

## **Flu Season is Here!**

**Actually, cases of seasonal and H1N1 influenza never left our area this summer. With the return of students and staff it is EXTREMELY important that everyone work together to limit the spread of flu in our school community.**

**The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends 4 main ways you and your family may keep from getting sick with the flu at school and at home:**

1. **Practice good hand hygiene** by washing your hands often with soap and water, especially after coughing or sneezing. Alcohol-based hand cleaners are also effective.
2. **Cover your mouth and nose** with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. If you don't have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your elbow or shoulder; not into your hands.
3. **Stay home if you or your child is sick** for at least 24 hours **after** there is no longer a fever or signs of a fever (without the use of fever-reducing medicine). Keeping sick students at home means that they keep their viruses to themselves rather than sharing them with others.
4. **Get your family vaccinated** for seasonal flu and 2009 H1N1 flu when vaccines are available.

**Follow these steps to prepare for the flu during the 2009-2010 school year:**

- Plan for child care at home if your child gets sick. Remember: students cannot return to school until they are symptom free for 24 hours, so they will not return to school the day after becoming ill with any influenza like illness (even if they appear to be better).
- Plan to monitor the health of the sick child and any other children in the household by checking for fever and other symptoms of flu.
- Identify if you have children who are at higher risk of serious disease from the flu and talk to your healthcare provider about a plan to protect them during the flu season. Children at high risk of serious disease from the flu include: children under 5 years of age and those children with chronic medical conditions, such as asthma and diabetes.
- Identify a separate room in the house for the care of sick family members.
- Update school emergency contact lists.
- Please notify the school if your child is out with influenza or flu like illness.

**Joint School District No. 2 is following carefully all guidelines to limit the spread of influenza in our schools. Working together we can hopefully limit the numbers of students and staff exposed to and infected with influenza this year.**

**Thank you for your helping keep our school a healthy place.**