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Dear Parents/Guardians:

This is an update regarding the possible H₁N₁ outbreak here in the Branford schools. Absenteeism is up slightly today at Walsh Intermediate School to approximately 30.5% of the student population. However, not all of these absences appear to be “flu-like” illnesses. Absences at our other schools are similar to yesterday’s numbers.

At Branford High School 10.8% of the students were absent, about half of those reporting “flu-like” illness. Each of our elementary schools, Tisko at 6.8%, Sliney at 9.3% and Murphy at 12.9% report a similar pattern.

As I noted yesterday, without official documentation and testing, it is impossible to know how many of the absences are due to H₁N₁. It does appear that there is a fair amount of the H₁N₁ virus in our student population. Very few staff are absent at this point.

Please continue to encourage good health habits with your children, especially hand washing. Also, it is important to relay your child’s symptoms to the school if your child is ill. This will help us better monitor the situation.

At this time, there are no plans to close school. Should there be a change, you will receive immediate notification. I will continue my consultation with school administrators, school nurses, our school physician and the health department.

Sincerely,

Kathleen C. Halligan, Ph.D.
Superintendent of Schools