

## **What do parents need to know about H1N1 flu?**

Centennial School District is gearing up to deal with cases of H1N1 flu. What the district knows is that it is a dynamic or rapidly changing situation. H1N1 is expected to affect almost all communities and there will be an increase in cases. At Centennial, the Superintendent will be working with Health Services regarding sharing of information, the district response, etc. The district will continue a consistent approach for all buildings and all ages per the local/county, state, and federal recommendations.

## **Fact Dissemination – where to find reliable information**

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) [www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu](http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu) - posts the latest news releases and virus information as it pertains to the United States.
- Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) [www.health.state.mn.us](http://www.health.state.mn.us) - posts the latest news releases and virus information as it pertains to Minnesota. Will track the virus from an emergency management point of view.
- Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) [www.education.state.mn.us/mde/about\\_mde/news\\_center/swine\\_influenza](http://www.education.state.mn.us/mde/about_mde/news_center/swine_influenza) - works with MDH to provide guidance to schools.
- The federal government has centralized communications about the flu at [www.flu.gov](http://www.flu.gov)
- Home contingency plans can be created with assistance at [www.ed.gov/emergencyplan](http://www.ed.gov/emergencyplan)

## **School district response**

Estimates are that up to 40 percent of the population could be affected by H1N1. If someone has H1N1 symptoms:

- Advise parents to keep children home per current recommendations, which are evolving.
- Advise staff to stay home per current recommendations, which are evolving.
- Follow the lead of MDH and MDE in determining a bigger response.

## **Standard prevention recommendations**

- Cover nose and mouth with a sleeve when coughing or sneezing
- Clean hands frequently and thoroughly with soap/water or alcohol-based hand rub solution
- Clean hands after shaking hands or having other close contact with people, before eating or preparing food, or touching eyes, nose or mouth
- Limit contact with others who may be ill
- If sick, stay home from work or school – and generally avoid going out in public. Remain home per current recommendations, which are evolving.
- Make sure to take enough fluids
- If flu-like symptoms develop, consider consulting health care provider – call before going in for an office visit
- People at risk for severe flu or flu complications should contact their health care provider if they have flu-like symptoms or have been exposed to people with flu symptoms. Those individuals include people with an underlying medical condition, pregnant women, young children (especially those under age two), and people 65 or older

## **Symptoms**

- Fever together with cough and/or sore throat. MDH defines fever for this exclusion to be greater than or equal to 100.0 degrees Fahrenheit.
- Most significant means of transmission are person to person contact, having a conversation in close proximity, coughing within six feet of another person, and not washing hands and touching mucous membranes. Cleaning of environmental surfaces is important but not the primary mode of transmission with H1N1.