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Edmonton AB T5J 2N3

May 13, 2009

Alberta School Superintendents

## **Re: Guidance for School Administrators regarding H1N1 Influenza Virus**

Dear Superintendents:

Although the H1N1 Influenza Virus continues to cause mostly mild illness, we have prepared an information package for your reference and use. The information package regarding H1N1 Influenza Virus is now posted at <http://education.alberta.ca/admin/resources/healthandsafety/h1n1.aspx>. The package contains information for you as an administrator, as well as public information products for distribution to your schools, students and parents.

### **Administrators' Package includes:**

- *Guidance for School Administrators Regarding H1N1 Influenza Virus* that includes:
  - interim recommendations regarding school closures;
  - recommended measures to be undertaken by schools to prevent or limit infections in school settings.
- Frequently asked questions that may be helpful for school staff and parents.
- Posters for schools.

### **Parent Product Package includes:**

- A fact sheet for parents.

Please ensure that all school principals in your jurisdiction are aware that this information is available. School principals should determine whether children and students in their schools should take home a copy of the fact sheet. We encourage you to post appropriate information from this package on your jurisdiction and/or school websites. You should also provide a package to each school board trustee.

In the event of a confirmed case of H1N1 Influenza Virus, Public Health officials will notify the school principal and will circulate a generic letter to the school community, including all parents, notifying them that a confirmed case attends or works in a school setting. The principal is expected to notify the superintendent of the local jurisdiction.

The notification will not identify the infected individual but will rather focus on preventative and common sense measures as the best protection against H1N1 Influenza Virus. The name and location of the school will not be publicized and any additional action and communication is left to the discretion of the local school jurisdiction.

Public Health will work with the school to identify individuals who have come into close contact with a confirmed case, to identify potential new cases, and to provide further direction as required. Parents of students identified as “close contacts” will receive specific information pertaining to monitoring the health of their children and keeping them at home should they develop symptoms. Those parents can expect to be contacted by Public Health regularly to monitor the health status of their identified children. There is no requirement for “close contacts” of cases of H1N1 Influenza Virus to stay home from school or work if they remain free of symptoms.

Please note that the Public Health Agency of Canada is not recommending the closure of schools at this time, even if a confirmed case of H1N1 Influenza Virus is identified in a school.

Check for updates and other information on the Alberta Health Services website at <http://www.albertahealthservices.ca> or the Alberta Health and Wellness website at <http://www.health.alberta.ca>. If you have questions, please contact your local Medical Officer of Health.

Thank you for your assistance in disseminating this package. Further information will be provided as required. Alberta Health and Wellness and Alberta Education will continue to work closely and provide you with timely and accurate information to ensure the health and safety of your students and staff.

Sincerely,



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Keray Henke  
Deputy Minister  
Alberta Education



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Linda Miller  
Deputy Minister  
Alberta Health and Wellness

cc: Executive Directors:

- ASBA (Alberta School Boards Association)
- AHEA (Alberta Home Education Association)
- ASCA (Alberta School Councils' Association)
- ATA (Alberta Teachers' Association)
- AAPCS (Association of Alberta Public Charter Schools)

ACFA (Association canadienne-française de l'Alberta)  
AISCA (Association of Independent Schools & Colleges in Alberta)  
ASBOA (Association of School Business Officials of Alberta)  
CASS (College of Alberta School Superintendents)  
Federation des parents francophones de l'Alberta  
Federation des conseils scolaires francophones de l'Alberta  
Learning Disabilities Association of Alberta

School Board Communications Contacts