



Thunder Bay District Health Unit

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MANITOWAGE

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MARATHON

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RED ROCK

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Superior Greenstone District
School Board Learning Centre
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February 5, 2024

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

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

TBDHU 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, notification to parents/guardians when missing vaccines or missing information, and vaccination clinics in the community 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 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, will receive a first notice entitled ‘Immunization Notice: Preventing Suspension’. This will be sent to the home address on file with the school for the student. These notices will be sent out in early February.
- If you receive a notice for your child, follow the directions outlined in the notice. Call TBDHU at 807-625-5900 and press 1 to speak with the vaccine program for any questions.
- If you/your family has specific needs in order to comply with these ISPA requirements, please call TBDHU. We provide individualized support to families who require this.

Suspension process for Students in Grades 2-5 for the 2023/24 School Year

All Thunder Bay area elementary schools will be on the same timeline in this process, including for the suspension orders and suspension period. TBDHU will be providing lots of opportunity prior to the suspension period to help get your child’s record up to date.

First two weeks of February Notices sent out to parents/guardians as noted above.

March 15 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 on file.

April 8 The suspension period for students in grades 2-5 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.

Throughout this process, TBDHU will be offering support to parents with any questions, to update records, and to provide immunizations.

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

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J DeMille". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

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