

September 11, 2009

Dear Parent/Guardian:

Flu season will begin soon. In addition to the normal influenza virus, the H1N1 virus (swine flu) is also a concern this year. As you may know, flu can be easily spread from person to person. Therefore, we are taking steps to reduce the spread of flu in the Selah School District. We want to keep schools open to students and functioning in a normal manner during this flu season. **But, we need your help to do this.**

We are working closely with the Yakima County Health District to monitor flu conditions and make decisions about the best steps to take concerning schools. We will keep you updated with new information as it becomes available.

For now we are doing everything we can to keep our school functioning as usual. Here are a few things you can do to help.

- **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, and to 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, 37.8 degrees Celsius 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 children at home** for at least 24 hours *after* they no longer have fever or do not have signs of fever, without using fever-reducing drugs. Keeping children with a fever at home will reduce the number of people who may get infected.
- **Do not send children to school if they are sick.** Any child determined to be sick while at school will be sent home.

If the flu becomes more severe, we may take additional steps to prevent the spread such as:

- Conducting active fever and flu symptom screening of students and staff as they arrive at school;
- Making changes to increase the space between people such as moving desks farther apart and postponing class trips; and
- Other precautions as recommended by the Yakima Health District.

For more information, visit www.flu.gov, or call 1-800-CDC-INFO for the most current information about the flu. For more information about flu in our community visit the Yakima Health District web site: <http://www.yakimahealthdistrict.org> or call them at 575-4040. We will notify you of any additional changes to our district's strategy to prevent the spread of flu.

Sincerely,

Steve Chestnut, Ed. D.
Superintendent

Sharon Conrad, RN
School District Nurse