



## Monticello Central School District

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Dr. Patrick Michel, *Superintendent of Schools*

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*"Building Excellence Through Trust"*

[www.monticelloschools.net](http://www.monticelloschools.net)

November 2, 2009

Dear Parents, Staff and Community Members,

As of this week, we are starting to see cases of influenza-like illness at our elementary schools. Although we do not have any confirmed cases of the H1N1/Swine Flu virus, absentee rates due to flu-like symptoms are on the upswing. Please keep in mind that it is not uncommon to experience student absences at this time of year due to this type of illness.

At this point, we must proceed cautiously and prudently to contain any type of potential outbreak. To reduce the spread of H1N1, it is very important that everyone knows what the flu symptoms are and stays home when they occur. **Symptoms include: fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache and feeling very tired. Some people may also have nausea or vomiting and not everyone will have fever.**

**Children should not go to school if they are ill with flu-like symptoms.** They should stay home whether their illness has been diagnosed as a specific type of flu or not. The health authorities recommend staying at home for at least 24 hours after the fever is gone (without the use of a fever-reducing medication). Parents should also know that if children become ill during the school day with flu-like symptoms, we will send them home. We know this is a challenge for working parents, but it is our responsibility to remove ill children from school as quickly as possible. Please make contingency child care plans now for how you will handle this possibility in your family. To reduce the spread of disease, students who have flu-like symptoms at school will be segregated and may be given surgical masks to wear. We need you to pick them up within 30-45 minutes of notification.

We would like to reassure you that we are monitoring the situation closely in coordination with the local health department and we are taking precautionary measures including the increased cleaning and disinfection of our buildings. Our best response still remains to follow the recommendations of the CDC on measures to prevent the spread of influenza and other illnesses:

- Wash your hands frequently and thoroughly.
- Cover your coughs or sneezes with a tissue or use the inside of your elbow.
- Do not share personal items such as a toothbrush or unwashed utensils.
- Stay home if you are sick or if you have flu-like symptoms.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.

Please remember that sharing accurate information—rather than giving way to rumors—is the best way for us to get through this flu season. For more information on the H1N1 virus, including helpful resources for students, parents and staff, please visit the H1N1 Resources section of the district web site at [www.monticelloschools.net](http://www.monticelloschools.net).

Thank you for your continued partnership in protecting the health and well-being of our school community. We will keep you informed as things unfold.

Sincerely,

Dr. Patrick Michel  
Superintendent of Schools