

HADLEY - LUZERNE CENTRAL SCHOOL

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EARL SUSSMAN

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SUPERINTENDENT

Dear Parent(s) and/or Guardian(s):

We realize many people are worried and we hope this letter will help address your concerns.

I am writing at this time to provide you with some information regarding H1N1-Influenza and influenza-like illnesses and the preventive measures the district is taking to provide a healthy and safe school environment for our students and staff. Although we have students exhibiting flu-like symptoms, there are no confirmed cases communicated to our school district by the Health Department. Although our absentee rate is currently at 12%, it is seemingly below that of certain area school districts.

At this time, the state and local health departments have advised us that students may continue to attend school, as long as they are not sick and do not have flu symptoms. Flu-like symptoms include: fever (over 100 degrees F.), feverishness, cough, sore throat, runny nose, or stuffy nose. Additional symptoms may be experienced with swine flu, including muscle pain, fatigue, and sometimes vomiting or diarrhea.

Flu spreads easily. If you suspect your child is getting the flu, it is important that he/she does not attend school or go anywhere else—such as group childcare, the mall, or sporting events—where other people would be exposed to flu germs. It is also important to teach your children how to reduce their risk of getting the flu and protect others from infection.

- Teach your children to wash their hands often. Washing with soap and hot water for at least 20 seconds is ideal (that's about as long as it takes to sing the "Happy Birthday" song twice).
- Teach your children the proper use of hand sanitizer. Gels, rubs, and hand wipes all work well, as long as they contain at least 60% alcohol. Hand wipes must be disposed of properly. Always read and follow label instructions when using hand sanitizers.
- Teach your children to keep their hands away from their face and avoid touching their mouth, nose, or eyes.
- Teach your children to cover coughs and sneezes with tissues or by coughing into the inside of their elbow. Cough or sneeze into your sleeve—not your hands!

Help your children to learn these healthy habits by setting a good example and always doing them yourself. If we all practice good hygiene, health officials believe we can limit the spread of swine flu in our District. We will consult with local health officials regarding best cleaning practices for infection control in our buildings.

While the current situation does not warrant school closure, if swine flu continues to spread and our students become ill, it may become necessary to close our schools for a period of time. If schools close, do not send your children to a friend's home or group childcare—that will put them in close contact with other children. It is important to plan ahead. Have a family discussion now to consider options in advance of the event of a school closing.

Please stay informed by paying attention to media reports. You may also get information at:

www.cdc.gov or www.nyhealth.gov or www.schoolhealthservicesny.com or Pat Auer, Public Health Director at Warren County Public Health **761-6415 or **761-6580** or the 24 hour toll-free hotline that New Yorkers across the State can use to get answers to their questions. The hotline is **1-800-808-1987**.**

Thank you for your cooperation in keeping your children healthy and our schools safe.

Yours in Education,



Earl Sussman
Superintendent

cc: All Hadley-Luzerne Staff, Board of Education