



Superintendent's UPDATE

Thursday, May 19, 2022

COVID-19 School and Vaccination Update

Dear San Mateo County Education and Child Care Community,

It would be difficult to begin a letter about COVID-19 without acknowledging the grim milestone our nation officially reached this week – more than one million deaths in the United States due to the virus. In that number, which is difficult or nearly impossible to comprehend, are parents, children, siblings, teachers, best friends, neighbors, and others who touch our lives. That growing number also refutes any conclusion that COVID isn't that bad. We must remain vigilant and careful.

Finish the School Year Strong

As we move swiftly to the end of the school year while a new surge in COVID brews in our county and the Bay Area, we must take steps to protect ourselves, our families, and our community. In a statement last Friday, the Bay Area Health Officers reiterated “their continued, strong support for people to mask up indoors, keep tests handy, and ensure they are up to date on vaccinations by getting boosters when eligible.”

The end of the school year brings many opportunities for gatherings and events. The San Mateo County Office of Education and San Mateo County Health (SMCH) released safety tips for events for [students and families](#) (in Spanish) and [schools](#) to help them safely plan and attend events.

Testing and Test Kits

Testing remains a key COVID safety layer. With a greater number of free test kits available, it has become easier for schools and families to offer testing when someone has been exposed to COVID, is feeling symptoms, and before large indoor gatherings. The State has multiple channels for schools to access test kits, including through a recent delivery to the County Office of Education for distribution out to districts. U.S. households are now able to order eight additional free at-home tests, bringing the total number of free tests available to each household since the start of the program to 16. Ordering the test kits is quick and easy. To order, simply go to [CovidTests.gov](https://www.covidtests.gov).

Vaccination Booster for Children Ages 5-11

The [Food and Drug Administration](#) authorized booster shots of the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID vaccine on Tuesday for children ages 5-11 at least five months after completion of their second dose of the vaccine.

Vaccination Numbers and Opportunities

As of this week, 63 percent of children ages 5-11 have received two doses of vaccine. The vaccination rate for youth ages 12-15 is 83 percent, and 44 percent have also received a booster. More than 95 percent of individuals ages 16-24 are vaccinated, and 58 percent are boosted as well.

Healthcare providers, pharmacies, and SMCH are offering vaccinations for all eligible people. Appointments should be relatively easy to schedule. Information on public vaccination clinics in San Mateo County can be found on the [SMCH website](#). Providing a child with a vaccination is a great way to end the school year and start summer vacation!

Thank you all for your work to support our students and schools.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Nancy Magee". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Nancy Magee
San Mateo County Superintendent of Schools

Please note: A copy of this letter in Spanish will be [posted here](#) shortly.