

WILLARD SCHOOL
CONCORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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Dear Families,

As you have seen in the local and national media, and perhaps heard from other community members, H1N1 influenza is beginning to make its appearance in Massachusetts. Therefore, it is important that we revisit some of the best practices around preventing illness and what to do if your child is ill.

Flu can be easily spread from person to person. At Willard we are taking steps to reduce the spread of flu. We want to keep the school open to students and functioning in a normal manner during this flu season, and *we continue to need your help to do this.*

We are working closely with the Concord Public Health Department and the Massachusetts Department of Public Health to monitor flu conditions and make decisions about the best steps to take to protect your children. We will continue to keep you updated with new information as it becomes available.

Please take a moment to remind yourself and your family of the following recommendations:

- **Teach your children to wash their hands** often with soap and water or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer. You can set a good example by doing this yourself on a regular basis.
- **Teach your children not to share personal items** like drinks, food or unwashed utensils.
- **Remind your children to cover their coughs and sneezes with tissues.** Covering up their coughs or sneezes using the elbow, arm or sleeve instead of the hand when a tissue is unavailable.
- **Know the signs and symptoms of the flu.** Symptoms of the flu include fever (100 degrees Fahrenheit, 37.8 degrees Celsius or greater), cough, sore throat, a runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, and feeling very tired. Some people may also vomit or have diarrhea.
- **Keep sick children at home** until they have been free of any fever without the use of fever reducing medicine (Tylenol, ibuprofen) for at least 24 hours. This includes after-school activities and socializing. Keeping children with a fever at home will reduce the number of people who may get infected.
- **Do not send children to school if they are sick.** Any children who are determined to be sick while at school *will be sent home.*

For more information, visit www.flu.gov, or call 211 from any phone in Massachusetts for the most current information about the flu. For more information about flu in our community visit the Town of Concord website at www.concordma.gov or call the Concord Health Department (978) 318-3275.

We appreciate your cooperation in the efforts to protect your children and our entire student population.

Sincerely,

Patricia Fernandes Principal

Janine Gaudreau R.N. B.S.N. School Nurse