



# PRESS RELEASE

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**For Immediate Release**  
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## **Oak Valley Middle School Sixth Grade Absences**

On Monday, October 5, 2009, Oak Valley Middle School experienced an increase in the number of sixth grade student absences, with some parents reporting fever and flu-like symptoms in their children.

More than 400 of the 461 sixth grade students from Oak Valley attended a week-long, overnight sixth grade camp the previous week. Twenty-two students were sent home from camp mid-week because they were ill. The following Monday, October 5<sup>th</sup>, 131 Oak Valley sixth-grade students were absent; on Tuesday, October 6<sup>th</sup>, 103; Wednesday, October 7<sup>th</sup>, 112; and on Thursday, October 8<sup>th</sup>, 99 students were absent. The high levels of student absences which have been seen this week are only at the sixth grade level at Oak Valley, but their seventh and eighth grade absences are being monitored daily. Oak Valley Middle School has a total of 1,225 students in grades 6, 7 and 8. Principal Sonya Wrisley sent automated voice messages and emails to all Oak Valley Middle School parents on Tuesday and Wednesday afternoons, advising them of the situation.

The District has been working closely with the San Diego County Department of Public Health, sharing all available information for their analysis, follow-up, and any recommendations they might make. At this time we do not have direction from Public Health to change our normal school operations for students or staff.

Parents reported that students were absent due to a variety of reasons and illnesses, including suspected H1N1 flu. School personnel have been contacting parents of all Oak Valley

students who were reported absent, requesting more specific information about any symptoms or illnesses.

The District continues to emphasize ways to help our students and staff stay healthy by encouraging good personal hygiene habits, including catching a cough/sneeze in your sleeve and frequently washing hands and/or the use of hand sanitizers. Students are sent to the office if they have flu-like symptoms, to be monitored or sent home. We encourage students and staff to stay home if they have flu-like symptoms, and remain home for 24 hours after being fever-free without the use of fever reducing medications. At the school site, we are continuing to provide increased levels of custodial staffing so that our classrooms and health office receive proper and complete cleaning.