

January 28, 2015

Dear Parents and Guardians,

The CDC has reported an outbreak of measles in the U.S. currently involving eleven states. The School District of Rhinelander would like to take this opportunity to provide some information about measles and how to prevent it.

Measles is the most deadly of all childhood rash/fever illnesses. It is a serious infection that causes fever, cough, a rash, sore eyes, and occasionally dangerous complications. Measles spreads very easily, so it is important to protect against infection. Getting vaccinated is the best way to prevent measles.

Specifically, to have the best protection against measles, two doses of MMR vaccine are required. As part of the childhood immunization program the first dose of vaccine is required between 12 -15 months and the second dose before entering school, at 4 – 6 years.

It is important for you to check your child's immunization records to make sure he/she has received two doses of MMR vaccine. Measles can spread easily to and from unimmunized children. In addition to being at risk for getting sick if exposed to measles, children with one or zero doses of MMR will not be able to come to school for two weeks if exposed. If you believe that your child needs the MMR vaccine, please call your health care provider or local health department.

A fact sheet about measles is included with this letter. If your child does develop a rash with a fever, they should not attend school and you should call your health care provider. Please tell the clinic you suspect your child may have measles. It is important to call the clinic or hospital before taking your child in.

Please remember – the best way to protect your child is to ensure they have had two doses of MMR.

Sincerely,

Kerri R. Schmidt BSN, RN, NCSN

School District Nurse