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Dear Parents and Guardians,

This letter is to tell you about and help you prepare for potential Pandemic H1N1 2009 influenza (swine flu) cases in our schools. School-age children are particularly at risk for catching the H1N1 virus, creating the potential for large numbers of cases with more hospitalizations and deaths among younger age groups.

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services is working to get H1N1 flu vaccine ready for possible use in the fall. The Spokane Regional Health District is working closely with school district administration and state and federal public health authorities to make sure the vaccine is available for school-age children. However, the vaccine will not be available until several weeks after school starts. Please consider getting your child vaccinated then.

There will not likely be school closures unless absenteeism shows that the virus is widespread or the virus changes in severity. In these cases, closing school(s) may stop the outbreak from spreading. Individual children who have influenza-like symptoms will likely be sent home.

We want you to protect yourself and your family against H1N1 influenza as well as seasonal influenza. Help prevent the spread of viruses by teaching your children to:

- Wash their hands often (use hand sanitizer if soap and water aren't available).
- Stay home and not go to childcare or school when they are sick.
- Cough or sneeze into their sleeve/elbow – not into their hands when a tissue is not handy.
- Cover their nose and mouth when sneezing, coughing, or blowing their nose.
- Promptly dispose of used tissues.
- Not share food, utensils, or beverages with others.
- Avoid close contact with sick people.
- Always follow doctor's instructions and take medicine as prescribed.

Please check with your health care provider or your local health department if you have any questions. The CDC also has a 24 hr phone bank that can be accessed at (800) CDC-INFO.

You can stay up-to-date with current conditions by visiting [www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/](http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/), <http://www.doh.wa.gov/swineflu/default.htm>, or <http://www.srhhd.org/swineflu/>.



East Valley School District will inspire all children to achieve academic success and become responsible citizens.