

McLean County Unit District No. 5

1809 West Hovey Avenue

Normal, Illinois 61761

Telephone (309) 452-4476 Fax (309) 452-7418

Dear Parents,

McLean County Unit 5 Schools is closely monitoring the nationwide spread of the H1N1 virus. It appears inevitable that we will be challenged with this virus and I ask everyone's assistance to prepare and focus on prevention.

For now, we are doing everything we can to keep our schools functioning as usual. We are encouraging children to wash their hands, cough or sneeze into their elbow, and stay at home when they are sick. Additional hand sanitizer stations will be set up in each school and masks will be on hand to help with containment. Staff has also been reminded to regularly clean and disinfect frequently touched areas.

We are also asking parents to partner with us in keeping children healthy through a few practical ways:

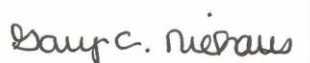
- **Practice good hygiene at home** by washing your hands often with soap and water and coughing/sneezing into your elbow.
- **Know the signs and symptoms of the flu:** fever greater than 100 degrees Fahrenheit, cough, sore throat, a runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, and feeling very tired. Some people may also vomit or have diarrhea.
- **Keep sick children at home** for at least 24 hours after there is no longer a fever (without using fever-reducing medicine). Remember to call the school to report an absence using your school's absence hotline and stating the reason for the illness.
- **Talk with your healthcare provider** if your child's symptoms become severe and if you have a child who is at a higher risk for complications.
- **Get your family vaccinated for seasonal flu and 2009 H1N1 flu** when vaccines are available.
- **Plan for child care at home** if your child gets sick. Update emergency contact information for the school continually.

The US government has not released any details on how H1N1 Vaccine will be supplied at this point. We will communicate with parents if a supply of H1N1 vaccine becomes available for use in our schools.

The district asks parents to remain calm and use common sense as this situation unfolds. We will notify you of any additional changes to our school's strategy to prevent the spread of flu. For more information, visit www.flu.gov, www.idph.state.il.us or call 1-800-CDC-INFO for the most current information about the flu.

I wish everyone a healthy and safe flu season.

Sincerely,



Gary C. Niehaus
Superintendent