



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

News Release

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**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH RECOGNIZES OUTSTANDING
PARTICIPANTS IN STOP FLU AT SCHOOL PROGRAM**

HONOLULU – The Hawai'i State Department of Health (DOH) today honored six schools for their high levels of participation in the statewide, school-based influenza immunization program, *Protect Hawaii's Keiki: Stop Flu at School*.

Iolani School, Kapalama Elementary School, Ke Kula O Nawahiokalaniopuu Iki Lab Public Charter School, Kualapuu Elementary New Century Public Charter School, Mililani Middle School, and St. Michael's School were each presented a plaque by Lt. Governor James R. "Duke" Aiona Jr. in ceremonies held at the State Capitol. The six schools represent public, private, and charter schools from throughout the state and were distinguished by having either the highest percentages of participation or greatest numbers of students participating in the program.

"Given the current global novel H1N1 flu situation, highlighting this program and these top-performing schools couldn't be more timely," stated Director of Health Chiyome Fukino, M.D. "Vaccinating our children against seasonal influenza and keeping flu illness to a minimum will go a long way toward helping us control the spread of novel strains such as the H1N1 virus."

“Thanks to the foresight of the Department of Health and its successful partnerships with public and private schools and healthcare providers, systems are already in place for us to quickly and efficiently respond to help keep our keiki safe and healthy,” said Lt. Governor Aiona. “We were the first in the nation to institute this program, and our early preparation is paying off.”

“We commend and thank the students who participated in the *Stop Flu at School* program. They understand what it means to be a community contributor and took responsibility for their own health,” said Schools Superintendent Patricia Hamamoto. “Their actions benefit their families and the entire community. We will continue to encourage schools and families to participate in this voluntary program when it is offered again this fall.”

Last year, the DOH *Stop Flu at School* program received the Immunization Excellence Award for Overall 2007-08 Season Activity by the National Influenza Vaccine Summit. Over the past two years, the program has provided influenza vaccinations at no charge to over 120,000 elementary and middle school students in public and private schools throughout the state. Over 15,000 school faculty and staff were also vaccinated.

Stop Flu at School partners included the Hawai'i State Department of Health, Hawai'i State Department of Education, Hawai'i Association of Independent Schools, and Hawai'i Catholic Schools with support from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Hawai'i chapters of the American Academy of Pediatrics and Academy of Family Physicians, Kaiser Permanente, and the Hawai'i Medical Service Association (HMSA).

More information about the DOH *Protect Hawaii's Keiki: Stop Flu at School* program is available at: <http://www.stopfluatschool.com/>.

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