



THE STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK
Richard P. Mills
President of The University and
Commissioner of Education



NEW YORK STATE
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
Richard F. Daines, M.D.
Commissioner

May 22, 2009

TO: District Superintendents of Schools
Superintendents of Public Schools
Administrators of Nonpublic Schools
Administrators of Charter Schools
School Principals
Other Educators and Childcare Providers
College and University Presidents
Local Health Department Officials

FROM:

Richard P. Mills
Commissioner
NYS Education Department

Richard F. Daines, M.D.
Commissioner
NYS Department of Health

SUBJECT: K-12 Educational Facilities: School Absenteeism Monitoring for H1N1 (Swine Flu) Infections

Since the recognition of H1N1 (swine flu) in New York State, schools have been working collaboratively with local health departments to share important student absenteeism and illness information. Schools have also been in consultation with local health officials and school medical directors when considering whether or not to close due to illness. Building on what local school districts and local health officials are already doing, the New York State Education Department and the New York State Department of Health have worked together to develop a voluntary statewide system for monitoring illness and absenteeism in schools that will enhance school monitoring capabilities. This supplemental process is being implemented on a pilot basis because the current evolving situation with the H1N1 (swine flu) outbreak in New York State warrants heightened, real-time monitoring to allow early identification of developing problems in school settings.

The additional information collected will supplement the data school districts already collect regarding absenteeism and inform local decision-making regarding school closures. The system will permit daily reporting of data by schools to local health departments to provide situational awareness regarding a spike in illness among school children and help monitor the prevalence of illness. Many county health departments already collect this data from school districts during the height of the ordinary influenza season. Decision-making about school closures will continue to be a local decision made by school officials in consultation with local health officials.

Thank you for your continued cooperation in this matter.

Attachments:

NYSDOH Advisory, "K-12 Educational Facilities: School Absenteeism Monitoring for H1N1 (swine flu) Infections", School Surveillance and Reporting System, Health Commerce System Account Guide



STATE OF NEW YORK DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Corning Tower The Governor Nelson A. Rockefeller Empire State Plaza Albany, New York 12237

Richard F. Daines, M.D.
Commissioner

Wendy E. Saunders
Executive Deputy Commissioner

May 22, 2009

To: Private and Public Elementary and Secondary Educational Institutions, School Based Health Centers, Local Health Departments

From: New York State Department of Health, Division of Epidemiology

**K-12 EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES: SCHOOL ABSENTEEISM MONITORING
FOR H1N1 (SWINE FLU) INFECTIONS**
Please distribute to all appropriate staff.

Introduction

This document is intended to inform K-12 educational facilities about recommendations for school absenteeism monitoring to begin immediately, if not already ongoing, and continue for the remainder of the school year. This is a supplement to the joint NYS Departments of Health and Education guidance document, "Educational and Childcare Facilities: Update #2 H1N1 (Swine Flu) Infections" distributed May 12, 2009, which continues to reflect current guidance regarding the response to human infections with H1N1 (swine flu) virus in educational and childcare facilities outside of New York City (NYC) and can be accessed at:

<http://usny.nysed.gov/swine-flu-info.html>.

In some school settings in NYC and NYS, there continues to be ongoing high rates of absenteeism and influenza-like illness which, in certain instances and on a case-by-case basis, has led to temporary school closure. For guidance related to educational institutions in NYC, see the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (NYCDOHMH) website at:

<http://www.nyc.gov/html/doh/html/home/home.shtml>.

The continually evolving H1N1 (swine flu) situation underscores the critical importance for all schools statewide to track daily absenteeism and conduct influenza-like illness monitoring, as these are the criteria by which recommendations for school closure, if needed, would be determined. It is important to track this information daily, in real-time, so that early and rapid action can be taken if rates begin to significantly increase.

The primary means to reduce the spread of influenza in schools continues to be the early identification of ill students and staff who should stay home when ill, and encouraging good cough and hand hygiene etiquette. Decisions related to measures taken in response to human infections with H1N1 (swine flu) virus remain at the discretion of local education and health

officials, taking into account the specific needs of the community, including public concern and the impact of school absenteeism and staffing shortages.

Monitoring Recommendations

The New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) **strongly recommends** schools (K-12) within NYS (outside of NYC) immediately begin to conduct specific monitoring activities and continue throughout the remainder of the 2008-09 school year. H1N1 (swine flu) disease is expected to persist throughout the summer and into the start of the 2009-10 school year. Over the summer, recommendations to continue school absenteeism monitoring will be defined and distributed.

