



United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF INDIAN EDUCATION
Washington, D.C. 20240

To: All Education Line Officers, Principals and Schools

From: Kevin Skenandore, Director

Date: April 28, 2009

RE: **URGENT NOTICE- Swine Flu Pandemic**

The Bureau of Indian Education's number one priority continues to be safe and secure schools for the students we serve.

As part of the Bureau of Indian Education's comprehensive pandemic preparedness effort, I am writing to underscore the potential magnitude that a pandemic outbreak could cause in the education community, including BIE-funded schools and dormitories. It is especially important that you understand the gravity of a potential pandemic and begin to prepare now. Your leadership and cooperation is essential as we work together to plan for this potential event.

The global health community is closely monitoring a virus infection outbreak known as Swine Influenza A (H1N1), which originated in Mexico and has spread to the United States and Canada. U.S. Cases have been reported in California, Texas, Kansas, New York, and Ohio.

As we learn more information about the Swine Influenza (H1N1), we can immediately begin to take some very simple, yet highly effective precautions to prevent the infection. Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Wash your hands often with soap and water (alcohol-based hand cleaners are highly effective). And, avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth.

Each and every school and Line Office should begin to prepare for the **possibility** of school dismissal, COOP plans and emergency preparedness plans should be re-visited immediately. In the event that a student and or staff member is **CONFIRMED** as having the Swine Flu, there is a strong likelihood that school will be cancelled.

If the confirmation is at a BIE boarding school and or peripheral dormitory, the local professional health care organizations in concert with the BIE will give guidance as to how to proceed.

If any staff person or student at Haskell, SIPI, or BIE-operated or grant/contract school is confirmed to have the Swine Flu, you are to immediately contact Eric North, School Safety Specialist at (505)-554-8073.

The BIE will be providing two reports daily to central office as to the impact of the Swine Flu.

It is the Education Line Officer's responsibility to ensure every school under his or her authority be contacted immediately to share this information.

Web sites that are updated continuously are:

Centers for Disease Control

<http://www.cdc.gov/swineflu/>

U.S. Health & Human Services

<http://www.hhs.gov/>

Pandemic Flu website

<http://www.pandemicflu.gov/>

World Health Organization (WHO)

<http://www.who.int/csr/disease/swineflu/en/index.html>

Information from the State of New Mexico

<http://www.health.state.nm.us/>

Information from the State of Arizona

<http://www.azdhs.gov/phs/oids/epi/flu/swine/index.htm>

They provide excellent resource for guidance and procedures to follow.