

**SAMPLE LETTER TO PARENTS #4 Expanded Outbreak:
Use this letter to let parents know schools are open and urge ill children to stay home**

Dear Parents,

We wrote to you recently to tell you about a pandemic flu outbreak in our community. Here is some new information.

There are now even more students in our school who are ill with this flu virus. Still the county health department tells us that students who are not ill can continue to attend school. The schools will remain open. We will keep you updated with any important information.

To keep the flu from spreading to more people, we ask you to keep sick children home. Any children who are sick in school will be sent home.

Public health officials want you to protect yourself and your family against pandemic flu. Here are some ways to stop the spread of germs and sickness and take care of your family

- Keep children who are sick at home. Don't send them to school.
- If some of the people in your home are sick with the flu, keep them away from the people who are not sick.
- If some of the people in your home are sick with the flu and you cannot see a health provider, some things you can do to help them are:
 - o Have them drink a lot of liquid (juice, water)
 - o Keep the ill person as comfortable as possible. Rest is important.
 - o For fever, sore throat and muscle aches, in adults, use ibuprofen (Motrin) or acetaminophen (Tylenol). Do not use aspirin with children or teenagers; it can cause Reye's syndrome, a life-threatening illness.
 - o Keep tissues and a trash bag within reach of the sick person.
 - o Be sure everyone in your home washes their hands frequently.
 - o Contact a healthcare provider for further advice. If the ill person is having difficulty breathing or is getting worse, contact your healthcare provider right away.

If you have questions, please visit the Burlington County Health Department website at <http://www.co.burlington.nj.us/departments/health>. You can also call the CONTACT help line by dialing 2-1-1 to obtain more information.

If the pandemic flu continues to spread and more students become ill, schools may close for days or weeks. The purpose of closing schools will be to keep children from getting sick. If schools are closed, children should stay at home. Begin planning now for childcare in your home.