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Superintendent

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
BLUE RIBBON SCHOOLS OF EXCELLENCE

James B. Conant High School  
William Fremd High School  
Hoffman Estates High School  
Palatine High School  
Schaumburg High School

ALTERNATIVE SCHOOLS  
District 211 Academy-North  
District 211 Academy-South



Dear Parents:

The flu season is upon us and this year we face a more aggressive strain of the flu, known as the novel H1N1 influenza virus. One factor that makes this strain new and different is that it can have particularly harsh effects on individuals under the age of 24, especially those who are school-aged.

This letter is intended to ask your assistance in the District's overall flu response plan, to inform you of our latest understanding of the prevalence of the flu in Township High School District 211 at this time and to inform you of an upcoming H1N1 vaccination campaign that will be coordinated by the Cook County Department of Public Health (CCDPH) with the cooperation and assistance of Township High School District 211.

You may have heard that the CCDPH will soon be conducting a school-based vaccination campaign in order to offer parents the choice of accessing the H1N1 vaccine. The vaccines will be free. The H1N1 vaccinations will soon be offered in District 15, as Palatine was the first area in Cook County designated to receive the vaccination via the CCDPH. The villages of Schaumburg and Hoffman Estates will follow in the coming months as the CCDPH works its way through the various communities in suburban Cook County.

In order to participate in the school-based vaccination program, school districts were asked to formalize an agreement with the CCDPH. At its meeting on October 8, 2009, the District 211 Board of Education authorized the District to participate in the H1N1 vaccination campaign as a partner with the CCDPH. A meeting was held the next day involving officials from the Village of Palatine, the CCDPH and representatives from various public and private schools in Palatine. **During the meeting, the CCDPH informed all parties that they will make the H1N1 vaccine available only to elementary school students at this time.** We have been told by officials from the CCDPH that the vaccine will be made available to high schools after the K-8 schools have had the opportunity to participate in the vaccine program. The CCDPH could not provide a timeframe when District 211 could expect to offer access to the H1N1 vaccine to our students.

In order for any student under the age of 18 to receive the vaccine once it is available to us, we must have your signed consent approving the administration of the vaccine. Your consent must be made in writing on the designated consent form from the CCDPH. In the coming weeks, you will receive a copy of the consent form offering you the choice as to whether you will authorize your son or daughter to receive the H1N1 vaccine. Whether you authorize your son or daughter to receive the vaccine is entirely your decision. A student who is at least 18 years old may make his or her own determination whether to receive the vaccine without requiring parental consent.

In addition to the H1N1 vaccination campaign, representatives from Township High School District 211 developed a flu response plan based on guidance from the CCDPH. **As part of our response plan, parents have been asked to notify school personnel if your son or daughter is staying home from school due to flu-like illness and to report if your son or daughter has a diagnosis of the flu made by a doctor. Symptoms of the flu may include fever, body aches, chills, fatigue, coughing or sore throat.**

I thank you for your cooperation up to this point and I ask that you continue to report this information to school personnel. We have also asked our staff members to report whether they have flu-like symptoms so that we can monitor the trend of the flu virus in the District.

To date, we have had a small number of students and staff diagnosed with the flu. Some cases have been significant and we are grateful and fortunate that these students have recovered quickly.

The flu is spread primarily by coughing and sneezing or by touching contaminated surfaces and then transferring the virus by hand to your nose, mouth, or eyes. To help limit the spread of the flu among our student-body and our staff, we ask everyone to follow these health practices:

- 1. Wash your hands with soap and water under warm running water for 20 seconds and rinse your hands well. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.*
- 2. Cough into your sleeve or a tissue to prevent spreading germs. Do not cough into your hands. Dispose of tissues in a waste basket.*
- 3. If your son or daughter is ill, please keep your child home at least 24 hours after the temperature is below 100 degrees without the aid of medication, such as Tylenol, which reduces the fever temporarily.*

If you have questions about the H1N1 vaccine, please contact your healthcare provider. For additional information about the flu, you can go to the web site for the Centers for Disease Control at <http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/parents/> or to <http://www.flu.gov/>.

Thank you for your assistance as together we attempt to limit the impact of the flu virus on our students and school communities.



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