



STERLING PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Where kids achieve!

410 EAST LEFEVRE ■ STERLING, IL 61081 ■ 815.626.5050

WWW.STERLINGPUBLICSCHOOLS.ORG ■ R. TAD EVERETT, SUPERINTENDENT

Sterling Public Schools' H1N1 Plan

1. Educate students, staff, parents, and the community about the seriousness of H1N1.

- To inform our students, SPS is designating specific times at each school to talk to our students and staff about H1N1.
- To inform our parents, we have sent home a letter detailing SPS' H1N1 Plan.
- To inform our community, we have established an informational H1N1 link located on the homepage of our district's website, located at www.sterlingpublicschools.org.
 - The website includes an overview of SPS' H1N1 Plan, a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) brochure, SPS' cleaning protocols, and H1N1 web resources.
- To inform our community, a paper copy of the FAQ brochure will be located in each school's main office.
- To inform our community, we will be working with SVN to run a story on SPS' H1N1 Plan.

2. Prevention, Prevention, Prevention

- Our goal is to help students, staff, parents, and community members understand how they individually can minimize the spread of the H1N1 virus. To help prevent H1N1, Sterling Public Schools is encouraging the following:

A. *The 3 C's – Clean, Cover, and Contain*

It is very clear from health professionals that the most important daily component to prevent the spread of any flu virus is simply the "3 C's". We are reminding students and staff of this initiative by placing "3 C signs" all around the district.

- *Clean your hands.*
We are asking everyone to wash and sanitize his or her hands frequently. To support this, SPS is including its elementary students in a hand-washing seminar and purchasing over 200 new alcohol-based hand sanitizers for the entire District.
- *Cover your cough in your elbow or sleeve.*
- *Contain yourself by staying home when you have respiratory flu symptoms and a fever over 100 degrees.*

B. Promote Vaccinations

The next best method to protect against the seasonal flu is to get vaccinated each year. This year's flu shots will be available to community members by mid September, and can be acquired at many local health facilities. In general, anyone who wants to reduce his or her chance of getting the flu should be vaccinated annually.

As stated in our FAQ brochure, the H1N1 flu virus is a completely different strand than the

normal seasonal flu virus. Because of this fact, the seasonal flu vaccination will not build resistance to H1N1; therefore, it is important to additionally receive a H1N1 vaccination. SPS and the Whiteside County Health Department are jointly promoting that all SPS students receive a seasonal flu vaccination, as well as the H1N1 vaccination. Though we currently have not finalized an official H1N1 vaccination plan, the tentative dates will begin sometime in mid October.

Four key points to know about vaccinations:

1. Even though SPS would like all its students to be vaccinated this year, these shots are completely voluntary. Parents and legal guardians will choose if their child is vaccinated.
2. For those who choose to receive the shot, parents will be given the opportunity to be present at the time of vaccination.
3. The Whiteside County Health Department will be the local health agency authorized to administer the 2009 H1N1 vaccination shots. SPS will work cooperatively with the WCHD to administer these shots at each individual school at a time and date yet to be determined.
4. For those who choose to receive the shot, it will be completely free of charge.

C. Improve Record Keeping

Each one of our schools is already keeping detailed health records. The purpose is to track student and staff absences each day and report any flu-like symptoms to the Whiteside County Health Department. Please see our online FAQ brochure to determine "what are flu-like symptoms." We are asking parents and guardians to help with better record keeping by providing their child's school with detailed reasons for student absences.

D. Establish specific cleaning and sanitation protocols

SPS has been working with its custodial staff and the Whiteside County Health Department to develop specific cleaning and sanitation protocols for each of its buildings. If you would like to see the specific details of this plan, please visit our website at www.sterlingpublicschools.org.

If you have questions regarding Sterling Public Schools' H1N1 Plan, please email them to healthservices@sterlingschools.org.