



CABRILLO UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

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Parents:

We are continuing to keep a watchful eye on developments associated with the H1N1 flu virus as we transition into a new flu season. To date, there have been 268 confirmed cases of this virus in San Mateo County and “0” school dismissals. It is almost a certainty that the number of unreported and/or undiagnosed cases of H1N1 is much higher. Yesterday, we received word at the district level of the first “highly probable” case of H1N1 in our school community-- involving a student at one of our elementary schools. It wouldn’t surprise me to learn that other cases have already surfaced here on the Coastside... and it’s almost a certainty that more instances of H1N1 will occur in our community in the months ahead.

Symptoms associated with H1N1 are similar to those you would associate with flu in general— high fever and chills, aching muscles, extreme tiredness, headache, dry cough, and sore throat. That is why accurately tracking H1N1 is so challenging. Most likely, there have been individuals who thought they had the H1N1 virus when they were actually battling a more common strain of flu... while others who were shrugging off the effects of a “common bug” were contending with H1N1. The single most important thing you can do to help us in our effort to minimize the effects of H1N1 is to keep your child home if he/she is manifesting the flu-like symptoms noted above.

We have received the following general guidelines from the San Mateo County Health Department:

- Parents should keep their children home from school when they have a fever and exhibit one or more of these symptoms.
- Students who exhibit flu symptoms will be promptly separated from other students and staff, and will be sent home as soon as possible. Parents should be aware that they must be available to pick up their children promptly if they become sick while they are attending school.
- Students who experience flu-like illnesses should remain at home until at least 24 hours after they are free of fever (defined as 100.0 F or above).
- It is recommended that individuals get seasonal flu shots as soon as possible.
- The H1N1 vaccine is expected later in the fall, and it is recommended that individuals follow the guidance that will be made available at that time regarding who should get these vaccinations.
- Parents and school staff should encourage students to wash hands frequently... cough or sneeze into a tissue or the bend of the elbow... and refrain from touching eyes, nose, or mouth in order to avoid the spread of germs.

The Cabrillo Unified School District is continuing to maintain regular lines of communication with the San Mateo County Office of Education and the San Mateo County Health Department. We also recently partnered with the Health Department to complete a comprehensive “pandemic influenza response plan” that has been posted on our Cabrillo Unified School District web site (<http://www.cabrillo.k12.ca.us/>).

I highly encourage you to visit the San Mateo County Health Department’s website at www.smhealth.org/flu. You will find up-to-the-minute statistics on the status of the H1N1 virus and some terrific resources, written in English and Spanish, including a particularly effective brochure, “A Guide to Home Care and Prevention.” We will also continue to post H1N1 flu updates on the District web site (<http://www.cabrillo.k12.ca.us/>).

Sincerely,

Rob Gaskill
District Superintendent