

August 25, 2023

Dear Administrator,

Schools play an important role in the health and well-being of North Dakota's young people. One of the most important ways to ensure children are healthy and able to attend school is by maintaining high rates of immunization against vaccine-preventable diseases.

The North Dakota Department of Health and Human Services would like to take this opportunity to remind school administrators of their role and responsibility in this effort.

North Dakota Century Code 23-07-17 mandates all students in kindergarten through 12th grade meet a minimum number of [required immunizations](#) prior to school entrance or have a documented exemption. Each school is responsible for excluding non-compliant students after October 1. Children enrolling in school after October 1, have 30 days to be up to date or claim an exemption. Those who are not in compliance must be excluded from school. Schools should have notified parents of incoming students about immunization requirements for this fall. Immunization requirements for the 2023-2024 school year, template letters for parents, and frequently asked questions can be found in the immunization area of hhs.nd.gov.

With the return of once eliminated diseases such as polio and measles in the United States and across the world, the importance of vaccines and maintaining immunization rates has become more critical. Having vaccine-preventable diseases circulating within a school would lead to large numbers of school absences and adversely affect the health of our students. Immunization rates must reach 95% to keep diseases from spreading if introduced into a school. Once rates fall below the 95% threshold, schools become vulnerable to outbreaks of diseases. You can view and compare your school's immunization rates to other schools, county and state rates on our [website](#).

You will also soon receive communication and instructions for completing the annual School Immunization Survey. This will be launched in October and due in November. To assist in tracking immunizations and completing the survey, schools may have access to the [North Dakota Immunization Information System](#) (NDIIS). Please contact the North Dakota Immunization Unit at 701-328-3386 or toll-free at 800-472-2180 with any questions or concerns regarding school immunizations.

Kind Regards,



Danni Pinnick, MPH

Immunization Surveillance Coordinator

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