



October 5, 2009

Dear Students, Families, and Employees:

Vancouver Public Schools continues to monitor current conditions regarding H1N1 flu (swine flu). Public health officials at the state and local levels have stated, in addition to confirmed cases, there are many more probable cases of H1N1. Few clinics are testing for confirmation of H1N1. Because increasing numbers of unconfirmed and probable cases are likely, the district will not be notifying families and employees of cases of H1N1 within our schools.

The health of our students, families and employees is important to all of us. We must work together to prevent the spread of H1N1 and other seasonal viruses.

Vancouver Public Schools prevention and planning

- All schools and district buildings are operating with a heightened response that includes cleaning focused on surfaces and high-use areas including cafeterias, classrooms, restrooms, and health rooms.
- District leaders continue to maintain frequent contact with state and local public health officials to monitor district and community conditions.
- Students and employees will continue to receive reminders about the best ways to prevent the spread of H1N1 flu and seasonal flu.

Reminder to families and employees to make a plan

Families and district employees must be prepared in the event that conditions change in our schools and in the community.

- Plan for childcare at home if your child is sick.
- Create an alternate plan for children in the event that the school schedule changes or a school is closed. Many families around the country are creating childcare co-ops with friends and neighbors. These trusted friends and family members work together to share the responsibility of caring for children.
- If you or your children have asthma or other medical conditions that put them at higher risk for the flu, talk to your doctor about a plan to protect them during the flu season.

Reminder about what you can do to prevent the flu

1. Wash your hands frequently with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze.
2. Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze; cover your mouth and nose with your arm or sleeve if a tissue is not available.
3. Stay home when you are sick: public health guidelines suggest staying at home 24 hours after fever has passed (without the use of fever-reducing medication).
4. Voluntarily report flu-like symptoms when reporting absences.
5. Get your seasonal flu shot and H1N1 vaccine when it becomes available.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Christine Burgess, Associate Superintendent