



Superintendent's UPDATE

Thursday, January 20, 2022

COVID-19 School and Vaccination Update

Dear San Mateo County Education and Child Care Community,

After a bumpy couple of weeks for San Mateo County schools, I would like to say we are beginning to see the proverbial light at the end of the tunnel, but we're definitely not **quite** there just yet. Cases of COVID-19 in schools and childcare settings remain high, continuing to strain our resources and our resilience. Thankfully, this week brings news of more tools, including at-home test kits for early learning settings, N95 masks, and pediatric and adult vaccinations and boosters, to support our county's students as well as our school and childcare workforce through this challenging time.

Test Kits for Early Learning and Care Providers

Acting on their commitment to equity, San Mateo County Health (SMCH) arranged for the delivery of thousands of at-home test kits to the San Mateo County Office of Education (SMCOE) today. These tests will be headed out the door tomorrow to childcare programs serving children from families with the greatest financial needs, including those in Early Head Start, Head Start, and State Preschool programs. The tests will be provided directly to families and staff in those programs. The distribution will expand next week to include additional families who receive financial subsidies for childcare. These test kits also allow childcare providers to remain open, track COVID-19 in their communities, and strengthen the response for our youngest students, families, and staff.

Test Kits from the Federal Government

Although many families and staff have found it difficult to secure at-home test kits, the federal government has made that a bit easier this week. Residents can sign up for four free at-home test kits, which the Post Office will deliver to their address. It's quick and easy to [sign up online](#) for the kits.

Masks

The County Office of Education began the distribution of N95 masks to all public and private TK-12 schools in the county this week. The County Office surveyed all districts and schools about their staffing numbers to determine how many masks to provide each school or district. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) [continues to recommend](#) that people wear the most protective mask they can that fits snugly and can be worn consistently. This most recent supply of high quality masks provides an added layer of protection for our education workforce.

Vaccination Clinics for Children, Families, and Staff Continue

School-based vaccination clinics continue this week at Hoover Elementary School in Redwood City. The clinics will be held today, tomorrow, and Saturday. The clinics are now open to the public of any age,

not just children. Individuals can register in advance through [MyTurn](#) or simply walk in. The clinics offer a great opportunity for children ages 5-11 and their families to get vaccinated or, if eligible, boosted.

Hoover Elementary School Vaccination Clinics

701 Charter Street, Redwood City

January 20, 2:30 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.

January 21, 2:30 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.

January 22, 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Information on additional vaccination clinics can be [found here](#).

Rising Pediatric Vaccination Rates

Vaccination rates among youth continue to rise. As of this week, 59.6 percent of children ages 5-11 received a first dose of vaccine, and 47.5 percent have received both doses, up more than three percentage points over last week. In addition, 81.2 percent of youth ages 12-15 have been fully vaccinated, and 16.6 percent have received a booster.

County Health and SMCOE’s school-based vaccination clinics have played a part in this success story, having delivered more than 2,000 vaccines. A big thank you to the school districts and school nurses who have worked with SMCH and SMCOE to make these clinics happen. It is amazing what can happen through partnerships and persistence.

Schools Embrace New Guidance

Schools and districts have once again been working hard to update their protocols to meet changing State guidance. The latest change many schools have embraced is a [group-tracing approach](#) to contact tracing. Instead of centering contact tracing efforts on individual students who may have been exposed to COVID-19 over the course of a day, the new approach allows for group notification and testing. In addition, students and staff may now return to campus after five days of isolation when they test negative and are asymptomatic. More information on school guidance updates can be [found here](#).

Let’s hang in there, everybody! I know I’m looking forward to a beautiful Friday in San Mateo County with the 49ers on tap for Saturday. Go Niners!!



Nancy Magee
San Mateo County Superintendent of Schools

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