



Frances M. Rabinowitz, Superintendent of Schools  
Hamlet M. Hernandez, Assistant Superintendent

May 27, 2009

Dear Hamden Middle School Parent/Staff;

The media continues to report cases of novel H1N1 (swine) flu within the state and our town. I have been informed that a Hamden Middle School student is being evaluated for the novel H1N1 (formerly called swine flu). Although we are still waiting for confirmatory testing, I wanted to take this opportunity to inform parents, students and staff that we continue to work closely with Public Health officials to be protective of our students and staff. I have been informed that there is no indication at this time that the school needs to close. We will continue to monitor the situation and update you as more information is received.

We would like you to review the following information:

- 1) The most important action you can take is to keep sick children at home until they are well. Persons with an influenza-like illness (fever [100.4° F] and a cough or sore throat) should not be in school and should remain absent for 7 days after symptoms have appeared, even if the symptoms have resolved sooner. If a person is still ill on the 7<sup>th</sup> day, they should remain absent until 24 hours after the symptoms have disappeared.
- 2) Specialized cleaning of schools is not required if a suspect or confirmed case of this flu occurs. CT Department of Public health guidelines state **"because the virus only lives for 2 to 8 hours on surfaces, by the time students and staff come to school in the morning, influenza virus on surfaces from the day before would no longer be infectious. In light of this fact, it does not make sense to close a school for the purpose of cleaning when influenza cases are detected among staff and students."** The schools regular cleaning procedures are effective in inactivating the flu virus.
- 3) You should continue to teach your family to use personal protective measures, which include staying home when you are ill, frequent handwashing (or hand sanitizer use if handwashing is not available), covering the nose and mouth when coughing or sneezing, disposing of soiled tissues appropriately and avoiding persons who are ill.
- 4) If you or your child are ill with flu-like symptoms, contact your medical provider for advice.

We will continue to keep you informed. It is hoped that continued communication will allay concerns you may have about flu within our school system.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Fran Rabinowitz". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

Fran M. Rabinowitz

Cc: Hamlet Hernandez, Assistant Superintendent  
James O'Connor, Principal, Hamden Middle School  
William McGraw, Director of Pupil Personnel Service