



## **DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH**

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### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **FIRST LADY DAWN IGE KICKS OFF ANNUAL STOP FLU AT SCHOOL PROGRAM AND RECOGNIZES PUBLIC AND PRIVATE PARTNERS**

HONOLULU – First Lady Dawn Ige, together with Dr. Virginia Pressler, Director of Health, and Dr. Sarah Park, State Epidemiologist, today recognized public and private organizations for their contribution in reaching the milestone achievement of more than 500,000 flu vaccinations administered through the Stop Flu at School program since its inception in 2007.

This recognition ceremony also kicked off the 9<sup>th</sup> year of the school-located influenza vaccination program, which helps protect more than 65,000 Hawaii students annually from the flu. “We are immensely proud of this program, which is the only one of its kind in the nation, in providing free flu vaccinations to elementary and middle school children in more than 300 public, private, and charter schools statewide,” said Health Director Virginia Pressler. “Counties in other states have conducted similar programs, but we are the only one to provide this service statewide.”

“This program is extremely important and the single most effective way to protect our keiki, our schools and communities from the flu. It’s free and it’s easy, and I encourage parents to ensure their children are protected,” said Mrs. Ige.

Information packets and vaccination consent forms are being distributed to parents through participating schools. Parents choosing to have their children vaccinated through the Stop Flu at School program must complete the vaccination consent forms and return them to school by Friday, Sept. 4, 2015.

Parents also have the option of completing the consent form online. To access the online consent form, visit <https://vaxonlinereg.doh.hawaii.gov>. Consent forms completed online must be printed, signed and dated, then returned to school by the Sept. 4 deadline.

This year's vaccination clinics will be held in October and November. A list of participating schools and their clinic dates is available online at <http://health.hawaii.gov/docd/files/2015/07/Statewide-Schedule-for-Public-Site-07212015.pdf>.

For more information about the Stop Flu at School program and to download translated consent forms, visit <http://health.hawaii.gov/docd/flu-hawaii/stop-flu-at-school> or call Aloha United Way's information and referral service at 2-1-1 for assistance.

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