



11 a.m., April 30, 2009

Dear Parents and Guardians:

All Bellingham School District schools remain open at this time.

District officials are working closely with the Whatcom County Health Department to prepare for swine flu cases that may occur locally. School and county health officials are working together to continuously monitor the situation and families will be updated with any important information.

Parents and guardians are advised to begin making childcare arrangements in their homes in the event that the health department advises that a school(s) need to close. As always, parents and guardians may choose to keep their children home and follow procedures for excused absences.

Health officials say parents can help protect their children and prevent the spread of swine flu as they would any other colds or flu by taking the following precautions:

- Stay home from work or school if ill.
- Remind all family members to wash hands frequently with soap and water for 20 seconds or use alcohol-based hand sanitizers frequently: <http://www.cdc.gov/cleanhands/>
- Remind all family members to cover coughs and sneezes with tissues or by coughing into the inside of the elbow: <http://www.coughsafe.com/media.html>

Health officials point out that their recommendations may change during the course of the swine flu outbreak.

For the most up-to-date information about swine flu, please go to <http://www.cdc.gov/swineflu/> . Washington state information about swine flu is available at <http://www.doh.wa.gov/swineflu> and the district has its communications posted at <http://www.bham.wednet.edu/staff/influenzaplanning.htm> . For the latest updates from Whatcom County, please visit: <http://www.co.whatcom.wa.us/>

If you are not already registered, I encourage you to sign up to receive e-mail emergency notices and other news from the district under “E-News Registration” at <http://www.bham.wednet.edu/> We will continue to monitor the situation and share information with you.

Sincerely,

Principal