



Thunder Bay District Health Unit

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November 23, 2023

Dear Parents and Guardians of high school students in Thunder Bay area,¹

RE: High school student immunization programming for 2023/24 school year

TBDHU is moving forward on the high school student immunization program this school year as per standard practice and the Immunization of School Pupils Act (ISPAⁱⁱ). This includes the review and assessment of all student immunization records, notification to parents/guardians of missing vaccines or missing information, and vaccination clinics in all high schools and in the community to support routine and catchup immunizations. Please note that in the 2023/24 school year, we will be returning to the full ISPA process, including the suspension process for students who are overdue and whose records remain incomplete.

High School Student Immunization Program Timeline for the 2023/24 School Year

All Thunder Bay area high schools listed below will be on the same timeline in this process, including for the suspension orders and suspension period. TBDHU will be offering vaccination clinics in each high school and in the community well in advance of the suspension period to support students to receive their immunizations. Student records are reviewed and updated throughout this process.

Nov 16 - Dec 1 Parents/guardians of students who are eligible for routine ISPA vaccines will receive a **High school immunization consent** form for upcoming school vaccine clinics. This form will be mailed to the home address.

Parents/guardians of students who are overdue in completing their immunization record under ISPA will also receive an **Immunization Notice: Preventing Suspension**. This notice will be mailed to the home address. Students with incomplete immunization records will be eligible for suspension.

Dec 7 - Jan 22 TBDHU will offer vaccine clinics at high schools in Thunder Bay and surrounding areas. See below for a detailed clinic schedule.

Jan 22, 2024 Suspension orders will be sent to the parents/guardians of students with incomplete immunization records. This will be sent by registered mail to the home address.

Jan 29 – Feb 9 TBDHU will offer further vaccination opportunities, including evening clinics, weekend clinics, and clinics held at the CLE in Thunder Bay to help students catch up on vaccines and avoid suspension. Visit [TBDHU.com/vaxclinics](https://www.tbdhu.com/vaxclinics) for more information about TBDHU clinics.

Monday, Feb 12 The suspension period for high school students will start on this day for students who are overdue and whose records are still incomplete. Schools will be enforcing this suspension. TBDHU will immediately rescind a suspension order for a student when their immunization record is completed, and students may return to school right away. The full suspension period ends on March 18, 2024.

TBDHU will offer additional vaccine clinics the first week of the suspension period to help students complete their immunization record and return to school as soon as possible.

School Vaccination Clinics

December 7th and 8th	Hammar skjold High School
December 11th and 12th	Superior Collegiate and Vocational Institute
December 14th and 15th	Westgate Collegiate and Vocational Institute
December 19th and 21st	St. Patrick High School
January 8th and 9th	St. Ignatius High School
January 11th and 12th	École Secondaire Catholique De La Verendrye
January 22nd	Thunder Bay Christian School

Note that students in grades 11 and 12 will be called down to the school clinic and can provide their own consent for vaccination if the consent form was not completed by their parent/guardian.

What Parents/Guardians Should Do

- Look out for notices sent by TBDHU, especially on the dates noted above. If you receive a notice for your child, follow the directions outlined on the notice. Call TBDHU at 807-625-5900 and ask to speak with the vaccine program for any questions.
- Complete and return school vaccine clinic consent form and speak with your child about the upcoming immunization clinic at their school.
- Visit [TBDHU.com/schoolimmunizations](https://www.tbdhu.com/schoolimmunizations) for more information on ISPA and vaccines for school-aged children and youth.
- If you/your family has specific needs in order to comply with ISPA requirements, please reach out. We provide individualized support to families who require this.

We greatly appreciate your efforts to help ensure students are protected against vaccine preventable diseases.

Sincerely,



Janet DeMille, MD, MPH, CCFP, FRCPC
 Medical Officer of Health & Chief Executive Officer
 Thunder Bay District Health Unit

ⁱ High school students in Thunder Bay area include those attending the following high schools: Hammar skjold High School, Westgate Collegiate and Vocational Institute, Superior Collegiate and Vocational Institute, École Secondaire Catholique De La Vérendrye, St. Ignatius High School, St. Patrick High School, and Thunder Bay Christian School.

ⁱⁱ ISPA is an Ontario law requiring students under the age of 18 attending school in Ontario to be vaccinated against nine specific diseases or have a valid exemption on file with their local Health Unit. All ISPA-required vaccines are covered under Ontario's FREE vaccine schedule.