



INDIAN PRAIRIE SCHOOL DISTRICT

Office of Superintendent

October 20, 2009

Dear District 204 Parents/Guardians,

There has been a great deal of information in the news recently about this year's flu season, and with the arrival of the novel H1N1 vaccine, you will likely be hearing even more. We have placed resources on the district's website to help parents easily find flu information. You can access the resources at <http://ipsdweb.ipsd.org/Subpage.aspx/Flu>. We also encourage you to talk with your physician if you have questions.

In spending time with different parent groups over the past week, I have been asked if the district will report to parents when we have a confirmed case of H1N1 in our schools. It is very difficult, if not impossible, to know how many "official" cases we have in our schools. The county health department has advised that schools not depend on individual test results as the basis for routine decision making. Some individuals with flu symptoms do not seek medical care and are not tested. In addition, some rapid tests may produce false positive or false negative results. Therefore, the county health department does not recommend that a note be sent home to notify parents when a case of H1N1 is reported at school. You can read the county health department's guidelines at <http://ipsdweb.ipsd.org/uploads/Flu/WillCountyGuidanceForSchools.pdf>

I tell parents to assume that the H1N1 virus is in our community -- it is in the schools, in the workplace, in the stores we visit, etc. The flu is all around us, and it will be with us through the fall and winter. As such, parents need to prepare for this year's flu season. Become aware of flu symptoms and know when to seek medical assistance, especially if your child has an underlying medical condition. It is also a good time to review plans for child-care options should you need to keep your child at home.

For the time being, the district will continue to inform parents when the absentee rate at a school reaches 10 percent of students with influenza-like illness. We will also continue to encourage students and staff to practice good hygiene and stay home when they are not feeling well. We appreciate your help in providing these same reminders to your children and for helping us keep our students healthy this flu season.

Please visit our website for more information <http://ipsdweb.ipsd.org/Subpage.aspx/Flu>

Sincerely,

Kathy Birkett
Superintendent

P R E P A R I N G A L L S T U D E N T S T O S U C C E E D

Crouse Education Center

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