At this time, all schools (K-12) within NYS (outside of NYC) should collect and review the following on a daily basis and report this information by 3:00 p.m. the following day to the local health department (LHD).

- Student absenteeism rate
- Staff absenteeism rate
- Number of students who are sent home early and the reasons for early dismissal

NYSDOH has built a data reporting tool, called *School Survey, School Surveillance Activity* on the Health Commerce System (HCS) for schools to use for reporting the absenteeism and illness information to LHDs daily. Schools should already have access to the HCS for other required reporting activities. Detailed instructions on how to obtain a Health Commerce account are included.

Detailed instructions for how to access and complete the *School Survey, School Surveillance Activity* are included. In addition, a pre-recorded training webinar will soon be available. General questions should be directed to the LHD and/or the NYSDOH Bureau of Communicable Disease Control at 518-473-4439.

Schools that already track illness and absenteeism in existing surveillance systems may continue to interact with their LHD using these existing systems. NYSDOH recommends that schools and LHDs that do not have such a surveillance system use the NYSDOH *School Survey, School Surveillance Activity*.

Volume

1

NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Bureau of HEALTHCOM Network Systems Management

School Surveillance and Reporting System

INFORMATICS SCIENCES UNIT

Quick Reference Guide

NYSDOH, BHNSM Informatics Sciences Unit
800 North Pearl Street • Room 236
Phone 518.473.1809 • Fax 518.473.1615

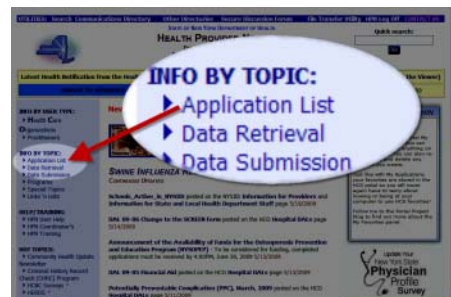
Chapter 1

Entering and Submitting Data

1. Log on to the Health Commerce System
<https://commerce.health.state.ny.us> and select to go to the HPN.



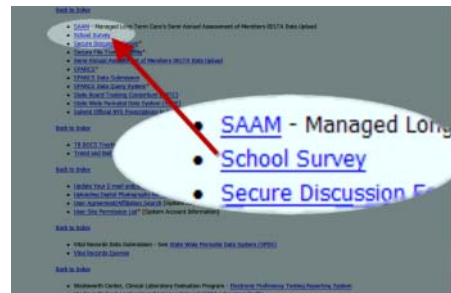
2. Click **Application List**



3. Click the letter **S**.



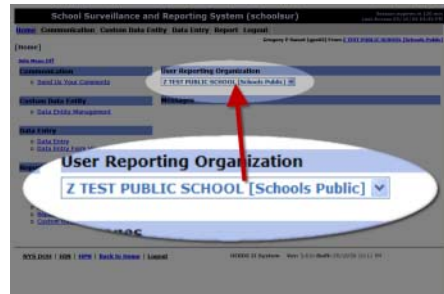
4. Click **School Survey**



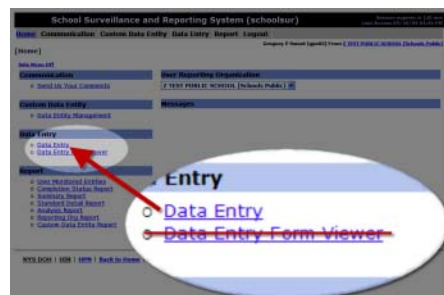
- Under User Reporting Organization choose the organization for which you wish to report data.

Please Note

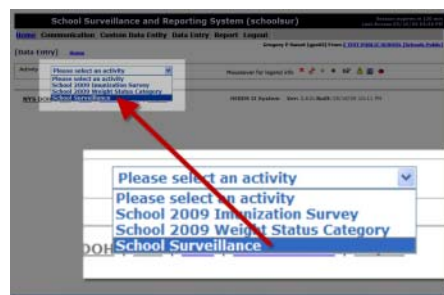
You will only need to make this selection if you can report data for more than one school or more than one type of school (public, private).



