

# MESA

---

## PUBLIC SCHOOLS

October 9, 2009

Dear Parents:

How quickly the time has passed. Our first quarter is completed and students are taking a well-deserved break.

The Mesa Public Schools teachers and support staff are committed to helping your student to be successful in school. We believe it is critical for children to attend class each day so they may participate in lessons that are building blocks in their education.

*Michael B. Cowan, Ed.D.  
Superintendent of Schools*

*63 East Main Street #101  
Mesa, Arizona  
85201-7422  
www.mpsaz.org*

Staying healthy is important as we begin cold and flu season. This year, health officials are concerned with the regular seasonal flu as well as Novel H1N1 or swine flu. According to the Maricopa County Department of Public Health, Novel H1N1 flu appears to affect children more than the seasonal flu, and about half of Novel H1N1 patients who need to be hospitalized are school- or preschool-aged.

Education and prevention will be keys to helping our students stay healthy and attend class each day. Your family will play an important part in preventing the spread of flu in our community by using the same healthy practices that we are asking school staff to follow:

#### GOVERNING BOARD

*Michael Hughes  
President*

*Dave Lane  
Clerk*

*Michael Nichols  
Member*

*Steven Peterson  
Member*

*Dr. Ben Whiting  
Member*

- Teach children to **cover a cough or sneeze** with their shirt sleeve. Remind them to wash hands frequently and to keep hands away from the face.
- **Keep sick children at home.** A sick child in the classroom can quickly infect classmates. If too many children are sick at school, we may be required to take extreme measures to stop the spread of illness, including closing a school. **Flu symptoms**, seasonal or H1N1, include a high fever, headache, dry cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, muscle aches and extreme tiredness. Sometimes patients may have nausea, vomiting or diarrhea, but this is more common in children than adults.

If you keep your child out of school because of illness, please tell the school attendance clerk if your child has "flu-like" symptoms. The district is closely monitoring student attendance patterns and information about why children are absent.

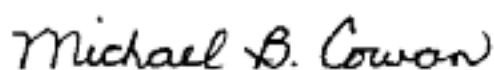
- **Consider getting a flu shot.** Seasonal flu shots are now available. The district, along with the Mesa Fire Department and Maricopa County Department of Public Health, are sponsoring free immunization clinics. The dates may be subject to change based on the availability of the vaccine – for up-to-date information, visit the Web site at [www.mpsaz.org/beprepared](http://www.mpsaz.org/beprepared) or call (480) 472-0562.

A vaccine for H1N1 has been approved for use and the first shipment is expected to arrive this month. As more students and staff become vaccinated with the seasonal flu shot, it will help to stop the spread of flu infection in school and decrease the opportunity for it to reach family members.

Mesa Public Schools has an emergency management plan that includes addressing health issues like H1N1. We will continue to provide you with any new information about H1N1 through your school newsletter, our phone notification system or our district Web site.

Like you, we want your child to stay healthy. By working together, we can teach students the illness prevention measures that will hopefully keep them in the classroom ready to learn each and every day.

Sincerely,



Dr. Michael Cowan  
Superintendent