



Superintendent's UPDATE

Thursday, October 28, 2021

COVID-19 Vaccination Update

Hello San Mateo County Education and Child Care Community,

We have a lot to be grateful for on the COVID-19 front this week – case numbers and hospitalizations continue to decline and vaccinations for our youngest students are expected to ramp up next week. SMCOE is working with San Mateo County Health and school districts to ensure that families have the information they need about vaccinations as well as opportunities to vaccinate their children.

Pfizer Vaccine Recommended for 5-11 Year Olds

On October 26th, [a panel of expert advisors](#) recommended that the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) provide emergency use authorization for the Pfizer vaccine in children ages 5 to 11, based on Pfizer's data showing that the vaccine is safe and 90.7% effective in preventing COVID-19 infections among youth. A decision is expected next week.

While younger students are generally healthy, there have been 1.9 million cases of COVID-19 among this age group across the country, with 8,300 hospitalizations and 94 deaths so far. This brings COVID-19 into the top 10 causes of death for children ages 5 to 11. COVID-19 is also connected with multi-system inflammatory syndrome, for which there have been 5,217 cases so far, many of whom have been experiencing long-term impacts. With Pfizer's data showing that children ages 5 to 11 experienced minimal side effects from receiving the vaccine, there is good evidence to help make the case for families to vaccinate their young children as soon as they are able.

Vaccination Options

In anticipation of approval of the vaccine next week, SMCOE is partnering with San Mateo County Health and local school districts to hold vaccination clinics across the county next month for students ages 5 to 11. These clinics are just one of many options for vaccinating children. Other options include healthcare providers, pharmacies, and other county and community clinics. SMCH will be posting these options on its [website](#), and SMCOE will continue to share information on vaccination options over the coming weeks.

Prepping Parents

We know that parents across the county are eager to protect their children from COVID-19, and there will be a variety of locations where these vaccinations may take place. We also know that some families still have questions about the vaccines' efficacy and safety. [Johns Hopkins Medicine](#) shares

important tips for parents, and we have created flyers in [English](#) and [Spanish](#) that share some of the reasons for youth to get vaccinated.

To further help inform parents and answer their questions, SMCOE hosted a [webinar with San Mateo County Health](#) yesterday addressing the latest COVID-19 community trends, strategies for safe schools, and vaccination updates. We are excited to continue these informative sessions, including a webinar in Spanish with Dr. Yvonne Maldonado, Stanford Professor of Pediatrics and Infectious Diseases, community pediatricians, and local health officers on [Thursday, November 4, at 6pm](#).

COVID-19 Boosters Approved

In case you missed the news, the [Food and Drug Administration](#) authorized booster doses of the COVID-19 vaccines made by Moderna and Johnson & Johnson. The FDA also approved the use of heterologous (or “mix and match”) booster doses, meaning that eligible individuals can receive any available COVID-19 vaccine as a booster dose, no matter which vaccine they originally received.

In addition to Pfizer, Moderna and Johnson & Johnson boosters will be available through vaccination events at the San Mateo County Event Center, pharmacies, healthcare systems, and smaller clinics serving communities across the county. More information can be found on [San Mateo County Health’s website](#).

We will continue to respond to your questions and share local, real-time data as much as possible so that everyone can feel confident in receiving their vaccine and protecting our community.



Nancy Magee

San Mateo County Superintendent of Schools