



STATE OF MICHIGAN

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY HEALTH
LANSING

JENNIFER M. GRANHOLM
GOVERNOR

JANET OLSZEWSKI
DIRECTOR

December 7, 2009

Dear School Principal or Administrator:

The Michigan Department of Community Health (MDCH) continues to monitor statewide influenza activity and control efforts. As the burden of 2009 H1N1 flu has increased in our schools and communities, learning from our combined experience is critical to improve our response to the current and future epidemics of influenza.

MDCH, with support from the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) and the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), is conducting a survey of current practices for prevention and control of influenza in our schools. The purpose of this voluntary survey (Survey of Factors Influencing School Closures Associated with 2009 H1N1 Flu in Michigan Schools) is to assess the factors, such as school absenteeism, non-pharmaceutical interventions, public health communications, demographics, and policies, which might impact school closures. Results of the survey will be used to inform future 2009 H1N1 flu mitigation strategies.

This 15-20 minute survey asks questions about prevention and control policies that your school might be considering or have already implemented following the emergence of H1N1.

Steps to participate:

1. We are asking each superintendent and principal of all the school districts and schools in Michigan to please complete the survey for your building(s) by Friday, December 18, 2009.
2. The survey can be accessed at:

<http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/CCBKYTE>
3. Note that the survey contains questions that might be best answered with input from various staff (administrator, school nurse, etc). Since the online survey can only be filled out by a single user, it is suggested that you print out the hard copy in advance to fill out prior to entering your responses online. If you wish, you may fax to: (517) 335-8263, attn: Melinda Wilkins, although submitting online would be preferred.

School Closure Survey FAQ's

1. **Is this voluntary?** Participation is voluntary, but we strongly encourage schools to complete this survey to improve our ability to protect our students and staff from influenza.
2. **Who should fill out the survey? Can all the questions be answered by one person?** The survey might be best answered with input from various staff (administrator, school nurse, etc). Since the online survey can only be filled out by a single user, the point of contact might find it helpful to print and complete a paper copy (attached to this email as a PDF file and online), prior to entering the data online.

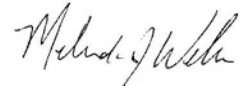
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3. **Will survey results be used to judge our school's flu response in any way?** School responses to the survey are confidential. Schools will not be penalized for any of their survey responses, and the results will not be used in any regulatory action. Individual school buildings will not be identified in any reports or recommendations resulting from this survey.
4. **Is student privacy protected?** Although the survey asks some questions about the demographics of your school, no information about individual students will be collected or used in any way.
5. **Should we be implementing the practices asked about in the survey?** The specific questions and answers do not necessarily imply a recommendation from the MDCH, MDE or CDC. For specific guidance for influenza prevention and control, please consult the MDCH "Guidance for School (K-12) Responses to Influenza during the 2009-2010 School Year," available at: http://www.michigan.gov/documents/mdch/fluschool_247586_7.pdf
6. **Will schools be notified of survey results?** A summary of survey results in aggregate form will be made available to participating schools.
7. **When is the survey due?** We are asking participating schools to complete the survey by Friday, December 18, 2009.

If you have additional questions about this survey, please contact me at (517) 335-8165 or wilkinsm@michigan.gov.

Thank you for your consideration to participate in this important project.

Sincerely,



Melinda Wilkins, DVM, MPH, PhD
Director, Division of Communicable Disease
Bureau of Epidemiology