

## **CDC Guidance for School (K-12) Responses to Influenza during the 2009-2010 School Year**

### *Under Conditions with Similar Severity as in Spring 2009*

- **Stay home when sick:**  
Those with flu-like illness should stay home for at least 24 hours after they no longer have a fever, or signs of a fever, without the use of fever-reducing medicines. They should stay home even if they are using antiviral drugs.
- **Separate ill students and staff:**  
Students and staff who appear to have flu-like illness should be sent to a room separate from others until they can be sent home. CDC recommends that they wear a surgical mask, if possible, and that those who care for ill students and staff wear protective gear such as a mask.
- **Hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette:**  
The new recommendations emphasize the importance of the basic foundations of influenza prevention: 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 should routinely clean areas that students and staff touch often with the cleaners they typically use. CDC does not believe any additional disinfection of environmental surfaces beyond the recommended routine cleaning is required.
- **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 high risk include those who are pregnant, have asthma or diabetes, have compromised immune systems, or have neuromuscular diseases.
- **Consideration of selective school dismissal:**  
Although there are not many schools where all or most students are at high risk (for example, schools for medically fragile children or for pregnant students), a community might decide to dismiss such a school to better protect these high-risk students.
- **School dismissals:**  
School and health officials should work closely to balance the risks of flu in their community with the disruption dismissals will cause in both education and the wider community. The length of time schools should be dismissed will vary depending on the type of dismissal as well as the severity and extent of illness. Schools that dismiss students should do so for five to seven calendar days and should reassess whether or not to resume classes after that period. Schools that dismiss students should remain open to teachers and staff so they can continue to provide instruction through other means.