

PRINCETON REGIONAL SCHOOLS

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September 18, 2009

Dear Parents:

I trust that the first weeks of school have been very good for your children and you. From the “big picture” view, it has been a stellar opening across all six schools! Amidst all of the planning for high quality instruction, engaging activities and exceptional co-curricular programs are questions and conversations about H1N1. Throughout the year, there will be updated information about H1N1 on the district website, www.prs.k12.nj.us. What follows are the basics that are important to the school community.

How are district officials kept informed of accurate information and recommended actions?

The district receives email alerts regularly from the local Princeton Health Department, the State Department of Education and the Center for Disease Control (CDC). Additionally, special seminars have been held in recent weeks for school nurses and administrators. Further information can be found at www.cdc.gov and <http://www.state.nj.us/education/>.

How are students being informed of precautions and actions they should take?

School nurses have conducted lessons on hygiene in all K-5 classes and are working with our secondary students to insure that everyone understands the CDC’s recommendations. Signs with reminders about good hygiene are in bathrooms and there are hand sanitizer dispensers in all schools. Your conversations with children at home are critical to this “campaign”.

What is *most* important in minimizing the spread of H1N1?

The key to minimizing the impact of H1N1 is staying home. Parents are the most influential players in this battle! The CDC regulations require that *students remain out of school until they are fever free for 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medication*. This is our greatest control and we will screen carefully to enforce this regulation. Difficult as it might be, for your child’s health and the health of the entire school community, please keep ill children home!

Will there be vaccinations for children at school?

The district schools are approved as mass vaccination sites for the Health Department. We might be *hosting* vaccination sessions offered by the Health Department when the vaccine becomes available but the district itself will not provide the vaccinations.

Will the schools close due to H1N1?

This is highly unlikely. Closing is a local district decision and is based on whether or not the school(s) can function and continue to deliver instruction and services well.

A PLACE FOR LEARNING

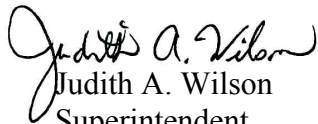
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What can parents do to protect, support and guide their children?

Please be factual and encourage good preventive measures but do not make children fearful. Help them to understand that this is another challenge and something new to learn about but that while many children have been ill, for most it is similar to the seasonal flu. Be careful not to blame another child or family as the first to be sick in a class or school; there were such cases of harassment in NJ schools last spring.

Of course no one yet knows how H1N1 will impact the region or the schools and we are all working to minimize the risks and the toll it might take on individuals and on the school year. For now, simply taking all possible precautions and incorporating good hygienic practices into daily routines will be our best course of action.

With appreciation for your understanding and support,


Judith A. Wilson
Superintendent

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