



# LAKE TRAIL SECONDARY SCHOOL

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School District No. 71 (Comox Valley)

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*"We're proud of our P.R.I.D.E."*

November 3, 2009

Dear Parents;

You may have heard some concerns about the number of students away with the flu from Lake Trail.

As you will have read in previous notices about H1N1 and our preparation for the flu season, we obtain our information about H1N1 through the Medical Health Officer and the Vancouver Island Health Authority (VIHA). What we have recently been told is that, in general, when people have the flu this year, likely it is H1N1. We do not expect that VIHA will be confirming any cases of H1N1 for us because of the concern for the privacy of individuals, the widespread influenza activity in the general community and that our response as a school is to be based on influenza like activity within the school environment. Where children become ill and are tested, often the results are not back for over a week at which time people have likely recovered. Finally, we know in our school that it is not the presence of H1N1 that is a trigger for us to begin specific interventions; it is a rise in the level of absenteeism resulting from flu like symptoms which would indicate that the flu is spreading. The Medical Health Officer has informed us that likely during the flu season there will be students with H1N1 in all of our schools.

The Vancouver Island Health Authority monitors the attendance and reasons for absence in all of our schools. When our absenteeism jumps, then we begin to determine the cause and take steps to intervene. At Lake Trail we are continuing to monitor our absenteeism level at school and be in contact with parents when students are away from school. Parents can help us with this by giving us the reason for the absence of your child. Our plan from the beginning has always been to limit the spread of any virus by promoting healthy choices.

These plans include:

- Encouraging parents to keep their child/ren at home who have a flu like illness until they are feeling better;
- Isolating students who have flu like symptoms, contacting home and arranging for transportation home;
- Telling staff members who are ill to stay home;
- Monitoring the levels of absenteeism at schools due to flu-like symptoms; and increasing the cleaning routines at schools including additional cleaning of flat surfaces.

To date at Lake Trail we have:

- Installed hand sanitizers provided by the School District; and
- Kept detailed records of students who are absent and the reasons for their absences.

To prevent the further spread of any type of influenza we encourage our students, staff and families to:

- Continue to practice good personal hygiene including regular washing of hands;
- Cough into a tissue or the inside of your elbow;
- Stay two metres away from anyone who is ill; and if you are sick, stay home until your symptoms are gone.

The School District and the Vancouver Island Health Authority have several resources for parents and the community on H1N1 including information for symptoms of the flu and what to do if your child is sick. The School District website is at [sd71.bc.ca](http://sd71.bc.ca) and we encourage you to look there for more information.

Thank you for your continued support of our school. By working together we help to keep our school community a healthier place.

Regards,

Lori Carpenter  
Principal  
Lake Trail Secondary School

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