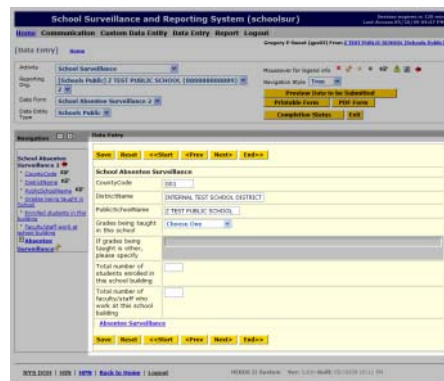
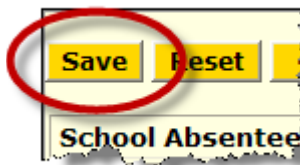
- Click **Data Entry**



- Select the **School Surveillance** activity



- In the Data Entry pane respond to the questions. Always click **Save** after entering any data.



9. Click **Next**, or **Absentee Surveillance** to open the Absentee Surveillance Form. .

10. Click **Add Group**.

Please Note

The Absentee Surveillance form is a repeating group form. Whenever you come in to enter your data for the next day's report, you need to click on the Add Group button. This will give you a new blank form on which to enter the data for that day's report. Unless you are correcting a mistake you never want to overwrite data you have already entered.

11. In the Data Entry pane, respond to the questions. Always click **Save** after entering any data



12. For each day that you have data to report, click **Add Group** to create a blank set of fields.

Repeat from Step 10.

This screenshot shows the 'Absence Surveillance' form. A yellow callout bubble with a red arrow points to the 'Add Group' button, which is labeled '(4) Other symptom'.

13. If you are finished entering data, click **Preview Data to be Submitted**

This screenshot shows the 'School Surveillance and Reporting System (schoolsur)' interface. A yellow callout bubble with a red arrow points to the 'Preview Data to be Submitted' button, which is also labeled 'Printable Form' and 'PDF Form'.

14. Review the spreadsheet, if you have errors they will be highlighted red. You should see rows of data for each Absentee Surveillance report you created, that is, a set for each time you clicked **Add Group**. Click any fields highlighted red to return to that field and correct the data. Once all corrections are made and there are no errors, you must submit the data to NYSDOH.

This screenshot shows the 'Preview Data to be Submitted' spreadsheet. It displays a table with columns for 'Field', 'Value', 'Data Type', and 'Updated'. The table contains data for 'Absentee Surveillance' and 'School Surveillance' reports. Some fields are highlighted in red, indicating errors.

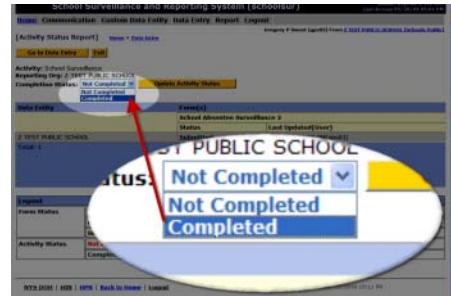
15. Click **Proceed to Submit Data to DOH**

This screenshot shows the 'School Surveillance and Reporting System (schoolsur)' interface. A yellow callout bubble with a red arrow points to the 'Proceed to Submit Data to DOH' button.

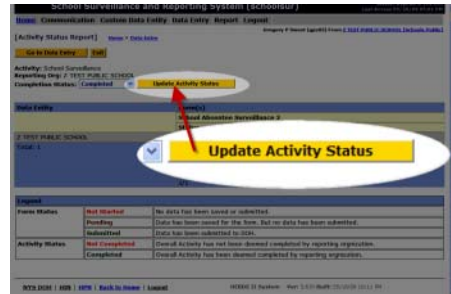
16. Upon successfully submitting the data, click **Completion Status**

This screenshot shows the 'School Surveillance and Reporting System (schoolsur)' interface. A yellow callout bubble with a red arrow points to the 'Completion Status' button, which is also labeled 'Printable Form' and 'Export'.

