



"Equity and
Excellence"

Ocean View School District

17200 Pinehurst Lane
Huntington Beach
California 92647-5569
714/847-2551
Fax: 714/847-1430
Web: www.ovsd.org

Superintendent
Alan G. Rasmussen, Ed. D.

Board of Trustees
Norm Westwell, President
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Dear Parents and Guardians:

H1N1 Flu (Swine Flu) Information for Parents

As you may know, the new H1N1 flu has been circulating throughout the state of California, and it is likely that when children go back to school, we will see an increase in flu cases spreading from child to child. We are all hoping the fall flu season will be mild, but it is important to be prepared for all possible scenarios, including a widespread pandemic.

At this time, state and local public health officials have advised that students can - and should - continue to come to school as long as they are not sick and do not have flu symptoms. Flu-like symptoms include: fever (over 100° F), cough, sore throat, runny nose, or stuffy nose. Additional symptoms may be experienced with swine flu, including body aches, feeling very tired, and sometimes vomiting or diarrhea. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention now recommend that **all individuals with an influenza-like illness or symptoms should remain home until at least 24 hours after they are free of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications (like acetaminophen or ibuprofen), and should avoid contact with others.**

If your child is absent from school for flu-like symptoms, please relate the symptoms when reporting the absence to the school. This information would include your child's fever (how high it is) and if your child has a cough, sore throat, chills, etc.

It is also important to teach your children how to reduce their risk of getting the flu and how to protect others from becoming infected. If we all practice good hygiene, health officials believe we can limit the spread of H1N1 flu in our schools and child care centers.

- **Avoid close contact** with people who are sick.
- **Stay home when sick** and maintain distance from other people to prevent the spread of illness.
- **Wash hands often** with soap and hot water for at least 20 seconds (that is about as long as it takes to sing the "Happy Birthday" song twice). Alcohol-based hand sanitizers are also effective in reducing the spread of the flu.
- **Cover coughs and sneezes** with tissues or by coughing into the inside of the elbow. Wash hands after blowing nose or coughing into a tissue and dispose of tissues after use.
- **Avoid touching eyes, nose, and mouth** to prevent the spread of germs.

Public health officials stress that it is very important to get separate vaccinations for seasonal flu and the H1N1 flu this year. The seasonal flu vaccines were already in production when the new H1N1 flu broke out, and it may be available as early as October. It is recommended that you and your family get this vaccination as soon as it is available from your health care provider or local clinic.

Thank you for your cooperation in keeping our children and our school environment healthy. If you have questions about the information or recommendations in this letter, please do not hesitate to contact the Health Technician at your child's school.

Sincerely,

Alan G. Rasmussen, Ed.D.
Superintendent

Additional resources and links can be found on the District website at www.ovsd.org.