



# FAXGRAM #35

APRIL 30, 2009

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## SWINE FLU UPDATE

April 30, 2009 - 11:30 a.m.

To parents/guardians, students and staff:

As you may have already learned through the media, various international health organizations have identified a new strain of influenza, Human Influenza A - H1N1 (Swine Flu), which has been reported in several countries around the world, including Canada. The *World Health Organization (WHO)* and health officials are still learning more about this disease and its spread.

Please be advised that the *Halton Region Health Department* is working with the *Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care* and the *Public Health Agency of Canada* to monitor and investigate the impact of this disease in Halton, which you can learn more about at: [http://www.halton.ca/health/services/communicable\\_disease/swine-flu-HD.htm](http://www.halton.ca/health/services/communicable_disease/swine-flu-HD.htm).

For the past several years, we have worked with the *Halton Region Health Department*, as we have prepared and continue to revise our Board's *Pandemic Response Plan* (<http://www.hcdsb.org/news/2009%2004/PandemicPlan.pdf>). This plan ensures clear communication, and an effective and coordinated response to issues as they arise.

As a result, our Board is ready to respond and will take whatever advice or action that regional health authorities recommend to reduce the risk to our school and system communities.

We remind students and staff to continue to reinforce the use of prevention strategies to reduce the spread of influenza:

- Wash hands well and often with soap and warm water
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you sneeze and cough
- Cough and sneeze into your sleeve or arm
- For more information, please visit the *Halton Region Health Department's website*: [http://www.halton.ca/health/documents/resource\\_database/swine-flu.pdf](http://www.halton.ca/health/documents/resource_database/swine-flu.pdf).
- If you are experiencing flu-like symptoms, contact your family doctor and stay at home if you are ill.

School administrators and school staff continue to monitor the general health condition of students. As per standard practice, if students exhibit symptoms of illness, parents are called and advised to have students stay home until they are well. As always, the safety and wellbeing of our students and staff, and the safe operation of our schools, in general, are our priority.

For health-related information and updates, please visit the *Halton Region Health Department's website* at: [http://www.halton.ca/health/services/communicable\\_disease/swine-flu.htm](http://www.halton.ca/health/services/communicable_disease/swine-flu.htm). You can also call *Telehealth Ontario* at 1-866-797-0000.

For school-related inquiries, please contact your school principal.

In order to keep you informed of developments within our Board and directives from the *Halton Region Health Department*, we have created a dedicated section on our Board's public website on this issue at: <http://www.hcdsb.org/swineflu>.

Sincerely,

Michael W. Pautler  
Director of Education

**IF YOU ARE PREGNANT, YOU MAY WANT TO CONSULT WITH YOUR ATTENDING PHYSICIAN TO ENSURE THAT YOU ARE AT NO ADDITIONAL RISK AND TO MAINTAIN PEACE OF MIND FOR YOU. FURTHER, IF YOU ARE PREGNANT, THE BOARD IS PREPARED TO ACT AS IT DOES WHEN FIFTH DISEASE IS IN THE SCHOOL. IN SHORT, WHATEVER YOUR ATTENDING PHYSICIAN REQUESTS OF YOU, IT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY TO FOLLOW YOUR DOCTOR. .... RICHARD BROCK**