17. Select **Completed**



18. Click **Update Activity Status**



19. Click **Logout**, you are finished with data entry.



Retrieving Data

1. Log on to the Health Commerce System
<https://commerce.health.state.ny.us>



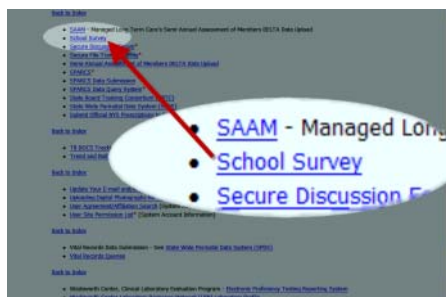
2. Click **HPN Application List**



3. Click **S**



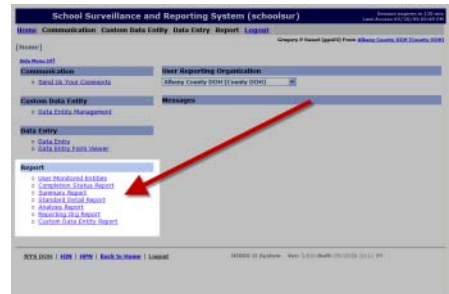
4. Click **School Survey**



- Click a report title to view and work with that report.

Please Note

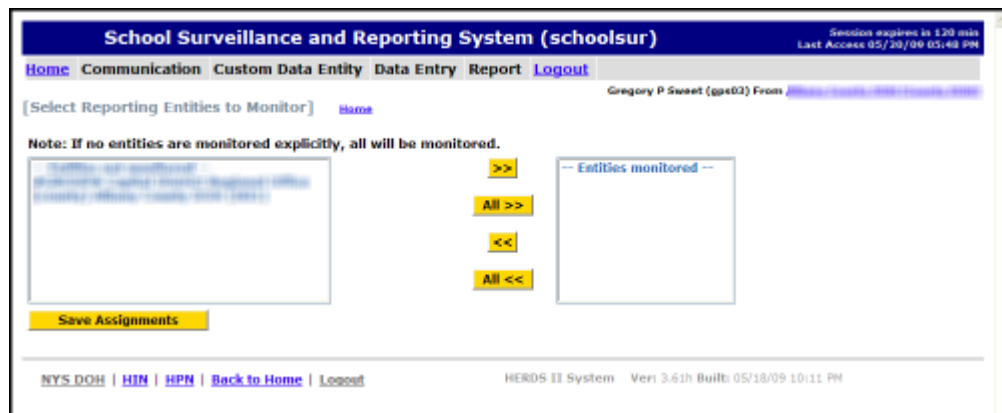
Remember to Logout of the application when you are finished working with the reports.



Report Descriptions

User Monitored Entities

User Monitored Entities allows you to select specific groups of schools to monitor. When you select schools to monitor your reports will automatically be filtered to those you have selected. Select entities (schools) to monitor on the left and click >> to move them to monitored entities (schools) on the right.



The completion Status Report tracks the status of the reports submitted from each reporting school. This report is very useful in identifying schools not participating and encouraging them to do so. You can see the legend describing the meaning of each status at the bottom of the report page. Keep in mind that the Status of the Activity is set by the reporting facility, that is, a facility may have completed data submission but failed to mark their activity completed.

Summary Report

The Summary report allows you to view the summary of values for a particular survey question of interest which you can select in the left hand column. This report offers summarized data as well as average, highest and lowest counts. Clicking on a specific count in the Response Count column will open to a new view that shows you the details of each schools responses to that question (as seen in second picture below for “the total number of students absent” field.

School Surveillance and Reporting System (schoolsur)

Session expires in 120 min
Last Access 05/20/09 08:01 PM

[Home](#) [Communication](#) [Field](#) [Custom Data Entity](#) [Data Entry](#) [Report](#) [Logout](#)

Gregory P Sweet (gps03) From [Home](#) [Reports](#) [Data Entry](#) [Admin](#)

[Summary Report] [Home](#) > [Activity Status Report](#)

Activity

School Surveillance

Required Field

Repeatable Section

Form

School Absentee Surveillance 2

External Reference Field (Read only)

