

Dear Parents,

As you know, flu can be easily spread from person to person. Therefore, we are taking steps to reduce the spread of flu. 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.**

We are working closely with the Crawford County Health Department to monitor flu conditions and make decisions about the best steps to take concerning schools. We will do our best to keep you updated with new information as it becomes available.

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:

- **Be aware of flu symptoms:** fever, headache, extreme tiredness, dry cough, sore throat, muscle aches, runny or stuffy nose, and some may exhibit stomach symptoms such as nausea, vomiting, and/or diarrhea. These symptoms will last for several days.
- **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.
- **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.
- **Keep sick children at home** for at least 7 days and for 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. Siblings of infected students should be monitored very closely for flu-like symptoms. In the event of a major out-break, you may be asked to keep siblings home until it is certain no flu symptoms are apparent.
- **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. You need to make alternate arrangements for child care in the event your child is excluded from school
- **Please be aware that extra-curricular activities** i.e. sports, band, choir, etc.. are all close contact activities and therefore a potential source for the spread of infection/illness. Unfortunately, your child may have to be excluded from these activities while ill as well.

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,
Van Buren School District Health Services