



Christ the Teacher

ROMAN CATHOLIC SEPARATE SCHOOL DIVISION #212

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Letter to Parents, Guardians, Caregivers, and Staff re: H1N1 Influenza Pandemic Planning

September 28, 2009

Dear Parents, Guardians, and Staff:

As you may have already learned through the media, a strain of influenza - H1N1 Influenza A - has been reported in several countries around the world including Canada, Mexico and the United States and the World Health Organization has stated that we are in fact, experiencing an H1N1 Influenza pandemic..

The Christ the Teacher Catholic School Division and all of our schools remain in close contact with the local Medical Health Officer (MHO) of the Sunrise Health Region and are fully prepared to respond to his advice and direction aimed at protecting the health of our school communities. We have been advised by Public Health that there is no immediate cause for alarm and that schools will remain open unless otherwise directed by the MHO.

At this time, we have been advised to focus on strategies to help prevent the spread of the disease. Information and instruction on proper hand washing technique is already in place at every school and students are being trained in the appropriate use of hand sanitizers as well. (See attached poster).

All school staff members have been requested to be vigilant for students who are ill and to report any concerns to the principal. Please note that students who are ill should remain at home until they are feeling better.

An important part of emergency planning is ensuring we have **up-to-date emergency contact details** for all students and staff. Please ensure that you have provided your school with a local emergency contact person (and telephone number) who can take care of your child in an emergency.

We will keep you informed as our **pandemic plan** develops. Meanwhile, you can reduce the risk of catching and spreading the influenza virus by remembering to:

- Wash hands well and often with soap and warm water. (See www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/im/iif-vcg/wh-lm-eng.php#a)
- Cough and sneeze into your elbow, sleeve, or tissue. (See video at www.fightflu.ca/prot-eng.html)
- Stay at home if you are ill. Public Health advises that you do not need to see a doctor if your symptoms are mild or moderate.
- However, **DO SEE A DOCTOR** as soon as possible **IF YOU HAVE**: (1) difficulty breathing, (2) shortness of breath, (3) chest pain, (4) severe or persistent vomiting, (5) **ADULTS** – high fever that lasts more than two days, (6) **CHILDREN** – severe tiredness, (7) confusion or difficulty waking an ill person

Voluntary H1N1 Vaccination Program – The schools of the Christ the Teacher Catholic School Division will be working with Public Health to provide our students and communities with the most efficient and effective H1N1 Influenza vaccination program possible. We have not yet been advised regarding the details of the vaccination program and the involvement of the schools. However, once we know these details and the role Public Health wishes our schools to play, we will advise our parents/guardians immediately. Information regarding the details of the vaccination program will be sent home when it is received from Public Health.

We will be continually updating the information in our Influenza Pandemic Plan on the Division's website at www.christtheteacher.ca

Sincerely,

Brian E. Boechler
Director of Education

Enclosures:

1. H1N1 – Common Questions (Sept. 16/09) Saskatchewan Ministry of Health (5 pages)
2. Cover Your Cough Poster (Saskatchewan Ministry of Health).
3. Clean Hands Save Lives Poster
4. Information for Parents When Caring for Sick Children (Sept. 16/09) Sask. Ministry of Health

Resources for Information on H1N1 Influenza

The following websites may provide additional resources to help you learn more about H1N1 Influenza and planning appropriate responses to the current pandemic.

Government of Canada, Pandemic Influenza

<http://www.fightflu.ca>

Public Health Agency of Canada, Canadian Pandemic Influenza Plan

<http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/influenza/pandemicplan-eng.php>

Public Safety Canada, Pandemic Preparedness

http://www.safecanada.ca/link_e.asp?category=10&topic=193

Government of Saskatchewan, Ministry of Health

<http://www.health.gov.sk.ca/pandemic-planning>