



## **DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH**

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### **Annual Stop Flu at School Vaccination Program Limited to Selected Public Schools Statewide**

HONOLULU – The state’s annual school-located vaccination program, Stop Flu at School, will be offered to all elementary and intermediate public schools in Kauai, Maui, and Hawaii Counties later this year. On Oahu, the program will be made available to selected public schools. Stop Flu at School, which provides free flu shots to students in kindergarten through eighth grade, will no longer be offered in private schools.

Information packets and vaccination consent forms will be distributed to families in participating schools in early October. Vaccination clinics are scheduled to begin November 1.

“We recognize that many families relied on the Stop Flu at School program as a free and convenient way to vaccinate their children, so scaling back the program’s offerings was not a decision taken lightly,” said Health Director Dr. Virginia Pressler. “After careful consideration, we understood it was critical to prioritize eligible schools based on students with the greatest need for assistance, which allowed us to maximize the benefit to the public while utilizing the limited funds and resources available.”

The program will be offered to approximately 90 Oahu public schools which in previous years had at least 40 percent of their student enrollment participating in the Department of Education’s Free and Reduced-Price Meal Program. All neighbor island public schools will be eligible to

participate in this year's program as access to healthcare in those counties can often be a challenge.

"Parents of students attending schools no longer eligible for the Stop Flu at School program are encouraged to have their child vaccinated by their healthcare provider," said State Epidemiologist Dr. Sarah Park. "As an additional resource, pharmacies are now able to provide flu vaccine to children ages 11 through 17 with a prescription from their healthcare provider."

In addition to vaccination for everyone ages 6 months and older, DOH recommends other flu prevention strategies, which include staying home when sick, covering coughs and sneezes, and washing hands frequently. For more information about the flu, visit

[http://health.hawaii.gov/docd/disease\\_listing/influenza-flu/](http://health.hawaii.gov/docd/disease_listing/influenza-flu/).

The Stop Flu at School program is a continuing partnership between the Departments of Health and Education, and is made possible by the support of school administrators, health care providers, the American Academy of Pediatrics Hawaii Chapter, health insurers, and federal partners. For more information about Stop Flu at School, visit

<http://health.hawaii.gov/docd/about-us/programs/stop-flu-at-school/>.

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