

## **FLU INFORMATION**

Dear Parents,

Last spring there was a lot of information about the spread of a new influenza virus (the “swine flu” or “H1N1 flu”). Some schools in the United States were closed because of the flu. We want to keep our schools open with normal activities this flu season. We will stay in close communication with Clay County Public Health to be current with what is occurring in the state of Iowa. We will need our families to help with keeping our schools safe and healthy.

PLEASE remind your child to wash his or her hands often, especially before eating, after touching their face, and after coughing/sneezing/blowing their nose. Teach your child to cough or sneeze into a tissue or his or her elbow if no tissue is available. Encourage the use of tissues for runny noses, and teach them to throw them away immediately. Also, teach them to not share personal items (beverages, cups, food unwashed utensils, toothbrushes, etc.)

PLEASE DO NOT SEND your child to school if he or she is sick. If your child has symptoms of the flu (fever of 100 degrees or more orally, cough, sore throat, runny/stuffy nose, body aches, headache, and feeling very tired), you MUST keep your child home until he or she does not have a fever for a 24-hour period WITHOUT the use of medication (such as Tylenol or Ibuprofen). PLEASE keep your child at home except to go to the doctor while he or she is sick. While your child is sick, he or she should not hang out with friends, participate in school or other social activities, or be sent to day care.

If your child becomes sick with symptoms of the flu at school, he or she will need to go home. You will be called to come and get your child from school. You should have a plan if this occurs.

If your child is absent from school with the flu, PLEASE call and tell the secretary at your child's school. If your doctor does diagnosis your child with the flu, PLEASE share that information with the school. This will assist us with determining how much flu is within our district.

Anyone can get the flu, even healthy people. The H1N1 flu and the typical seasonal flu symptoms will likely be the same. However, we do not know how severe the flu will be this fall and winter season. PLEASE plan ahead for the possibility of your child having the flu.

Another thing you can do to protect your child and yourself is getting the vaccines. Seasonal influenza vaccine is already available, and a vaccine for H1N1 is being made and will hopefully be available soon.

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School Nurse