

SAMPLE LETTER TO PARENTS ----

Initial H1N1 Flu Outbreak #2: Use this letter to let parents know schools are open and that situation is being closely monitored.

Dear Parents,

This letter is being sent to give you an update about increasing influenza illness in _____ School. Every year, some people get sick with the flu during the fall and winter months. This year, there is a new flu virus called the 2009 H1N1 virus (swine flu) that is making many people sick. Health officials call it a "pandemic flu."

Many students and teachers in our school have become sick with the flu, and classroom absenteeism monitoring is still identifying new cases of the flu among students and school staff. We hope they will all get better quickly, but we are requiring that no one returns to school until their fever has returned to normal for at least 24 hours without the use of fever-lowering medications.

At this time, the _____ County Health Department tells us that students who are not ill can safely come to school. The schools will remain open. We will keep you updated with any important information.

To keep the flu from spreading to more people, we ask you to keep sick children home. Any children who are sick in school will be sent home.

Public health officials want you to protect yourself and your family against pandemic flu. Here are some ways to stop the spread of germs and sickness:

- Keep children who are sick at home. Don't send them to school.
- Teach your children to wash hands a lot with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Be sure to set a good example by doing this yourself.
- Teach your children to cover coughs and sneezes with tissues or by coughing into the inside of the elbow. Be sure to set a good example by doing this yourself.
- People who are sick should stay home from work or school and stay away from other people until they are better.
- Stay away from shopping malls, movie theaters or other places where there are large groups of people.

If you have questions, please contact your School Nurse or healthcare provider. You can call the school hotline (INSERT NUMBER). You can also get more information from the Oklahoma State Department of Health online at <http://h1n1.health.ok.gov>.

If the pandemic flu continues to spread and more students become ill, students may be dismissed from school for days or weeks. The purpose of student dismissals will be to keep children from getting sick. If students are dismissed, children should stay at home. Begin planning now for childcare in your home.

Recommendations may change during the course of a pandemic flu outbreak.