

October 7, 2009

Dear parents/guardians:

As you may have heard, a new influenza virus, called the 2009 H1N1 influenza virus, was first identified in the United States in late April 2009. The virus has caused illness ranging from mild to severe, including hospitalizations and deaths in adults and children. Many children have gotten H1N1 infection and there have been large outbreaks in some schools across the country. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices has recommended that children and young adults aged 6 months through 24 years be vaccinated against 2009 H1N1 as soon as the vaccine is available.

Groups recommended to get the first available doses of the H1N1 vaccine include:

- Children aged 6 months through 24 years
- Pregnant women
- Health care and emergency services workers
- Child care workers and parents of children under 6 months
- People age 24 through 64 years with certain health conditions such as HIV, diabetes, or heart or lung disease

Vaccination is the best way to protect your child from this potentially serious disease. The California State Health Department is working with Valencia School to give the 2009 H1N1 influenza vaccine to children at school. We will hold a vaccination clinic on Friday, October 23, subject to availability of vaccine.

There will be no cost to you for this vaccine.

Children under 9 are expected to need two doses of vaccine, spaced at least 4 weeks apart, unless they have had seasonal flu vaccine in the past. A second vaccination clinic will be scheduled at Valencia for those children needing a second dose.

In this packet you will find a handout describing the disease and the vaccine. On the back of this letter is a form to fill out with your child's information. Please indicate whether you wish to accept or refuse vaccination for your child. If you refuse, the vaccination will not be given to your child.

If you have any questions about the vaccine or the vaccination clinics, please call 688-8266 from 9 am to 5 pm. You can also visit the CDC's 2009 H1N1 influenza web site at <http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/> or <http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/parents/> for information especially for parents. Your child's health care provider can also answer your questions about the 2009 H1N1 influenza virus and will be able to give your child the seasonal influenza vaccine and may be able to give your child the 2009 H1N1 vaccine.

Sincerely,