

September 2, 2009

Dear Colleagues:

I hope your 2009/2010 school year is off to a good start. I want to assure you that since the outbreak of the novel H1N1 (swine) influenza virus in April 2009, SFUSD has collaborated with the San Francisco Department of Public Health to minimize the spread of influenza virus within the school community. I want to make you aware of the latest recommendations for schools from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

* **STAY HOME WHEN SICK:** Those with flu-like illnesses should stay home for at least 24 hours after they no longer have a fever (100.0 or greater) without the use of fever-reducing medicines such as acetaminophen (Tylenol).

* **PRACTICE HAND HYGIENE AND RESPIRATORY ETIQUETTE:**

* Wash hands frequently with soap and water

* Cover nose and mouth with a tissue when coughing or sneezing (or an elbow or shirt sleeve if no tissue is available). Discard tissue in the trash after use. Wash hands promptly with soap and water after coughing or sneezing.

* **SEPARATE ILL STUDENTS AND STAFF:** Students and staff who appear to have flu-like illnesses should be promptly separated from other students and staff and sent home. It is important to maintain current emergency contact information. (A protocol will be disseminated to all sites in early October)

* **EARLY TREATMENT OF HIGH RISK STUDENTS AND STAFF:** People with influenza-like illness who are high-risk for developing complications should contact their health care provider as soon as possible. People at high risk include those who are pregnant, have asthma, diabetes, compromised immune systems or neuromuscular disease.

* **ROUTINE CLEANING:** Areas that are touched often should be cleansed with cleaners that are normally used in our schools. Special cleaning with bleach and other non-detergent-based cleaners is not necessary.

* **SCHOOL NOTIFICATION:** Presently, it is NOT necessary to notify staff and students about novel H1N1 cases at the school site. A note from a health care provider is NOT necessary to return to school after a flu-like illness.

* **INFLUENZA VACCINATION:** Anyone who wants to reduce the likelihood of becoming ill with influenza or spreading influenza to others should receive a seasonal flu vaccine. All children 6 months through 18 years of age should receive vaccination against seasonal influenza. Seasonal flu vaccine should be available at this time. A novel H1N1 flu vaccine is expected to be available in late October. We are working with the Mayor's office and public health department to plan the most efficient way to provide flu vaccine to school children in San Francisco and will be distributing more information as soon as it is available.

* **SCHOOL DISMISSAL:** It is extremely unlikely that school dismissal will be ordered in San Francisco. We will work closely with the public health department to minimize transmission of disease but keep schools open.

Please refer to <http://sfcdcp.org/swineflu.html> or call 3-1-1 for additional Novel H1N1 (swine) flu information.

Sincerely,

Carlos A. Garcia