



**DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE  
DEPENDENT SCHOOLS  
OFFICE OF THE PRINCIPAL  
HEIDELBERG MIDDLE SCHOOL  
UNIT 29237  
APO AE 09102**



15 September 2009

Dear Parents,

This letter will help your family prepare for a flu pandemic should it happen in our community. As you are probably aware, on June 11, 2009, the World Health Organization signaled that a global pandemic of Novel Influenza A (H1N1/Swine Flu) was underway by raising the worldwide pandemic alert level to Phase 6, the last Pandemic Period (global pandemic underway). This action was a reflection of the spread of the new H1N1 virus, not the severity of illness caused by the virus. At the time, more than 70 countries had reported cases of Novel Influenza A infection and there were ongoing community level outbreaks of Novel Influenza A in multiple parts of the world.

We are prepared during this upcoming school year to take the appropriate actions to help safeguard the health and well-being of your children. These actions will range from common sense steps to help prevent the spread of the flu to unlikely temporary school closures in the event of a widespread and prolonged flu pandemic. *Local commanders and military health officials would make decisions on any school closures as part of a community-wide response to the pandemic flu.*

Public health officials want people to protect themselves against pandemic flu. Here are some ways to protect your family:

- Keep children who are sick at home. Do not send them to school.
- Teach your children to wash hands frequently with soap and water for 20 seconds. Be sure to set a good example by doing this yourself.
- Teach your children to cover coughs and sneezes with tissues or by coughing into the inside of the elbow. Be sure to set a good example by doing this yourself.
- Teach your children to stay at least three feet away from people who are sick.
- People who are sick should stay home from work or school and avoid other people until they are better.
- Enclosed with this letter are health tips and a checklist to help families get ready for a pandemic flu outbreak. This information may also help your family get ready for any kind of emergency.

If you have any questions, please contact our school nurse, Ms. Bonnie Kerr, at 06221-388-9310 or your healthcare provider. For more information on H1N1, please visit the community website at [http://www.eucom.mil/english/flu/H1N1\\_flu.asp](http://www.eucom.mil/english/flu/H1N1_flu.asp) or the federal government website with information on planning for individuals and families at <http://www.pandemicflu.gov>, as well as the American Red Cross at <http://www.redcross.org>.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Stephanie M. El Sayed".

STEPHANIE M. EL SAYED  
PRINCIPAL