



Nevada State Health Division  
Public Health Preparedness



## ELEMENTARY & SECONDARY EDUCATION

### **A Key Policy Letter Signed by the Nevada Superintendent of Public Instruction and the Nevada State Health Officer**

August 2009

Dear Nevada Health Officers and Nevada School District Superintendents:

First, we want to thank teachers, parents, and administrators for the tremendous job you have done to address the challenges you faced as a result of the H1N1 flu outbreak.

It is important for schools to continue planning. Think about how you can keep children from gathering in large groups; watch for influenza-like illness in students; send students/teachers/school staff home if they have a fever. In addition, because schools could be used as vaccine distribution locations, schools should consider how they might accommodate such requests. While all of us want to do all we can to keep students engaged in learning and maintain a sense of normalcy, we need to be ready for whatever the fall may bring.

Good health practices:

- Get your seasonal flu vaccination.
- Sneeze/cough into your sleeve.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. Alcohol-based hand cleaners are also effective.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs spread this way.
- Try to avoid close contact with sick people.
- If you get sick with the flu, stay home from work or school and limit contact with others to keep from infecting them.

Helpful websites:

- Update your emergency plans and ensure all your contact lists are up to date. If you do not already have such a plan, we encourage you to develop one. To initiate or build upon an all-hazards plan, visit <http://www.ed.gov/emergencyplan> and <http://rems.ed.gov>.
- Collaborate with your state and/or local health departments. Useful information, including health department contacts, can be found at <http://www.naccho.org> or <http://www.astho.org>.
- More information about controlling infectious diseases at schools can be found at <http://www.flu.gov/plan/school/toolkit.html> and <http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu>.
- Consider alternative mechanisms for delivery of education content, leveraging community resources if appropriate and possible. See <http://free.ed.gov>.



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We face an uncertain situation. Nevertheless, there are measures we can all take to meet the potential public health challenges that lie ahead. Your commitment is critical to the overall effort. We want to work closely with you to ensure you have the support you need to provide a safe learning environment for your students. You may call on us and our staffs at any time, and we will check in with you throughout the school year. In the meantime, you may find helpful information at these Web sites: [www.flu.nv.gov](http://www.flu.nv.gov), [www.flu.gov](http://www.flu.gov), [www.ed.gov](http://www.ed.gov) and [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov). If you have questions for the Department of Education, feel free to send them to [flu@ed.gov](mailto:flu@ed.gov).

Again, thank you for all your efforts. We look forward to continuing to work with you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Keith Rheault".

Dr. Keith Rheault  
Superintendent of Public Instruction

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Tracey Green MD".

Dr. Tracey Green  
State Health Officer