



CALIFORNIA
DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION

TOM TORLAKSON

STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

August 16, 2016

Dear County and District Superintendents and Charter School Administrators:

ZIKA VIRUS INFORMATION

The California Department of Education (CDE) would like to inform you of available resources to guard against viruses spread by mosquitoes, such as Dengue, Chikungunya, as well as the Zika virus disease (Zika).

The Zika virus is transmitted primarily through the bite of infected mosquitoes and is not transmitted directly from one person to another through casual contact. Zika virus disease is a mosquito-borne illness. The most common symptoms of Zika virus disease are a mild fever, skin rashes, muscle and joint pain, and conjunctivitis. These symptoms normally last for two to seven days. Zika can also be transmitted through sexual contact with an infected person or passed from a pregnant woman to her fetus. There is no evidence that risk for transmission on school properties will be higher than in other areas of the local community.

The federal government has issued guidance to help school and health officials respond to questions regarding Zika. This guidance, along with information about preventing mosquito bites, is on the California Department of Public Health Zika Web page at <http://www.cdph.ca.gov/HealthInfo/discond/Pages/Zika.aspx>.

In addition, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) developed interim guidance for kindergarten through twelfth grade district and school administrators on public health actions pertaining to Zika virus infection, which is on the CDC Zika Virus Web page at <http://www.cdc.gov/zika/schools.html>. The CDC guidance provides school districts with information for planning school-related activities and recommends actions that can be taken, in consultation with local public health authorities, to reduce the potential risk of Zika virus transmission on school premises and among members of the school community.

Complete information about the Zika virus and how to prevent it is on the CDC Zika Virus Response Planning: Interim Guidance for District and School Administrators in the Continental United States and Hawaii Web page at <http://www.cdc.gov/zika>. Resources are available on the CDC Zika Communications Toolkits Web page at <http://www.cdc.gov/zika/comm-resources/toolkits.html>.

August 16, 2016

Page 2

Prevention of mosquito bites through multiple mosquito mitigation efforts is of paramount importance for avoiding Zika virus infections. We encourage you to share the CDC guidance with other district and school administrators and to remind teachers, students, parents, and the community that the best way to prevent diseases spread by mosquitoes is protection from mosquito bites. Information regarding mitigation strategies is in the attached document.

As with all health-related issues, districts and schools must maintain the privacy of and protect the identity of individual students and teachers consistent with all applicable privacy laws.

Thank you for all you do to support the health, safety, and well-being of our students.

If you have any questions regarding this subject, please contact Nancy Zarenda, School Health Policy Consultant, Coordinated School Health and Safety Office, by phone at 916-445-8441 or by e-mail at nzarenda@cde.ca.gov.

Sincerely,



Tom Torlakson

TT:nz

Attachment

2016-06230