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September 24, 2009

Dear Parents,

Hemet Unified School District continues to monitor all of our sites in conjunction with Department of Public Health as we do during all flu seasons. We wanted to share some vital information with our parents and what you can do to help minimize the spread of the flu.

It continues to be important for families to exercise preventive health measures. Because flu is spread easily from person to person, the Department of Public Health recommends the following measures:

- Teach your children to wash their hands often with soap and water or use instant hand sanitizer.
- Do not share personal items like drinks, food or unwashed utensils, and cover coughs and sneezes with tissues or use the crook of the elbow, arm or sleeve instead of the hand when a tissue is not available.
- Know the signs and symptoms of the flu. Symptoms of the flu include fever (100 degrees Fahrenheit, 37.8 degrees Celsius or greater), cough, sore throat, a runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, and feeling very tired. Some people may also vomit or have diarrhea.
- Speak to your healthcare provider about a family member with influenza-like illness as soon as possible.
- Keep sick children at home for at least 24 hours after they no longer have fever or do not have signs of fever, without using fever-reducing drugs. Keeping children with a fever at home will reduce the number of people who may get infected.
- Do not send children to school if they are sick. Any children who are determined to be sick while at school will be sent home.

School sites continue existing protocols which follows all current recommendations:

- School staff shall routinely clean areas that students and staff touch often with the cleaners they typically use. Additional disinfection of environmental surfaces beyond the recommended routine cleaning is not required.
- Students and staff who appear to have flu-like illness shall be sent to a room separate from others until they can be sent home. These students and staff shall wear a surgical mask, if possible, and those who care for ill students and staff shall wear protective gear such as a mask.
- Students and staff with flu-like illness shall be sent home and should stay home for at least 24 hours after they no longer have a fever (100° F [37.8°C]), or signs of a fever, without the use of fever-reducing medicines.

All medical related questions should be directed to the Riverside County Health Department. Their information number is 1-888-865-0564. School protocol questions should be directed to Lucy Rebeck, Safety & Risk Management at (951) 765-5100 extension 2300.

Sincerely,

Philip O. Pendley
Superintendent