



## News from Secretary Duncan and ED

THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Dear Superintendents,

As you are likely aware, the United States has been experiencing a nationwide outbreak of enterovirus D68 (EV-D68) associated with severe respiratory illness that has been especially harmful to children. At the same time, you and your communities may also have questions about the Ebola virus. To address both public health concerns, the U.S. Department of Education and our federal health partners have a number of informational resources to share with you.

Almost all of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)-confirmed cases this year of EV-D68 infection have been among children. Many of the children had asthma or a history of wheezing. Many parents continue to be worried about the outbreak and want information about what they can do to prevent illness and protect themselves and their families. The CDC has developed information and resources for parents about EV-D68. Please help us to address parents' questions and concerns and make them aware that these resources are available.

Below are CDC resources about EV-D68 developed for parents:

- [Web Feature](#), "What Parents Need to Know About Enterovirus D68"
- [Drop-in newsletter article \(matte article\)](#), "Parents: Learn the Facts about Enterovirus D68"
- [Fact sheet for parents](#), "What Parents Need to Know about Enterovirus D68"
- [General questions and answers for the public](#)
- [Infographic: Keep Your Child from Getting and Spreading Enterovirus D68](#)

Yesterday, the CDC issued a [press release](#) sharing news about a new lab test developed by CDC for EV-D68 which will allow more rapid testing of specimens. Because of this new test, confirmed cases of EV-D68 will appear to rise rapidly over the next 7-10 days as specimen testing accelerates. However, changes in case counts won't represent a real-time influx of new cases.

Remember too, as enterovirus season is expected to taper off, flu activity usually begins to increase in October. While there is not a vaccine to prevent illness from enterovirus, the single best way to protect against the flu is to get vaccinated each year. Many resources for parents and others can be found on the [CDC flu web site](#). CDC recommends that **ALL** children 6 months old or older get a flu vaccine.

Finally, we know your communities may also have questions about what schools can do to keep students and adults safe from the Ebola virus. The President has made control of Ebola a top national security priority, and we as a nation have spent more than \$100 million fighting this outbreak since the first cases were reported last March in Africa. Our national health system has the capacity and expertise to quickly detect and contain this disease and is working with states and school districts to ensure the safety of our students and school employees. As you likely know, the CDC is continually updating its information on Ebola, information that can be found here:

<http://www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/index.html>.

Additional materials developed by the DISD Communications Team included there are:

[Ebola FAQ](#)

[Talking with Children about Ebola](#)

[Recognizing and Reducing Signs of Anxiety in Times of Crisis](#)

We sincerely hope that you find these materials beneficial and that you will share them through all of your available networks and communication vehicles.

Thank you.

The National Public Engagement Team

U.S. Department of Education