



Superintendent's UPDATE

Thursday, January 13, 2022

COVID-19 School and Vaccination Update

Dear San Mateo County Education and Child Care Community,

Week Two of 2022 is keeping our school leaders busy amid the current Omicron surge as they receive and process newly released guidance specific to schools, share out with parents, students, and staff, and once again, prepare to adjust the safety protocols accordingly. Thankfully, San Mateo County's schools have been doing an amazing job through it all providing our students with in-person instruction and crucial social emotional supports. If you haven't thanked an education professional today, NOW is a great time!

New Guidance for Schools

As the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) continues to update its guidance, schools and childcare providers are working to keep up. The most recent [guidance](#), shared by CDPH last night, offers an entirely new approach to addressing exposures in schools. While San Mateo County Health, the San Mateo County Office of Education (SMCOE), and districts and schools work to understand the impact of the new guidance, which offers a [group-tracing approach](#), it appears that the focus on quarantining may be waning.

The new guidance will be reflected shortly in the [Pandemic Recovery Framework](#), which was just updated and released yesterday afternoon. As I mentioned, it has been a challenge to keep up with and interpret the guidance.

TK and Early Learning Updates

San Mateo County Health this week provided some welcome clarity for schools with TK programs by confirming that the CDPH school guidance applies to TK classrooms, in addition to a school's K-12 program. County Health is also working hard to prepare more specific local guidance for preschools, childcare, and before- and after-care programs. We hope this information will be shared shortly.

Test Kits for Early Learning

SMCOE has been working with San Mateo County Health to secure and distribute at-home and professional COVID-19 rapid antigen test kits for early learning settings, which were not part of the State's end-of-year at-home test kit drop for schools. SMCOE is also working with First Five

San Mateo County and 4Cs of San Mateo County on a distribution plan for the kits as well as additional supplies expected over the next couple of weeks.

Vaccination Good News

Last week, more than 1,000 children ages 5-11 were vaccinated at school-based clinics organized by San Mateo County Health and SMCOE. The county’s school nurses continue to provide the vaccinations at these clinics, using their special school-nurse superpowers to calm, support, and vaccinate even the most reticent children. The county has reached nearly 44% of our 5-11 year-olds with both shots and 56% with at least one dose. The vaccination clinics continue for the next couple of weeks. More information can be found on the [San Mateo County Health website](#).

Even More Vaccination Good News – Boosters!

To help meet the demand for booster vaccinations for children ages 12 and up as well as school staff, San Mateo County Health is piloting a booster program at its school-based clinics this week. Registration for boosters is available on [MyTurn](#). However, walk-in appointments are also available. The only vaccine on hand will be Pfizer. Depending on how well this works, the boosters may be a regular part of already planned school-based clinics this month.

If the health projections we are hearing are correct, we will hopefully be on the other side of this surge soon. Let’s hang in there and do all we can to keep our students in school. As research – and experience – are showing, schools are the safest place for students to be.

Thanks for all you’re doing to support our students and schools.



Nancy Magee
San Mateo County Superintendent of Schools

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