

Information on H1N1 influenza

We expect that we will see more cases of the flu this year than in past seasons because of the typical seasonal influenza and the H1N1 influenza which gained notoriety this year. Influenza of any type can be easily spread from person to person. Therefore, we are taking steps to reduce the spread of flu in Saint Paul Public Schools. Our highest priorities are to keep our schools safe and our students learning during this flu season. **But, we need your help to do this.** We are working closely with the Minnesota Departments of Health and Education and the Saint Paul/ Ramsey County Department of Public Health to monitor flu conditions and make decisions about the best steps to take concerning schools. We will keep you updated with new information as it becomes available.

Here are a few things you can do to help.

- **Teach your children to wash their hands often** with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand rub. You need to set a good example by doing this yourself.
- **Teach your children not to share personal items** like drinks, food or unwashed utensils. Teach them to cover their coughs and sneezes with tissues or to use 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** for at least 24 hours *after* they no longer have fever or do not have signs of fever, without using fever-reducing drugs. 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*. Plan now for child care now if your child gets sick.