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Dear Parents, Guardians Staff and Students:

Washtenaw County has been dealing with a higher than normal amount of illness for the past few weeks. Attached to this letter is a letter from the Washtenaw County Department of Public Health providing the district with an update and reminders about what you can do at home and school to help prevent the spread of the flu or other viruses.

As per the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) guidelines testing is being done for the H1N1 virus only in people who are consider at risk such as the very young, elderly, immune suppressed individuals, women who are pregnant, those with a chronic illness or anyone who is hospitalized. Public Health does tell us that both seasonal flu and the H1N1 virus are circulating in this community and they are closely monitoring the status. You can access this information at: http://www.ewashtenaw.org/government/departments/public_health/

Based on what we know now about the H1N1 virus, the Centers for Disease Control is not advising school districts to close for confirmed cases. We want to assure you that we are following the protocols and guidelines from the CDC, in collaboration with Public Health. We will continue to inform families and staff of any updates we receive from the Washtenaw County Department of Public Health and we will follow our own protocol of instituting extra cleaning of classroom in schools which have an increased number of student illness. Public Health still recommends that hand washing with soap is the best preventative measure you can take with against this virus in addition to staying home from school or work if you are ill.

We also want to remind you of the good health habits we all must follow when someone in our home is ill.

1. Clean your hands.

Wash with soap and water, clean with hand sanitizer or hand gel cleaner, or wipe thoroughly with sanitizing hand wipes

2. Stay home from work and errands when you are sick and keep your child home from school and other activities when they are sick especially for respiratory illnesses. Please keep sick children home until the doctor says they are okay to return or they are symptom free.

3. Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Put your used tissue in the wastebasket and then wash your hands. If you don't have a tissue, catch your cough or sneeze in your upper sleeve, not your hands and then wash your hands.

4. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth.

Germs are often spread when a person touches something that is contaminated with germs and then touches his or her eyes, nose, or mouth.

5. Practice other good health habits.

Get plenty of sleep, be physically active, manage your stress, drink plenty of water, and eat nutritious foods.

6. Contact your physician if you are experiencing severe symptoms including cough, fever, fatigue, sore throat, chills, headaches, body aches possibly along with diarrhea and vomiting.

We will continue to monitor the situation carefully in collaboration with the Washtenaw County Department of Public Health as we would with any illness in our district. If you have concerns, please let me know, contact your family physician or the Washtenaw County Department of Public Health.

Sincerely,

Todd Roberts, Superintendent

