



James C. Agostine
Superintendent

November 4, 2009

Dear Parents:

There has been much discussion in the media about schools and H1N1 recently that surely raises a level of concern about your children's health. I wanted to take a few minutes to tell you what Region 16 has been doing to monitor illness in our schools. On a daily basis, I am monitoring the daily attendance rate in the schools. The school nurses are logging daily attendance and noting the Influenza Like Illnesses (ILI). Our local health districts, Chesprocott and Naugatuck Valley, have requested that data. There has been some early discussion with the health districts to provide H1N1 vaccine to our students for those wishing to receive it. To date, they have been unable to secure vaccine for such an undertaking. If and when vaccines are available, we will notify you. I am in contact with our health districts almost daily.

We do have confirmed cases of H1N1 in each of our schools. Our attendance rate, which typically averages approximately 95%, has fluctuated downward several times in the past week. Today, November 4, 2009, for instance, our attendance rate was approximately 90%. On Monday, November 2, 2009, we had a rate of attendance of 88%. There has been speculation by some people that we are in the throes of an outbreak, fueled in part via "facebook". In some instances, there have been rumors that we will close schools as early as this week. Both are unfounded rumors. We will only begin to seriously consider closing our schools in the event that:

- attendance rates drop significantly to approximately 75% or so,
- if illnesses prevent us from monitoring classes or transporting students, or
- we are advised by our health district to do so.

I encourage you to keep your children home if they are sick until they are well and without a fever (without the use of fever reducing medications) for 24 hours. If there are any new developments, I will notify you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "James C. Agostine". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being the most prominent.

James C. Agostine