

September 2009

Saddleback Valley Unified School District Plan for H1N1 Influenza

As a new school year begins, SVUSD would like to continue open communication with parents and students about best practices concerning H1N1 influenza. As a district, we implement protocols and guidelines according to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the Orange County Health Care Agency recommendations and follow newly released guidelines for schools to limit confusion that new cases can bring to school communities.

According to the Orange County Health Care Agency, most people with H1N1 influenza are experiencing a relatively mild illness with symptoms including a fever greater than 100 degrees, sore throat and/or cough. Additional symptoms most commonly seen with any seasonal influenza are headache, fatigue, body aches, chills, nausea and diarrhea, although fever is the most prevalent symptom.

A specific vaccine to protect against the H1N1 2009 influenza is not yet available, however, the newly released recommendations emphasize the importance of prevention. The following actions can be taken to avoid the spread of germs that cause the influenza illness:

- *Cough and sneeze into a tissue or your elbow
- *Wash your hands often with soap and water and use hand sanitizer
- *Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth
- *Avoid close contact with people who are sick
- *Clean surfaces that are touched often by students and staff (and family members at home) regularly and routinely. Cleaning with bleach and non-detergent based cleaners is not necessary.

If you or your child is sick with any type of flu like illness **you or your child should stay home**. Students who are sent home with flu symptoms will be allowed to return to school after being fever free (100 degrees or greater) for a 24-hour period **without** the use of fever reducing medications. During your child's stay at home, please communicate with your child's school and teacher regarding class and homework assignments. Many teachers have information and homework posted on their district websites.

SVUSD will be following recommendations by the Orange County Health Care Agency and the CDC to keep schools open except when extreme numbers of H1N1 influenza are documented at any one specific school site.

We will look forward to working with students and families throughout the school year. Our goal is to ensure a safe, productive, and engaging learning environment for all students.

For more information and the latest updates about H1N1 2009 influenza in Orange County, visit the Health Care Agency website at www.ochealthinfo.com