

San Mateo County Grand Jury Report: “Is San Mateo County at Risk of a Large Measles Outbreak?”

SUMMARY

Recent reports of measles outbreaks across the country have alarmed public health officials and the public at large. In the wake of these concerns the Grand Jury investigated the measles immunization rates of school children and adults in San Mateo County. The report’s Findings and Recommendations, as well as the RCSD responses to those Findings and Recommendations are below:

FINDINGS:

- F1. Outbreaks of measles occur when an infected individual enters an under Immunized community.
The respondent agrees with the finding.
- F2. For the 2017/18 school year, the overall measles vaccination rate for public and private school students in San Mateo County exceeded the 93 percent herd Immunity level experts say is needed to protect the community as a whole.
The respondent agrees with the finding.
- F3. Following the January 1, 2016, effective date of SB 227, use of the personal belief exemption dropped from two percent of students to zero in San Mateo County
The respondent agrees with the finding.
- F4. Schools that admit students with overdue vaccinations create pockets of unimmunized individuals that may facilitate the development of a measles outbreak.
The respondent agrees with the finding.
- F5. The vaccination status of some schoolchildren--notable those who are home-schooled and those schools with fewer than 20 students--is unknown.
The respondent agrees with the finding.
- F6. Adults born after 1957 who never had a measles infection and who lack sufficient vaccination may also be at risk of a measles infection.

The respondent agrees with the finding.

- F7. Recent outbreaks in Washington State, New York, and Los Angeles illustrate that pockets of unvaccinated people can pose a risk of outbreaks.

The respondent agrees with the finding.

- F8. Testing for measles immunity at County clinics could identify pockets of people susceptible to measles.

The respondent agrees with the finding.

- F9. The resources of the SMCDC, which identifies and tracks measles cases in San Mateo County, may be inadequate to contain a major outbreak.

The respondent agrees with the finding.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- R1. School districts that enrolled students who did not meet state vaccination requirements for the 2018/2019 school year should report to their Governing Board whether overdue vaccinations have been completed by October 1, 2019, and the Governing Boards of these Districts should publish updated vaccination data for its schools on the school district's website by November 1, 2019.

The recommendation has not yet been implemented.

Forty four students have not provided proof of vaccination for the 2018/19 school year. Notice of Immunizations Needed letters have again been mailed to these 44 families this school year (2019/20). Updated 2018/19 vaccination data will be published on School District website by November 1, 2019.

- R2. Beginning with the 2019/2020 school year, school districts that enroll students who do not meet vaccination requirements in subsequent school years should report to their Governing Board whether overdue vaccinations have been completed by March 31 of each year, and the Governing Board should publish updated vaccination data for its schools on the school district's website.

RCSD will be implementing the Grand Jury's recommendations. The following is the time frame for implementation:

- District wide audit - January, 2020
- Notification to parents - January, 2020
- Student Exclusion - February, 2020
- Report to School Board - March, 2020

- Vaccination Data - March 31, 2020

R3. The San Mateo County Health Communicable Disease Control Program should study the feasibility of testing people visiting San Mateo County Clinics for their level of Measles immunity. The results of the study should be reported to the San Mateo County Health Department Board by January 1, 2020.

N/A

R4. Within three months of this report, the San Mateo County Health Communicable Disease Control Program should request funding for upgrading the resources needed to address Outbreaks of measles and other communicable diseases from the Chief of the San Mateo County Health Department. San Mateo County health should respond within three Months of receiving those requests.

N/A