



## Action Steps for Schools to Prevent the Spread of Flu

Take the following steps to help keep students, teachers, and staff from getting sick with flu. These steps should be followed ALL the time and not only during a flu pandemic.

- **Educate and encourage students to cover their mouth and nose** with a tissue when they cough or sneeze. Also, provide them with easy access to tissues. Remind them to cover coughs or sneezes using their elbow instead of their hand when a tissue is not available (respiratory hygiene).
- **Remind students to practice good hand hygiene.**
  - Provide the time and supplies for students and staff to wash their hands as often as necessary.
  - Provide easy access to running water and soap or alcohol-based hand sanitizers.
  - Install alcohol-based sanitizers in key locations at appropriate height for students and staff. Alcohol-based hand sanitizers should not be used if hands are visibly dirty.
  - Adopt a hand washing curriculum and reinforce throughout the day. Put up reminder posters throughout the building in key locations (bathrooms, classrooms, cafeteria, first aid station) as visual cues for students and staff.
- **Send sick students, teachers, and staff home** and advise them and their families sick people should stay at home for at least 24 hours after they no longer have a fever or signs of a fever (without the use of fever-reducing medicine, such as Tylenol® or Ibuprofen®).
- **Clean surfaces and items** that are more likely to have frequent hand contact such as desks, door knobs, keyboards, or pens, with cleaning agents that are approved by your school district and **usually used in these areas.**
- **Move students, teachers, and staff to a separate room** if they become sick at school until they can be sent home. Limit the number of staff who provide care for the sick individual(s). See <http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/schools/technicalreport.htm#sepill>
- **Have Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) such as masks and gloves** available for possible use as instructed by the health department.
- **Encourage early medical evaluation for sick students and staff** at higher risk of complications from flu. People at higher risk who get sick should speak with their health care provider to find out if they can benefit from early treatment with antiviral flu medicines.
- **Stay in regular communication with MESD.** The MESD is collaborating with our regional county health departments to provide up-to-date, accurate information to school personnel and community as the flu season and the new H1N1 virus unfolds.

**Follow these steps to prepare for the flu during the 2009 – 2010 school year.**

- **Update student, teacher, and staff contact information as well as emergency contact lists.** Make this a priority with students and staff.
- **Review and revise existing pandemic plans** and focus on protecting high-risk students, teachers, and staff..
- **Maintain** established contact with MESD. **Update Communicable Disease Contact Information and submit to Nurse Consultant at MESD.**
- **Develop a plan to cover key staff positions**, such as the school nurse, when staff stay home because they are sick.
- **Review school policies and awards criteria** to encourage social distancing and avoiding any incentives for students or staff to go to school when sick (e.g., cancel perfect attendance awards).
- **Develop a school dismissal plan** and options for how school work can be continued at home (e.g., homework packets, Web-based lessons, phone calls), if school is dismissed or students are sent home when sick.
- **Help families and communities understand** the important roles they can play in reducing the spread of flu in schools.

**For more information:**

- ▶ **Visit: [www.mesd.k12.or.us](http://www.mesd.k12.or.us)**  
**Visit: [www.mchealth.org/swineflu](http://www.mchealth.org/swineflu)**  
**Visit: [www.flu.oregon.gov/](http://www.flu.oregon.gov/)**  
**Visit: [www.flu.gov](http://www.flu.gov)**
- ▶ **Contact CDC 24 Hours/Every Day**
  - 1 (800) CDC-INFO (232-4636)
  - TTY: (888) 232-6348
  - [cdcinfo@cdc.gov](mailto:cdcinfo@cdc.gov)

