

September 16, 2009



Dear EICS Parent or Guardian:

At Elk Island Catholic Schools (EICS), the safety of our students and our school community is our first priority. EICS has been preparing for a pandemic for a number of years and as a result, we have a pandemic policy and preparedness plan in place for both the Division and for all of our schools.

As a parent or guardian of an EICS student – you play an important role in our pandemic preparedness plan. With the onset of influenza season, as well as with the possibility of a H1N1 pandemic, it is important for us all to remain diligent in our efforts in preventing the spread of flu in our school community.

The goal of EICS during a pandemic is to minimize the spread of disease and disruption to daily life, as well as to sustain core educational activities throughout the pandemic. EICS will work closely with community and provincial stakeholders and health partners to ensure our EICS families have a complete understanding of prevention and infection control measures, the various roles governmental departments will play and the expectations being placed on EICS and our school community.

Should an influenza pandemic arise and impact our schools, you will be the first to hear from us about what is happening and what we are doing about it. It is important to note that EICS is more than prepared to carry out its pandemic plan.

Right now we are asking for your help in preventing the spread of flu. We need your help to reinforce the importance of prevention and infection control measures with your child, such as:

- **Wash your hands frequently with soap and warm water.**
- **Cough etiquette: cough or sneeze into your sleeve, not into your hands. Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue and immediately throw the tissue out.**
- **Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth after touching door handles or other similar surfaces.**
- **Do not share personal items like drinks, water bottles, food, unwashed utensils, chapstick etc.**
- **Keep your child at home and avoid public places when sick.**

To learn everything you need to know, visit the Alberta Health Services website at www.albertahealthservices.ca. Additional resources and information are also available on the Division website at www.eics.ab.ca.

If you have concerns with your child's health, Alberta Health and Wellness encourages you to call Health Link Alberta at 780-408-5465 (toll-free: 1-866-408-5465) for advice. If you have any questions regarding EICS' pandemic preparedness plans, please contact the EICS Education Centre. You can also visit the EICS website at www.eics.ab.ca for further information and updates.

Thank you for your understanding and cooperation regarding this important issue.

Sincerely,



Dr. Chris Diachuk,
Superintendent of Schools