



October 27, 2009

Subject: H1N1 and Seasonal Flu

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Our schools, like those throughout the county, are experiencing many student absences due to widespread flu-like illness. Through coordinated efforts between school and home, we can help to reduce the spread of viruses that cause both H1N1 and seasonal flu. Our Health Services Specialists are observing that most cases of flu are mild and that students are usually well enough to return to school after 3 or 4 days at home.

### **What Can Parents Do?**

1. The single most important thing that parents can do is to keep your child at home at the first sign of illness and until he/she is fever free (without the use of fever-lowering medication) for 24 hours.
2. Be sure the schools have up-to-date emergency contact information for you. If called, please pick up your child from the Health Office within 30 minutes.
3. Arrange for back-up childcare in the event your child becomes ill and needs to stay at home for several days.
4. Parents whose children have chronic health problems may consult with the school principal about eligibility for the Home-Hospital Program or other options.

### **What are the Schools Doing to Help Reduce the Spread of Viruses?**

1. Moorpark Unified School District is fully cooperating with the Ventura County Public Health Department and is following the National Center for Disease Control Guidelines.
2. Our staffs are vigilant; they look for students who arrive at school not feeling well or who become ill at school. Children with fevers or active flu symptoms are isolated, given masks to wear, and parents are called right away.
3. Teachers are actively reinforcing protocols for covering coughs and frequent hand-washing and sanitizing.
4. Commonly touched surfaces, keyboards, doorknobs, etc., are frequently cleaned with sanitizing wipes.

### **Communication**

As we receive notices from the Public Health Department, information is placed on our District website at: [www.mrpk.org](http://www.mrpk.org) and includes hotline telephone numbers and links to official agencies. At this time, because the flu is relatively mild in the general population, Public Health and CDC are not encouraging physicians to systematically test for and identify specific flu viruses. The School District is not being directed to collect diagnostic information about student illness, rather we are being asked to assist the Public Health effort to monitor flu-like cases and to help educate the community about how to reduce the spread of infection. All families should have received a computerized call on October 26<sup>th</sup> about the location of an H1N1 vaccine clinic this week in Camarillo. If you didn't receive the call, please contact the school to update or correct your phone contact information.

Thank you for your assistance in helping to keep our students healthy and safe.

Sincerely,

*Ellen Smith*

Ellen Smith, District Superintendent