



## *Duanesburg Central School District*

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*"To be a socially responsible school community where learning and the pursuit of excellence are valued."*

September 8, 2009

Dear Parents and Guardians,

I hope you and your children had a wonderful summer vacation, and are excited about the year ahead—I certainly am.

As the school year gets underway, I'd like to take this opportunity to share some updated information about seasonal flu and the H1N1 flu virus, sometimes called "swine flu."

Last year, seasonal flu affected significantly more people than H1N1 flu, and health officials expect a similar trend this year.

So far, with the H1N1 flu, the largest number of cases has been in people between the ages of 5 and 24-years-old.

Those with "high-risk" medical conditions are more likely to get complications from the flu virus. This includes children under the age of five, pregnant women, people of any age with chronic medical conditions, such as pulmonary disease, including asthma, diabetes, neuromuscular disorders or heart disease).

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recently released guidelines that give schools and local health agencies a range of options for responding to flu in schools, depending on the severity of any outbreaks.

If the severity of the flu is similar to the spring 2009 H1N1 infection, the CDC recommends basic good hygiene habits, such as washing hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or using alcohol-based hand sanitizers and coughing into the upper sleeve instead of hands.

Students and school employees who have flu-like symptoms should stay home for at least 24 hours after they no longer have a fever or signs of a fever (without the use of fever-reducing medicine). This is a shorter time period from the previous guidance, which recommended that sick students stay home seven days after symptoms begin.

Symptoms include fever (over 100 degrees F), feverishness, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, muscle pain, fatigue and sometimes vomiting or diarrhea. If your son or daughter has these symptoms and stays home, they should stay at home, except to go to the doctor's office, and should avoid contact with others. People infected with seasonal

and H1N1 flu may be able to infect others from one day before getting sick to five to seven days after.

By practicing the steps mentioned above, families, students and staff can help slow the spread of the virus as well as protect themselves and others from infection.

Please note that health officials are less likely this year to suggest that schools immediately close when H1N1 flu emerges in a pattern that isn't considered severe.

In Duaneburg, we're taking precautionary steps to prevent an outbreak from occurring in our schools. For example, school officials are working closely with health officials to monitor the local and statewide situation and cleaning surfaces and items that are more likely to have frequent hand contact, such as door knobs and water fountains.

Please stay informed by visiting the district Web site at [www.duanesburg.org](http://www.duanesburg.org). The site provides a wealth of valuable resources on the H1N1 virus, as well as links to outside sources, such as CDC, the NYS Department of Health and World Health Organization.

If you have any further questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me, the school nurse or building principals.

As you return to the school buildings, please take notice of the remarkable work done by our summer staff including our custodians, secretaries and principals to prepare for the new school year. I especially hope you'll find the elementary school's newly renovated main office more welcoming and comfortable.

I look forward to seeing you in our schools soon.

Sincerely,

Christine Crowley  
Superintendent