Field Information

[Exit](#) All Reporting Organizations Monitored

School Absentee Surveillance 2

CountyCode

SchoolDistrictName

DistrictName

PublicSchoolName

Grades being taught in School

Other school type

Enrolled students in this building

Faculty/staff work at school building

Absentee Surveillance

Instructions

Date of report

Total number of students absent

Total number of faculty/staff absent

Total number of students sent home early

Students sent home with respiratory symptoms

Students sent home early with fever

Students sent home with respiratory symptoms

Students sent home early with fever

Students sent home w/gastrointestinal

Total number of students w/other

Students sent home for non-illness

Students sent home for unknown reasons

Usual pattern

Respiratory information

Fever information

Gastrointestinal information

Other info

Field	Response Count	Total Value	Average	Highest	Lowest
Instructions	0				
Date of report	1				
Selection #	Count	Selection Value			
1	1	Wednesday 05/20/2009			
Total number of students absent	1	35	35.0	35	35
Total number of faculty/staff absent	1	5	5.0	5	5
Total number of students sent home early	1	10	10.0	10	10
Students sent home with respiratory symptoms	1	10	10.0	10	10
Students sent home early with fever	1	15	15.0	15	15
Students sent home w/gastrointestinal	1	15	15.0	15	15
Total number of students w/other	1	25	25.0	25	25
Students sent home for non-illness	1	8	8.0	8	8
Students sent home for unknown reasons	0	0	0.0	0	0
Usual pattern	0				
Respiratory information	0				
Fever information	0				
Gastrointestinal information	0				
Other info	0				

[NYS DOH](#) | [HIN](#) | [HPN](#) | [Back to Home](#) | [Logout](#)

HERDS II System Ver: 3.61h Built: 05/18/09 10:11 PM

School Surveillance and Reporting System (schoolsur)

Session expires in 120 min
Last Access 05/20/09 08:03 PM

[Home](#) [Communication](#) [Field](#) [Custom Data Entity](#) [Activity](#) [Form](#) [Data Entry](#) [Report](#) [System Admin](#) [Logout](#)

Debra Sottolano (dlb20) From [Home](#) [Reports](#) [Data Entry](#) [Admin](#)

[Summary Report] [Home](#) > [Activity Status Report](#) > [Select Reporting Entities to Monitor](#)

Activity

School Surveillance

Required Field

Repeatable Section

Form

School Absentee Surveillance 2

External Reference Field (Read only)

Field Information

[Exit](#) All Reporting Organizations Monitored

School Absentee Surveillance 2

CountyCode

SchoolDistrictName

DistrictName

PublicSchoolName

Grades being taught in School

Other school type

Enrolled students in this building

Faculty/staff work at school building

Absentee Surveillance

Field	Response Count	Total Value	Average	Highest	Lowest
Total number of students absent	3	38	12.667	35	1

Page Size: All 1 of 1 (List includes those without responses if any)

Reporting Org	Reporting Org Type	Data Entity	Response
Z TEST PUBLIC SCHOOL (888888888889)	Schools Public	Z TEST PUBLIC SCHOOL	35
		Z TEST PUBLIC SCHOOL	1
		Z TEST PUBLIC SCHOOL	2

[NYS DOH](#) | [HIN](#) | [HPN](#) | [Back to Home](#) | [Logout](#) | 12 Online User(s)

HERDS II System Ver: 3.61h Built: 05/18/09 10:11 PM

Standard Detail Report

The Standard Detail report offers the details of all your school's entries for all fields in one spreadsheet. This is the most detailed report allowing you to see individual data submissions by each school within your jurisdiction. You may also select the fields and schools that you want to display on this report by clicking the checkboxes next to those you wish to see to customize this report. You also have the option of downloading a CSV file of this report.

[illegible]

**New York State Department of Health
Bureau of Immunization**

**Health Provider Network (HPN) Account Guide
Frequently Asked Questions**

If I am having difficulty activating my HPN account or need a new password, who do I contact for assistance?

- Call Commerce Accounts Management Unit (CAMU) at 1-866-529-1890.

How does our school obtain an HPN account?

1. Designate a Director and an HPN Coordinator. For a school district, the Director is the superintendent and for non-public schools, the Director is the school administrator. The HPN Coordinator can be whoever the district or school designates.
2. Send an e-mail to osas@health.state.ny.us requesting an HPN account. School Assessment staff of the New York State Department of Health's (NYSDOH) Bureau of Immunization will e-mail you the Online School Assessment Survey Superintendent/School Administrator and HPN Coordinator Form.
3. Complete the Online School Assessment Survey Superintendent/School Administrator and HPN Coordinator Form and either FAX it to 518-486-2249, or e-mail it to osas@health.state.ny.us.
4. The superintendent or school administrator will then receive the HPN Document 1 with the Schedule 2.A signature page for "Directors" by e-mail that he/she must print out and sign in the presence of a notary.
5. The HPN Coordinator will receive an HPN 1 Document with the Schedule 2.B signature page by e-mail that he/she must print out and sign in the presence of a notary.
 - ❖ The superintendent or school administrator must also sign this document on line six where it says "Director," but his/her signature does not have to be notarized.

