

## RCCSS Guidelines for Response to H1N1

The Rapid City Catholic School System will follow the suggested recommendations/guidelines listed below to help decrease the spread of flu among students and school staff during the 2009-10 school year. We ask that you become familiar with these guidelines to help prevent the spread of the flu or any contagious disease.

The RCCSS intends to send students who exhibit these symptoms home.

- **Stay home when sick:** Those with flu-like symptoms (fever, cough or sore throat) should stay home for at least 24 hours after they are free of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications. They should stay home even if they are using antiviral drugs.
- **Seek medical care:** H1N1 is treatable within the first 48 hours of onset.
- **Separate ill students and staff:** Students and staff who appear to have flu-like illness will be removed from classroom and sent to a room separate from others until they can be sent home. We ask parents or guardians to pick up their sick children as soon as possible. If a faculty or staff member becomes ill at work, they will be asked to follow same guidelines as students. The CDC recommends that those with flu-like symptoms wear a surgical mask, and that those who care for ill students and staff wear protective gear such as a mask.
- **Hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette:** The importance of the basic foundations of influenza prevention should be followed: stay home when sick, wash hands frequently with soap and water when possible, and cover noses and mouths with a tissue when coughing or sneezing (or a shirt sleeve or elbow if no tissue is available).
- **Routine cleaning:** School staff will routinely clean areas that students and staff touch often with the cleaners they typically use.
- **Vaccinations:** Recommendation is for parents to have children vaccinated with the regular flu vaccine at the beginning of the school year and with the Swine Flu vaccine when it becomes available.
- **Early treatment of high-risk students and staff:** People at high risk for influenza complications who become ill with influenza-like illness should speak with their health care provider as soon as possible. Early treatment with antiviral medications is very important for people at high risk because it can prevent hospitalizations and deaths. People at risk include those who are pregnant, have asthma or diabetes, have compromised immune systems, or have neuromuscular diseases.
- **Educate faculty/staff:** RCCSS will provide resources and in-service to faculty/staff to better detect symptoms
- **School dismissals:** The RCCSS will consult with health officials regarding the need for school closure. The district will balance the risks of flu in our school community with the disruption dismissals will cause in both the educational setting and the wider community.