

David J. Lyon District Elementary School
Health Office
33 School Street
Washburn, ME 04786

December 2, 2009

Dear Parents/Gardians:

This letter is to inform you that our community is experiencing an increase in influenza-like illness consistent with novel influenza virus (H1N1 or Swine flu). Flu can be easily spread from person to person. Therefore, we have been taking steps to reduce the spread of flu at M.S.A.D. #45 schools. We want to keep the school open to students and functioning in a normal manner during this flu season. **We need your help to do this.**

Here are a few things you can do to help.

- **Encourage your children to wash their hands** often with soap and water or an Alcohol-based hand rub. You can set a good example by doing this yourself.
- **Teach your children not to share personal items** like drinks, water bottles, food or eating utensils either with their friends or family members.
- **Cough and sneeze into your elbow, or into a tissue.** Throw away the tissue immediately and wash your hands.
- **Avoid touching your nose, mouth and eyes.** Germs can be spread by touching contaminated surfaces and then touching your eyes, nose and mouth.
- **Know the signs and symptoms of the flu.** Symptoms include fever (100 degrees Fahrenheit or more), cough, sore throat, a runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, and feeling very tired. Some people may also vomit or have diarrhea.
- **Stay home if you are sick, until you are fever-free** for a full 24 hours without taking fever-reducing medicines. It may take as long as 5-7 days to feel better.
- **Don't send children to school if they are sick.** Any children who are sick at school will be sent home. Keeping your sick child home is the responsible thing to do. It protects fellow students and school staff, especially those who are at a higher risk of severe illness from the flu.

- **Please seek medical attention if your child** is unable to keep fluids down; has trouble breathing or is frequently short of breath with normal activity; is getting better, then suddenly gets a lot worse; not waking up or decrease alertness; being so irritable that your child does not want to be held; rashes.
- **Do not use aspirin (acetylsalicylic acid) to help with fever or body aches to children or teenagers under the age of 18 years who have flu symptoms; this can cause a rare but serious illness called Reye's syndrome.**

If you have any concerns or questions, please contact Mrs. McPherson, the district school nurse at 455-4505 or 455-4504. Thank you.