

September 15, 2009

Dear Parent and/or Guardian:

In the BKW Central School District, we have taken several steps to prepare for the H1N1 influenza, also known as “swine flu,” during this year’s flu season. You can also help prevent the spread of the flu virus by reading the enclosed brochure, “Seasonal and Novel H1N1 Flu: A Guide for Parents,” and discussing the information with your child.

As a reminder, the state and local health departments have advised that students can continue to come to school as long as they are not sick and do not think they have flu symptoms. Flu-like symptoms include: fever (over 100°F or 37.8°C), feverishness, cough, sore throat, runny nose, or stuffy nose. With H1N1 influenza, additional symptoms may include muscle pain, fatigue, and sometimes vomiting or diarrhea. For more information, visit [www.flu.gov](http://www.flu.gov), [www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/](http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/), [www.nyhealth.gov](http://www.nyhealth.gov), or call (800) 808-1987.

**The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) now recommends that students with influenza-like illness stay home and not attend school or day care until at least 24 hours after their fever is gone.** (Their fever should be gone without them having taken a fever-reducing medicine.) School nurses can assist parents in determining whether or not a child is well enough to attend school. To contact a school nurse, please call a school’s main office or visit [www.bkwschools.org](http://www.bkwschools.org) and click on “Health Offices” for more information.

In order to prevent the spread of the flu, please continue to encourage your child to:

- Wash his/her hands often. Washing with soap and hot water for at least 20 seconds is ideal (about as long as it takes to sing the “Happy Birthday” song twice).
- Keep his/her hands away from the face and avoid touching the mouth, nose, or eyes.
- Cover coughs and sneezes with tissues or by coughing into the inside of an elbow.

As previously mentioned, the district has taken several steps to increase staff members’ and students’ awareness of how to prevent and respond to H1N1 and seasonal flu. District administrators have been and will continue to be in regular contact with the Albany County Department of Health. All nurses have received educator-specific information and guidelines provided by the CDC.

Thank you for your continued support of the effort to keep our students healthy.

Sincerely,

Kimberly LaBelle  
Interim Superintendent of Schools