

D'Arbonne Woods Charter School

# H1N1/ Influenza Policy

2009-2010 School Year

Dear Parents,

This policy is to help you understand the threat of a pandemic influenza outbreak in our area. While we are not advocating widespread hysteria, we feel it is crucial for the health and welfare of all of our students and faculty that we are all well informed and using preventative steps.

This guide applies to any flu virus this school year, not just the H1N1 variety. We fully recognize the need to balance the risks of illness among students and staff with the benefits of keeping students in school. ***If your child is sick, please do not send them to school.***

Anyone can get the flu, even healthy people. So far, the 2009 H1N1 flu's largest number of cases has been in people between the ages of 5 and 24-years old.

What is the best way we can keep from getting sick and spreading the flu?

- **Practicing good hand hygiene.** Students and staff members should wash their hands often with soap and water, especially after coughing or sneezing. Alcohol based hand cleaners are also effective.
- **Practicing respiratory etiquette.** The main way that the flu spreads is from person to person in the droplets produced by coughs and sneezes, so it's important to cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. If you don't have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your elbow or shoulder, not into your hands.
- **Staying home if you're sick.** Keeping sick students at home means that they keep their viruses to themselves rather sharing them with others.

Students, staff, parents, and their families must take personal responsibility for helping to slow the spread of the virus by practicing these steps to keep from getting sick with flu and protecting others from getting the flu.

DWCS will send home sick students and staff members. Please be advised that sick people should stay at home until at least 24 hours AFTER they no longer have a fever or signs of a fever. This should be determined WITHOUT the use of fever-reducing medicines (any medicines that contain ibuprofen or acetaminophen). They should stay home at least 24 hours after they no longer have a fever even if they are using antiviral medicines.

DWCS has revised out attendance policy to NOT PENALIZE any student who misses school with the flu and similar illness.

We will move staff and students to a separate area until they can be sent home. Additionally, we will provide a surgical mask for the sick person to wear if they can tolerate it.

We would encourage all parents and staff members to consult a medical professional at the first signs of any of the symptoms of flu. Flu symptoms may include any of the following:

- Fever (100 degrees Fahrenheit, 37.8 degrees Celsius or greater), cough, sore throat, a runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, and feeling tired. Some people may also vomit or have diarrhea.

Watch for these ***emergency signs that need urgent medical attention***. These warning signs include:

- Fast breathing or trouble breathing
- Bluish or gray skin color
- Not drinking enough fluids
- Not urinating or no tears when crying
- Severe or persistent vomiting
- Not waking up or not interacting
- Being so irritable that the child does not want to be held
- Pain or pressure in the chest or abdomen
- Sudden dizziness
- Confusion
- Flu-like symptoms improve but then return with fever and worse cough

As with any medical condition or possible medical condition, ALWAYS consult a health care provider in your area.