



OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

October 28, 2009

Dear Parents and Guardians:

*Chairperson: Milton Peach, B.A., B.A.(Ed.)
CEO/Director of Education (Acting): Ford Rice, M.Ed.*

H1N1 Vaccination Program and Use of Schools for Public Immunization Clinics

In June 2006, Eastern School District signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Eastern Health. This MOU committed the use of school facilities as sites for public vaccinations if required in the event of a pandemic. In late spring 2009, Eastern Health officials contacted our office and requested assistance in preparing for a possible mass immunization plan for the H1N1 virus.

Over the summer months and into the fall, Eastern Health officials visited a number of schools and public buildings in communities throughout the Eastern School District to secure locations for conducting public vaccination clinics. Eastern Health has confirmed that they will hold public vaccination clinics in 23 of our 122 schools beginning November 2, 2009.

Your child's school is one of the designated public vaccination sites. As such, the school gymnasium will not be available for the period of time designated for vaccinations in your area, in addition to an additional four days to allow for set up and dismantling of the clinics. (This schedule will be available from your school principal and Eastern Health). While I understand that there will be a loss of gym time, teachers will be creative and try to find ways to minimize the impact on students as much as possible. All extra-curricular and co-curricular activities in the gym will be cancelled for this period, as well as community use of school activities.

To alleviate concerns with respect to members of the public accessing our buildings, the gymnasium and areas utilized by Eastern Health will be off limits to school staff and students for the duration of the vaccination clinics. Eastern Health is providing security services to ensure the school is secure so that the public will not have access throughout the school. Daily enhanced cleaning as per our protocols will also continue in the areas occupied by Eastern Health.

We also recognize that there may be traffic and parking challenges during the period of the public vaccination program. We have requested that clinics start after school is in session and that a planned break for Eastern Health staff is scheduled for mid afternoon when students are dismissed. This should help to alleviate traffic congestion on the parking lot. Parents and visitors to the school will also be asked to be extra attentive and patient during this time.

The H1N1 vaccination program is a response to a public health emergency situation. While the Eastern School District is cooperating with Eastern Health, the health and safety of our students is, and always will be, our first priority.

We thank you in advance for your understanding and cooperation. Should you have any questions related to the H1N1 vaccination program, please contact your local Eastern Health office or the provincial Healthline: 1-888-709-2929.

Sincerely,

FORD RICE
CEO/Director of Education

