

September 24, 2009

Dear Parent/Guardian,

As you may know, the flu season will begin soon. The flu can be easily spread from person to person. Therefore, we are taking steps to reduce the spread of flu in the Orrville School District. The Wayne County Health Department recommends that schools continue to function in a normal manner during this flu season. **However, we need your help to do this!**

We are working closely with the Ohio Department of Education and the Wayne County Health Department to monitor flu conditions and make decisions about the best steps to take concerning schools. We will keep you updated with new information as it becomes available. Please visit our website for current information as it applies to the Orrville Schools, <http://www.orrville.k12.oh.us/>

If the flu becomes more severe, we may take additional steps to prevent the spread as directed by the Wayne County Health Department.

The influenza virus (flu) is not new to schools and children will come down with "the flu". The Wayne County Health Department has informed us that most physicians will not be sending flu samples out to confirm if patients have the H1N1 flu virus. The treatment for the seasonal flu and the H1N1 flu is the same: plenty of rest, increase fluids (hydration) and take fever-reducing medication. For now, we are doing everything we can to keep our schools functioning as usual. **Here are a few things that you can do to help:**

- 1) Wash hands *often* with soap and water (an alcohol (60%)-based hand sanitizer can also be used if soap and water are not available) scrubbing all surfaces of the hand for 20 seconds or more
- 2) Keep hands away from eyes, nose and mouth (the most common areas of entry for germs)
- 3) Cough or sneeze into your upper arm/sleeve or use a tissue and immediately throw that tissue away
- 4) Stay away from people who have the flu and keep sick family members away from family members that are well
- 5) Keep surfaces in the home that commonly transmit germs (doorknobs, faucets, phones, keyboard/mouse, etc.) clean
- 6) Stay home from work if you are sick and keep children home from school if they are sick
- 7) Get your children vaccinated
- 8) Know the symptoms of the flu (cough, fever (100 degrees F or more), sore throat, headache, body aches, vomiting & diarrhea). A person with the flu can have one or more of these symptoms

The CDC and the Wayne County Health Department recommend that the Orrville City Schools follow the following guidelines to prevent the spread of the flu:

- 1) Children with a fever of 100 degrees ***and/or*** having flu-like symptoms will not be allowed in school.
- 2) Children cannot return to school until they are ***free from flu-like symptoms and have been fever-free for 24 hours without taking fever-reducing medications such as Tylenol or Motrin (Remember, never give a child or teenager aspirin- it can cause the serious illness, Reves Syndrome)***
- 3) Children who are sick will be separated from other students until picked up by parent. Students may be required to wear a face mask while waiting to be picked up. NOTE: Most schools have only ONE cot in the building. The school does not have a "sick bay." Therefore, it is important for all parents to plan ahead for the care of their sick children

Contact Dawn Delmoro, RN, Orrville City School Nurse, at 330-682-1791 for questions/concerns you may have. You can also visit www.flu.gov for more current information.