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STATE REVISES SCHOOL CLOSURE GUIDANCE FOR H1N1

Carson City, NV—In response to revised guidance from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and a greater knowledge of how the virus is affecting people, the Nevada State Health Division today announced revised guidance regarding school closure when a case of H1N1 virus is confirmed within Nevada's school population.

In conformance with the CDC guidance, the state guidance assumes all schools will remain open following the confirmation of a case of H1N1 virus among its students. Upon that confirmation, the local school district superintendent and the local district health officer will meet to discuss the situation and agree on monitoring and surveillance procedures.

Should the health officer and/or school superintendent believe there is a need to close the school, a full meeting will be held of the Joint Health and Education Authorities Influenza Oversight Committee, which includes the two local officials, as well as State Health Officer Dr. Mary Guinan, and Nevada Schools Superintendent Keith Rheault.

"This new guidance for Nevada's schools is consistent with the direction of the CDC and offers protection for Nevada's school children while recognizing that the H1N1 virus is acting more mildly than the regular, season flu," said Dr. Guinan.

Under previous guidance, the full Joint Health and Education Authorities Influenza Oversight Committee met following each case of confirmed H1N1 virus within a school district student. That process worked perfectly during the initial cases to decide what action was necessary regarding the schools, but a greater understanding of the virus and its severity led to this change.

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