



November 18, 2022

## **Superintendent's Message: Illness Prevention and Protection**

Dear Parents, Guardians, Staff, and Community Members,

This cold and flu season has been especially hard on families with the common cold, influenza (flu), respiratory syncytial virus (RSV), and COVID-19 circulating in the community. RSV infections are impacting emergency room wait times and hospital capacity, and health officials are warning the flu may be more severe for a longer period of time this year and into next.

As a reminder, please do not send your child to school if they are feeling sick or experiencing symptoms of illness. Keeping your sick child home will be a great benefit for the health and wellness of our students and staff. Also, reach out to your child's medical provider to ensure your student is up-to-date on vaccinations. If you are a staff member and feel sick, please stay home and report your absence to your supervisor.

### **What symptoms to look for**

Please stay home if you are experiencing any of the following symptoms: fever within the last 24 hours, body aches or chills, a new cough, significant congestion, vomiting or diarrhea in the last 24 hours. Please stay home if you have a cluster of any of the following symptoms: sore throat, congestion, fatigue, headache, or stomachache.

Take a COVID test, and let the health office know if you test positive. Tests are available at all school sites. Please consult your healthcare provider for any concerning symptoms.

### **Tips to avoid getting sick**

Los Angeles County health officials offer these tips to prevent getting sick:

- Wear a well-fitting, good-quality mask, indoors and in crowded spaces
- Wash hands thoroughly and often
- Use hand sanitizer, when unable to wash hands
- Stay away from people who are sick
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth
- Clean commonly touched surfaces
- Get vaccinated against influenza and COVID-19
- [See more prevention tips from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#)

The flu and COVID vaccines are available at doctors' offices and retail pharmacies and are covered by medical insurance. To find the nearest location, visit <https://myturn.ca.gov/> webpage and select and schedule the vaccines you require. The Centers for Disease Control recommends that everyone six months and older get vaccinated for flu every year.

[Los Angeles County Department of Public Health has issued an alert](#) to families regarding illness with multiple linked resources and information.

### **Weekly ongoing COVID-19 testing**

We continue to provide students and staff with free COVID-19 antigen tests for use at home. We are strongly encouraging weekly testing on Sunday evening or Monday morning before school. Cases are rising again in LA County. Together, we can help minimize virus spread in our community! As stated earlier, please stay home if sick.

### **Masking after a COVID exposure**

Per LACDPH guidelines, exposed individuals are required to mask indoors while around others for 10 days after a COVID exposure. Our district follows the LACDPH COVID guidelines. Staff and students who are exposed to a COVID positive individual are **required** to mask indoors while on campus for 10 days after the date of last exposure. School administrators will alert you via email if you or your child were exposed on campus.

We thank you for your cooperation and support.

Sincerely,

Dr. Ben Drati, Superintendent