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October 5, 2009

Dear Parents/Guardians:

I am writing to update you on the H₁N₁ influenza situation.

We, here in the Branford Schools, are experiencing very little flu-like activity. The East Shore and State Departments of Health additionally report that activity throughout Connecticut is very localized at this time. However, we are continuing with our daily surveillance to monitor our schools.

It is our understanding from the State Health Department that pediatricians and hospitals will begin to receive the first shipments of H₁N₁ vaccine this week or next week. This shipment of vaccine is earmarked for the high risk population including hospitalized patients, children under the age of four, and children who have underlying health problems. These inoculations will be handled through private physicians.

The East Shore Health Department will run an H₁N₁ vaccination clinic for Branford school-aged children (K-12) and young adults, up to age 24 once vaccine supplies are received, which we anticipate to be in late October/early November. This clinic will be held after school hours.

The School-Based Health Clinics may also provide vaccinations for those students who are signed up at Walsh Intermediate School and Branford High School. These vaccinations will take place during the same time frame, late October/early November.

Later this week, the East Shore Health Clinic will send out an email through our system to parents/guardians to gauge interest in the vaccination clinic. Please be sure to respond to that query.

Additional information will be sent as soon as we have final plans for both the school clinic and School-Based Health Clinics vaccinations. I will also communicate with you with updated information as I receive it. Please note that there are links to the CDC and the government flu website on the homepage of Branford's website: www.branford.k12.ct.us. I am also including the phone number to the **Connecticut hotline** for answers to H₁N₁ flu questions. The number is: **1-800-830-9426**.

Sincerely,

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

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