Please mail both documents with original signatures in the same envelope to:

NYSDOH
Commerce Accounts Management Unit (CAMU) Supervisors
800 North Pearl Street, Room 214
Albany, NY 12204

6. HPN accounts will be created for the superintendent or school administrator and the HPN Coordinator. Each will be sent a letter containing the information needed to activate their accounts.

7. Please keep a copy of the notarized document. You will need the temporary access word on it to activate your HPN account.

Do schools need to designate an IT Security Coordinator as is indicated on the Document 1 NYSDOH Health Provider Network (HPN), Participant Organization Security and Use Policy and Application?

- School districts/schools only need to designate a Director (superintendent for districts and school administrator for non-public schools) and an HPN Coordinator.

Can I use the same HPN account to access the New York State Immunization Information System (NYSIIS)?

- Yes, NYSIIS is housed on the HPN. For information regarding NYSIIS webinar training, call 518-473-4437.

Is training available for HPN Coordinators?

- HPN Coordinator training is available via webinar. Webinar training combines a conference call with a central web site where participants log onto from any computer with Internet access. The web address to register for training is <https://nyvbcc.webex.com/meet/cti>. Call 518-473-1809 for more information.

I am an HPN Coordinator for my school district/school. How do I request additional HPN user accounts for our district/school?

- To obtain accounts for users at your organization use the electronic documents found on the HPN Coordinator's page <https://commerce.health.state.ny.us/hpn/help/hpncoord.html>.
 1. Log onto the Commerce Network (HPN) <https://commerce.health.state.ny.us/hpn>.
 2. Click **HPN Coordinator's** under Help and Training.
 3. Select **Document 2/P**.
 4. Click on **Request an account for a user, (Document 2)**.
 5. Click **Continue**.
 6. Enter name of user and click on **Continue**.
 7. Fill in the telephone number, FAX number, email address, and month and day of birth, then click on **Continue**.
 8. Review the information to make sure it's accurate, then click on **CREATE DOC 2**.
 9. Print a copy of the document.
 10. The HPN Coordinator needs to sign on line 7 of the document.
 11. The User signs on line 8 of the document.
 12. The notary completes lines 9 and 10 and stamps the document.
 13. Make a copy of the notarized document for the user; he/she will need the temporary access word on the form to activate his/her account.
 14. Make a copy for your records.

15. Mail the notarized copy with original signatures to the address provided on the document.

If you have any further questions about the account request process, please call the commerce trainers at 518-473-1809.

What should our district/school do if the superintendent/school administrator and HPN Coordinator at our school have faxed back the Superintendent/School Administrator and HPN Coordinator Form, but we have not yet received their HPN accounts?

Consider the following:

1. Were the Document 1 Schedules 2.A (emailed to the Superintendent for School Districts or to the School Administrator for non-public schools, Board of Cooperative Educational Services, Head Starts and nursery schools) and 2.B (emailed to the HPN Coordinator) signature pages signed, notarized and mailed to CAMU, 800 North Pearl Street, Albany, NY 12204?
2. Did the superintendent/school administrator sign on line 6 of the Document 1 Schedule 2.B signature page where it says “Director”? If the superintendent (for School Districts) or school administrator (for non-public schools, BOCES, Head Starts and nursery schools) did not sign on line 6 before you mailed the Document 1 Schedule 2.B signature page to the CAMU address, then your paperwork will be rejected and you will need re-do it. Call 518-474-1944 to request that the documents be re-emailed.
3. Did you mail both signature pages back together? The Document 1 Schedule 2.A signature page needs to be processed before the Document 1 Schedule 2.B signature page. If the document 1 Schedule 2.B signature page is received prior to the Document 1 Schedule 2.A signature page, CAMU is not be able to process it and will hold it until the Document 1 Schedule 2.A signature page is received.
4. If the Document 1 Schedules 2.A and 2.B signature pages were not received by the superintendent/school administrator and HPN Coordinator, then it may mean that your district/school has spam filters or security safeguards preventing you from receiving the emailed document and signature pages. Please allow 7 business days from the date you faxed the Superintendent/School Administrator and HPN Coordinator Form for receipt of the emailed documents. If you have not received your emailed document within 7 business days, please send an email to osas@health.state.ny.us or call us at 518-474-1944. If your school has a spam filter or security safeguards, you may need to contact your technical staff.

If I am no longer able to log onto the HPN with my user ID and password, who should I contact?

