



ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES

September 3, 2020

To: The Arizona School Community

RE: Influenza (flu) vaccination message for schools

Dear School Administrator,

In the setting of the current COVID-19 pandemic, controlling the spread of respiratory illness is at the top of everybody's mind. In contrast to COVID-19, efforts to control the spread of influenza in our schools have long been practiced and refined. Schools play a sentinel role in making recommendations and demonstrating good health practices that protect students, staff and families from the spread of respiratory illnesses.

During the seasonal flu season, a variety of infection control practices can be implemented by schools to prevent the spread of infection. Respiratory etiquette including covering your cough and washing your hands frequently are key elements to controlling the spread of disease. Concurrent efforts with COVID-19 control will help control the spread of influenza and other common respiratory viruses. Strong messages to stay at home when you are sick, mask-up, and maintain physical distance strengthen this common approach.

Unique to seasonal influenza is the availability of a vaccine. Vaccination against influenza has been a cornerstone of our effort to protect our communities against influenza; not only preventing infections but also making illness with flu less severe and preventing hospitalization and severe consequences. This flu season, more than ever, we must roll up our sleeves and vaccinate against flu for the safety and well being of our communities. Schools have always been strong and trusted voices in their communities, and we hope you will partner with us to spread this message and get vaccinated yourselves.

The ADHS has planned a far-reaching campaign to encourage vaccination against flu. We hope you can join with us to spread this message. An interactive map showing where your community members can get vaccinated is available at vaccinefinder.org. Thank you for your partnership in promoting the health of all Arizonans.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kathy Hoffman".

Kathy Hoffman, MS, CCC-SLP
Superintendent of Public Instruction
Arizona Department of Education

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Cara M. Christ MD, MS".

Cara M. Christ, MD, MS
Director
Arizona Department of Health Services