

[Date]

Dear Superintendent:

**RE: School Absenteeism greater than 10%**

Alberta Health Services, Health Protection, requests the assistance of your school principals in reporting absentee rates of greater than 10% to their public health nurse, using their current reporting protocols. [Zones may wish to indicate specifically who the absenteeism should be reported to here.]

Monitoring sudden, sustained occurrences of school absenteeism is a sensitive measure for identifying the arrival of influenza and other viruses in the community, and enables health care staff to provide appropriate preventive measures for the school and community.

For symptoms that are not consistent with influenza-like illness, public health staff will still conduct an investigation and recommend preventive measures as appropriate.

Public health staff may request that the school staff provide current contact information for 4-6 symptomatic students for further investigation and follow-up.

Your schools' participation provides a great community service and we look forward to working with you again throughout the school year.

Sincerely,

[Zone Medical Officer of Health  
Alberta Health Services]