



CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

# NEWS RELEASE

**JACK O'CONNELL**  
State Superintendent  
of Public Instruction

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## State Schools Chief Jack O'Connell Alerts Schools About Preventing the Spread of Swine Flu

SACRAMENTO — State Superintendent of Public Instruction Jack O'Connell today reminded school officials throughout the state that they may download a free "Keep Our Schools Healthy" toolkit in multiple languages to help prevent the spread of germs and viruses, such as the recently reported outbreak of swine influenza.

"I am very concerned about preliminary reports in Mexico and Southern California about the emergence of a swine flu outbreak," said O'Connell. "By taking simple precautions like washing hands often, students can increase their chances of avoiding the flu, so they can stay healthy, stay in school, and keep learning. These simple steps will help everyone protect their health so students and teachers will have fewer sick days."

State health officials report six known cases of swine flu in California. However, reports indicate the outbreak is much larger in Mexico and has forced the closure of schools and other public facilities.

In the past few years, the California Department of Education has worked with the California Department of Health Services to provide the "Keep Our Schools Healthy" toolkit in multiple languages. The toolkit contains six posters designed for students, teachers, and parents. The posters advise students and teachers to avoid spreading germs and viruses by frequent hand washing with soap and covering their mouths when they cough or sneeze. Other posters advise parents to keep their children at home if they suspect their child is ill, teach children how to wash their hands often with soap, and cover their mouths when they cough or sneeze.

To download the free posters to post around the home or classroom, please visit [Year 2003 - Multimedia](#). For more information about pandemic flu, please visit [Flu Prevention - Health Services & School Nursing](#).

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