



## Thunder Bay District Health Unit

### MAIN OFFICE

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Thunder Bay ON P7B 6E7  
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sans frais / toll-free :  
1-888-294-6630  
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### GERALDTON

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510 avenue Hogarth ouest /  
Hogarth Avenue W.  
Geraldton ON P0T 1M0  
t: (807) 854-0454  
f: (807) 854-1871

### MANITOWAGUE

1-888-229-1820

### MARATHON

Box / Boîte 384  
Marathon High School building /  
Bâtiment de l'école secondaire  
promenade 14 Hemlo Drive,  
Suite B  
Marathon ON P0T 2E0  
t: (807) 229-1820  
f: (807) 229-3356

### RED ROCK

Box / Boîte 196  
Superior Greenstone District  
School Board Learning Centre  
/ Conseil scolaire Centre  
d'apprentissage  
46 rue Salls Street  
Suite 2  
Red Rock ON P0T 2P0  
t: (807) 886-1060  
f: (807) 886-1096

### TERRACE BAY

Box / Boîte 1030  
promenade 19 Hudson Drive,  
Suite 100  
Terrace Bay ON P0T 2W0  
t: (807) 229-1820  
f: (807) 825-7774

February 7, 2024

Dear Parents and Guardians of students in grades 2 to 5 in the District of Thunder Bay

### RE: 2023/24 school year immunization programming for students in grades 2 to 5

Thunder Bay District Health Unit is moving forward with the immunization program for students in grades 2-5 this school year as per standard practice and the *Immunization of School Pupils Act* (ISPA). This includes the review and assessment of all student immunization records, the notification to parents/guardians when missing vaccines or missing information, and a community vaccination clinic to support routine and catch-up immunizations.

Please note that in the 2023/24 school year, we will be returning to the full ISPA process for students in Grades 2 to 5, including the suspension process for students who are overdue and whose records remain incomplete. ISPA requires that school students be vaccinated against nine specific diseases or have a valid exemption on file with their local health unit.

For further information about the ISPA process and vaccines for school-aged children and youth, please visit [tbdhu.com/schoolimmunizations](https://tbdhu.com/schoolimmunizations).

### Common reasons why a child in this age group may be considered “overdue” under ISPA:

- They have had the vaccine(s) but the record has not been submitted to the Health Unit.
- They have not had the required vaccine(s) and there is no exemption on file.

### What Parents/Guardians should do:

- Parents/Guardians whose child is considered “overdue” based on the Health Unit records for the child, were sent a notice in January entitled ‘**Immunization Notice: Preventing Suspension**’. This first notice was sent to the home address on file with the school for the student.
- The notice included directions to follow in order to comply with ISPA requirements. Please follow the directions outlined. Call your closest TBDHU branch office and ask to speak with a public health nurse for any questions.
- Visit your health care provider with your child to get them caught up on any missing vaccines and be sure to bring the notice with you. Please ensure that the record of the immunization(s) is sent to the Health Unit.
- If you/your family has specific needs in order to comply with ISPA requirements, please call your closest TBDHU branch office and ask to speak with a public health nurse. We will provide individualized support to families who require this.

### Suspension Process for Students in Grades 2-5 for the 2023/24 School Year in the District:

In March, approximately two months after the first notice, a second notice will be sent to parents/guardians whose child’s record with the Health Unit remains incomplete. This second notice will be sent by mail to the home address and will include an **Order for Suspension** and directions to follow in order to comply with ISPA requirements and avoid suspension. The school suspension period will begin two weeks later and will be enforced by the school. Note that the TBDHU will immediately rescind a suspension order for a student when their immunization record is completed.

TBDHU will also be providing a clinic on the first day of the suspension period to help overdue students complete their immunization record. The order is rescinded when the record is completed and the student can return to school right away. If the record remains incomplete, the suspension period will last 20 days.

Refer to the table below for timelines for each District community:

| Community                  | 'Immunization Notice: Preventing Suspension' mailed out | Order for Suspension are mailed | Date Suspension Begins | TBDHU Clinic |
|----------------------------|---|---------------------------------|------------------------|--------------|
| Greenstone                 | January 15  | March 4                         | March 19               | March 19     |
| Terrace Bay & Schreiber    | January 15  | March 11                        | March 26               | March 26     |
| Red Rock, Nipigon & Dorion | January 22  | March 18                        | April 2                | April 2      |
| Marathon & Manitouwadge    | February 5  | April 1                         | April 16               | April 16     |

**Contact information for local TBDHU branch offices:**

- For Greenstone, call 807-854-0454
- For Marathon, Manitouwadge, Terrace Bay & Schreiber, call 807-229-1820
- For Nipigon, Red Rock & Dorion, call 807-886-1060

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