in keeping our kids safe and healthy.**

At this time, health and school officials are not recommending school closures for individual cases of H1N1 flu. However, as with regular seasonal flu, we might recommend closing schools if larger numbers of students or faculty become ill.

In addition to students staying home when sick, here are three important things you and your family can do to help stay healthy and keep others safe:

- **Cover nose and mouth with a tissue when coughing or sneezing, and throw the tissue in the trash.**
- **Wash hands often with soap and water, especially after coughing or sneezing. Alcohol-based hands cleaners are also effective.**
- **Avoid touching eyes, nose, or mouth. Germs spread that way.**

Again, contact your medical provider and seek medical care if that is what you would normally do.

More information about new H1N1 flu is available on the following web sites:

<http://pandemic.wi.gov/>

<http://www.cdc.gov>

<http://www.who.int/csr/disease/swineflu/en/index.html>

<http://www.rhinelander.k12.wi.us/>

<http://www.co.oneida.wi.gov>

Thank you for your patience and cooperation during this time. With your help, we can help keep everyone safe and healthy.

Sincerely,

Roger Erdahl
Superintendent of Schools