

For Immediate Release

June 25, 2009

BTF H1N1 RECOMMENDATIONS TO SCHOOL BOARD

Stating the BTF's willingness to work with the School District, Erie County Health Department and parents to "ensure that everything that we can is done to ensure that no additional students, parents or members of the staff are tragically infected with H1N1 flu", BTF President, Phil Rumore outlined recommendations to the School Board.

Citing concerns that most students (about 80%) are bussed and a disproportionate number of students have asthma, Rumore suggested the following:

1. We need to ensure that parents and teachers know the symptoms so that children possibly infected remain or are sent home.
2. Since the busses are possibly a primarily closed infection site, we need to have hand sanitizers on the buses and used by each child upon boarding.
3. We need to investigate whether a bus driver or aide has the authority to refuse admittance if a very ill child accompanied by an adult comes to enter the bus.
4. We need to investigate the possibility of having flu shots available at all of our schools.
5. We need to work together to ensure that if it is young children who are at risk, they have priority for the flu shots.
6. BTF through its publications and meetings will stress the importance of using the hand sanitizer when students arrive, during the day and when they leave. Teachers and administrators need to set the example.
7. We need to investigate concerns that the liquid used in some of our sanitizers in the schools is not of sufficient strength to kill the virus.
8. We need to work with the media to provide public service spots on a continuous basis.
9. We need to teach students to sneeze/cough into their elbow (something very new to me) if a tissue is not available..

President PHILIP RUMORE



BUFFALO TEACHERS
FEDERATION, INC

271 PORTER AVENUE
BUFFALO, N.Y. 14201
(716) 881-5400
FAX (716) 881-6678

June 22, 2009

MEMO TO: Dr. James A. Williams, Superintendent
Members, Buffalo Board of Education

FROM: Philip Rumore, President, BTF

RE: H1N1 Preparations for September – corrected version

We look forward to working with the District, Erie County and Parents to ensure that everything that we can is done to ensure that no additional students, parents or members of the staff are tragically infected with H1N1 flu.

There is so little understood now about this strain. Hopefully we will know more soon.

What we do know is that it is highly unusual for the flu to be spread in spring. Hopefully this means that cold weather will eradicate it.

We also know that it is particularly prevalent in children. The belief is that people exposed in the seventies to this type of flu have some resistance to it; whereas, our students have no such resistance.

Since most (over 80%) of our students are bussed, sit in classrooms, are in close contact with each other and most importantly may (in contrast with suburban districts) have asthma, we need to work together to minimize their risk of exposure.

Some preliminary thoughts:

- BTF through its publications and meetings will stress the importance of using the hand sanitizer when students arrive, during the day and when they leave. Teachers and Administrators need to set the example.
- We need to teach students to sneeze/cough into their elbow (something very new to me).
- We need to ensure that parents and teachers know the symptoms so that children possibly infected remain or are sent home.
- Since the busses are possibly a primarily closed infection site, we need to have hand sanitizers on the buses and used as each child enters.
- We need to investigate whether a bus driver or aide has the authority of refusing admittance if a very ill child accompanied by an adult comes to enter the bus.
- We need to investigate the possibility of having flu shots available at all of our schools.

- We need to work together to ensure that if it is still young children that are at risk, they have priority for the flu shots.
- We need to work with the media to provide public service spots on a continuous basis.
- We need to investigate some concerns that the liquid used in some of our sanitizers in schools is not of sufficient strength to kill the virus.

These are just a few thoughts. I am sure you have many more.
We look forward to working with you on this very important issue.

PR/mm