



Monticello Central School District

237 Forestburgh Road, Monticello, NY 12701

Tel: 845-794-7700 Fax: 845-794-7710

Dr. Patrick Michel, *Superintendent of Schools*

Mrs. Alyce C. Van Etten, *President - Board of Education*

"Building Excellence Through Trust"

www.monticelloschools.net

September 24, 2009

Dear Parents/Guardians,

A partnership of school and home is essential for our children's well-being. This is especially true as we face the possibility that H1N1/Swine Flu may make our regular flu season more difficult than usual.

At this time, state and local health officials tell us that H1N1 is no more dangerous than most other strains of flu. Nevertheless, we need to do all we can – at school and at home – to decrease the chances of our children contracting it. Throughout the district, we are implementing a new, more rigorous daily cleaning regimen. Staff, faculty and students are being reminded of personal hygiene practices and trained in new sanitation procedures. School nurses are preparing for the possibility of a rough flu season.

These and other school-based defenses will not be effective without your help at home. H1N1 spreads easily. If your child shows any of the H1N1 symptoms, it is important that he/she **not** attend school or go anywhere else where others can be exposed to germs.

The key H1N1 Flu symptoms to watch for are as follows:

- Fever: 100 degrees F. or higher
- Cough
- Runny nose
- Sore throat
- Muscle pain, fatigue, vomiting or diarrhea may also accompany H1N1.

If your child has these symptoms, please keep him or her at home until the fever has dropped to normal (without the use of fever-reducing medication) for at least 24 hours. As much as possible, keep sick children away from healthy family members.

In preparing for the onset of flu season, we recommend the following practices:

- Be sure to have alternate plans for child care in the event that your child is sent home sick from school.
- Be alert to H1N1 symptoms and closely monitor your child's health.
- Be sure that all emergency health information is up-to-date in the school nurse's office. The nurse must be able to contact you quickly during the school day.

- Follow rigorous sanitation and hygiene practices. Be sure that all family members wash their hands with soap and water often. Cover coughs and sneezes with tissues if possible, or cough into your elbow or shoulder – not into your hands.

It is vitally important that you call your child's school and report that you are keeping your child home because he or she is exhibiting H1N1 symptoms. This will help us greatly as we assess the spread of the flu and severity of the situation.

In my 23 years working in public schools, I cannot remember a single time when schools closed because of flu season. At this time, I do not foresee having to close our schools due to H1N1, but if things change, I will let you know. Nothing is more important to us than the safety and health of your children.

If you have any questions, please feel free to give me a call at 794-7700, ext. 70910.

Sincerely,
Dr. Patrick Michel
Superintendent of Schools