- Call CAMU at 1-866-529-1890 for issues regarding account activation and passwords.

What do I need to activate my HPN account?

- You will need the PIN (from the letter you received indicating that your HPN account application was accepted) and the temporary access word (from the Document 1 Schedule 2.A or Schedule 2.B signature pages or the User Document 2 Schedule A signature page you had notarized).

Do I need to retain the original PIN that I received in the letter with the instructions to activate my HPN account?

- Yes, the original PIN that you received is used for identity verification purposes.

Are HPN accounts active indefinitely?

- As long as a user accesses the HPN and keeps updating their password, their account remains active. When an account becomes inactive, the user needs to call CAMU at 1-866-529-1890, to reactivate the account. The PIN that the user was given when the account was created will be needed to verify his/her identification. If the user does not have his/her PIN, call CAMU at 1-866-529-1890.

Our school district completes and submits the annual immunization survey for the non-public schools in our district. Can staff from our district be designated as an HPN Coordinator for a non-public school?

- If you are currently an HPN Coordinator for a school district or a school nurse in a district that completes the survey for a non-public school, you may also be designated as an HPN Coordinator for the non-public school with which you are affiliated.
- The school administrator at the non-public school would just have to complete the School Administrator and HPN Coordinator Form and designate the district HPN Coordinator or other district staff as the HPN Coordinator on the HPN Coordinator portion of the form and email it to osas@health.state.ny.us or fax it to 518-486-2249.
- The individual from the district will need to complete, sign and have notarized the Document 1 Schedule 2.B signature page for the non-public school. The school administrator needs to sign on line six of the signature page where it says “Director” and then it needs to be mailed to CAMU along with the school administrator’s Document 1 Schedule 2.A signature page.
- Once the paperwork is processed, you will be designated as HPN Coordinator for the non-public school. You won't be issued another user ID and password, you will just be entered as HPN Coordinator for the non-public school under your existing account.
- After you have been established as the HPN Coordinator for the non-public school, then you just assign yourself to the non-public school nurse role and this will grant you access to the survey for the non-public school.

What roles need to be assigned for access to the online immunization survey?

- If you are the HPN Coordinator for a **public school district**, you will need to assign the role of school district nurse or school district data reporter to the individual who will be reviewing and submitting the data from each public school in the district. Only the individual assigned to the role of school district nurse or school district data reporter will see the submit button for a school district.
- If you are the HPN Coordinator for a **public school district**, you may also need to assign the role of public school nurse to all nurses who will be completing the on-line survey and assign them to the school(s) for which they will be responsible. The nurses assigned to the public school nurse role will only be able to view/enter data for the school(s) to which they are assigned.
- If you are the HPN Coordinator for a **non-public school, BOCES, Head Start program or Nursery School**, you will need to assign the role of either non-public school nurse or school data reporter to the individual who will be responsible for completing, reviewing and submitting the survey data.

How does an HPN Coordinator assign a role?

- To assign a role:
 1. Log onto the HPN.
 2. Click **Communications Directory** in the blue bar along the top of the page.
 3. Click **Coordinator's Update Tool**.
 4. **Choose the school organization** you wish to update with a school nurse role or school data reporter role, and click **Select**.
 5. Click **Manage Role Assignments**.
 6. Click **Modify** next to the role for which you want to assign an individual.
 7. A list will be displayed of the individuals affiliated with your school district/school who have HPN accounts.
 8. Check the box next to each individual you want to assign to the role and click **Add Role Assignment**.
 9. If the individual you want to assign to the role is not on the list, use the search box to find them in the directory. Once the list of names is displayed, highlight the name of the person you would like to add to the role and click on **Add Role Assignments**.
 10. If the individual you want to assign to the role does not appear in the list, then he/she has not been issued a HPN account and needs to submit the paperwork to receive one.
 11. For a self-paced tutorial regarding assigning roles, click on the **HPN Training link** under **Help/Training** on the left side of the HPN home page.

If you need assistance assigning a role, please call Informatics at 518-473-1809.

Do new user documents need to be generated when reassigning nurses to the role of public school nurse for another public school within a school district?

- No, if a nurse moves from one public school building to another within the district, new user documents do not need to be generated. The HPN Coordinator will need to use the Coordinator's Update Tool to search for that nurse's name when assigning him or her to a role in a different school. The HPN Coordinator will also need to remove the nurse from the role for the original school to which he/she was assigned.