

NEW MRES CALL IN SYSTEM FOR ABSENCES

PARENT SIGNATURE NEEDED

You are receiving this letter because you are a parent or a guardian of a student in the Monterey Ridge Elementary School. We are inviting your involvement in a research study undertaken in conjunction with UCSD to examine if a change in the method of reporting medical absence will lead to improved awareness of contagious diseases, possible biological attacks, and other useful information about the health of the student population. Although there will be no direct benefits to you in this study right now, we hope it will set the stage for further research and development whereby parents and guardians may obtain information about 'what's going around' and early warnings of biological threats, including an outbreak of influenza such as 'swine flu'. Young people, unfortunately, are often the first to show the symptoms of outbreaks and biological threats. Our immediate objectives are to evaluate the feasibility of a telephone medical absence system, and develop a speech-processing system that will analyze parents' descriptions of their children's illnesses and classify the symptoms into a set of syndromes or complaints.

Participation involves a slight change in the way you currently let the school know that your child will be absent. Right now you telephone in to let the school know. We plan to modify that so that when you call in you are given a choice to proceed in the normal way or to help us by mentioning the symptoms your child has: sore throat, stomach ache, fever, etc. With this information we can begin to see whether there are patterns of symptoms in the student population.

If you are willing to participate in this research study, please sign Yes here. If not, please check and sign No.

Student Name: _____

YES: I'm willing to participate. _____

NO: I'm not willing to participate. _____

Please return this signed form **AS SOON AS POSSIBLE**.

Thank you for considering to help us in this research.

Dr. David Kirsh
Dept of Cognitive Science
UCSD

Dr. Rich Newman
Principal
Monterey Ridge Elementary