



HARVARD COMMUNITY UNIT SCHOOL DISTRICT # 50

BOARD OF EDUCATION OFFICE
1101 North Jefferson Street
Harvard, IL 60033-1768
815-943-4022
Fax 815-943-4282

Dr. Lauri Tobias
Superintendent
ltobias@cusd50.org

Dr. Richard Crosby
Director of Facilities Management
rcrosby@cusd50.org

Donna Joyce
Business Manager
djoyce@cusd50.org

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Dear Parents and Guardians of Harvard District 50 Students:

As you have likely seen in the news, swine influenza A (H1N1) virus infection, or swine flu, has reached the United States. As of April 29, 2009, there have been more than 40 laboratory-confirmed cases in the U.S., only one of which has been in Illinois. We have been advised by public health officials that the best strategy is to take precautions. Below we have outlined some of the steps we are taking to keep our students safe, and we have also listed some things you can do at home to prevent the spread of this virus.

Even before the virus had been confirmed in Illinois, we were taking precautions including the exceptional cleaning procedures usually performed by our custodial/maintenance staff. Washrooms and locker rooms are cleaned and disinfected nightly, as are desktops and door handles. Our physical education staff helps to ensure that shared gym equipment is also cleaned.

If your child feels ill with flu-like symptoms, he/she should stay home from school to prevent the spread of germs to other children. Symptoms of swine flu are similar to that of the regular flu, and include fever, sore throat, headache, cough, body aches, chills and fatigue. If your child's symptoms persist or worsen, you are encouraged to seek medical attention for your child.

To assist in the prevention of such diseases, we recommend:

- Careful hand washing with soap and warm water;
- Covering sneezes and coughs with a tissue;
- Cleaning and disinfecting sports equipment;
- Frequently washing gym clothes;
- Washing clothing and linens in hot water with detergent;
- Covering cuts and scrapes with clean bandages; and
- Not sharing personal items like towels and/or clothing.

At District 50, we will continue to monitor the situation and we will communicate any news or updates as needed in the coming weeks. If you have any questions related to swine flu or other health-related concerns, please visit the Center for Disease Control's website at www.cdc.gov, or contact your school nurse.

I wish you good health and happiness during these last weeks of the school year!

Sincerely,

Dr. Lauri Tobias
Superintendent