

Peace Wapiti School Division H1N1 Influenza Virus Announcements:

Letter #1 – Oct. 19, 2009 Correspondence to parents confirming the presence of H1N1 in area schools.

Letter #2 – Oct. 20, 2009 Correspondence to parents clarifying the Health Authority contact.

Dear Parents/Guardians

On Friday, a student at St. Mary's Beaverlodge was diagnosed as having H1N1 influenza. Given the close contact between our families in the area, the likelihood that H1N1 is present in our schools has increased.

We ask that parents talk to their children about washing hands with soap and water on a regular basis. We are asking our staff to remind students of the importance of regular hand washing at school. Families might also remind their children about coughing in their sleeve as opposed to coughing in their hands. We are also reminding kids to cover their cough at school. We also ask families to consider getting the H1N1 influenza shot when it is available in early November.

Alberta Health and Wellness has asked School Authorities not to contact parents until there is an infection rate greater than 10% in a school. When the infection rate is greater than 10%, Alberta Health and Wellness's Public Health division will work more closely with School Authorities. However, as Grande Prairie Catholic Separate School Division has shared this information with us, we believe it is important for parents in the Beaverlodge area to be aware that we are monitoring the issue.

In the mean time we are taking extra precautions to clean the school and ensure that students and staff wash their hands. We are acting according to our Pandemic plan. Schools will not be closed, but parents of students displaying any type of illness will be asked to pick their child up and take them home as soon as is reasonably possible.

Links to both Alberta Health Services and Public Health Agency of Canada website information about H1N1 influenza are available off the Peace Wapiti website at <http://www.pwsd76.ab.ca> under Publications.

**Yours truly,
Sheldon Rowe
Superintendent**



PEACE WAPITI PUBLIC SCHOOL DIVISION No. 76

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Tuesday, October 20, 2009

Dear Parents/Guardians

A student attending one of our schools has been confirmed with H1N1 and we are watching absenteeism rates as a way of measuring the spread of this illness. As part of the monitoring process, our schools contact Alberta Health Services when there is more than 10% of their student population missing by reason of illness. So far we have three schools that have passed the 10% and Alberta Health is doing a follow up with some of the parents whose children are ill to determine the reasons for the illness.

There are a number of things that parents can do to help limit the spread of this flu. These include:

1. Talk to your children about washing hands with soap and water on a regular basis. We are asking our staff to remind students of the importance of regular hand washing at school.
2. You might also remind their children about coughing in their sleeve as opposed to coughing in their hands. We are also reminding kids to cover their cough at school.
3. We also ask families to consider getting the H1N1 influenza shot when it is available in early November.
4. Keep children at home when they are feeling unwell.

In the mean time we are taking extra precautions to clean the schools and ensure that students and staff wash their hands. We are acting according to our Pandemic plan. Schools will not be closed nor at this time any planned activities cancelled on the advice of the local Medical Officer of Health. Parents of students displaying any type of illness will be asked to pick their child up and take them home as soon as is reasonably possible.

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Yours truly,

Sheldon Rowe
Superintendent
