



October 22, 2009

Dear Parent,

It was sad to read of the death of a first grade student at Browns Valley Elementary. What is known at this point is that the girl had the flu, but it has not been confirmed that her death was the result of the H1N1 or any flu virus. As you may know, flu can be easily spread from person to person. Therefore, we are taking steps to reduce the spread of flu here at Bethany. We want to keep the school open to students and functioning in a normal manner during this flu season, **but we need your help to do this.**

Prevention is the key! Taking steps on the home front will greatly reduce the risk of the flu, in any of its forms, from becoming a problem in your home and here at the school. Prepare yourself by staying informed about what is going on in our area through local news agencies, as well as keeping yourself informed through the CDC's website, www.flu.gov. You can also click on this link to see what you as an individual and family can do to keep things as good as you can: <http://www.flu.gov/individualfamily/checklist.html>.

If the flu becomes more severe, we may take additional steps to prevent the spread such as:

- conducting active fever and flu symptom screening of students and staff as they arrive at school,
- making changes to increase the space between people such as moving desks farther apart and postponing class trips, and
- dismissing students from school for at least 7 days if they become sick.

For now we are doing everything we can to keep our school functioning as usual. Here are a few things you can do to help.

- **Feed them well and good** by ensuring they eat good portions of healthy foods and are getting plenty of rest. Decrease/Eliminate their caffeine intake, and increase their water intake.
- **Teach your children to wash their hands** often with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand rub. You can set a good example by doing this yourself. Basic hygiene is key.
- **Teach your children not to share personal items** like drinks, food or unwashed utensils, and to cover their coughs and sneezes with tissues. Covering up their coughs or sneezes using the elbow, arm or sleeve instead of the hand when a tissue is unavailable.
- **Know the signs and symptoms of the flu.** Symptoms of the flu include fever (100 degrees Fahrenheit, 37.8 degrees Celsius or greater), cough, sore throat, a runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, and feeling very tired. Some people may also vomit or have diarrhea.
- **Keep sick children at home** for at least 24 hours *after* they no longer have fever or do not have signs of fever, without using fever-reducing drugs. Keeping children with a fever at home will reduce the number of people who may get infected.
- **Do not send children to school if they are sick.** Any children who are determined to be sick while at school *will be sent home*.

For more information, visit www.flu.gov, or call 1-800-CDC-INFO for the most current information about the flu. We will notify you of any additional changes to our school's strategy to prevent the spread of flu.

Sincerely,

Kris Schneider, Principal

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