Dear Families,

As you may have seen in the news Minnesota is experiencing a measles outbreak. School age students in Minnesota are required to have two MMR vaccines prior to starting school (MN 121A.15). Families may seek exemption from this requirement, either for medical or nonmedical reasons. Further information regarding exemption can be found on the enclosed, “Student Immunization Form.”

You are receiving this letter because our records show that your student is not fully immunized against measles. We are reaching out today to share information about measles disease, we want to make sure that you, as the parent of a not fully immunized student understand that your child may be excluded from school if they are not fully vaccinated, and to provide you with resources and contact information for any questions that you may have.

**What is measles?**

Measles, also called rubeola, is a very contagious disease caused by a virus. Because of high immunization levels, measles is no longer common in the United States. Measles can be a serious disease that can lead to hospitalization and even death. Many people with measles have complications like diarrhea, ear infections, pneumonia, or encephalitis (a brain infection that can lead to permanent brain damage). Complications are more common in children under 5 years of age and adults older than 20. Measles during pregnancy increases the risk of premature labor, miscarriage, and low birth weight infants. Measles can be especially severe in persons whose immune systems are weak.

Symptoms of measles include: rash, fever and cough or runny nose or watery/mattering eyes. Symptoms appear about 8 to 12 days after a person is exposed to measles. The first symptom is usually fever. The rash usually appears 2 to 3 days after the fever begins and lasts 5 to 6 days. The rash begins at the hairline, moves to the face and upper neck and then down the body. Measles is spread through the air when people who have it breathe, cough or sneeze. It is very contagious. Additional information can be found on the enclosed “Measles Fact Sheet.”

**What if my child is exposed to someone with measles?**

Children who are immunized for the measles can continue to attend school and child care.

At this time, when children are not immunized and are exposed to the disease they are excluded from child care and school for at least 21 days. Since some parents were not aware of this essential public health action, we wanted to ensure you were fully informed.

If you suspect your child has the measles, call your doctor or clinic first. They will direct you about how to get an appointment to be evaluated and to ensure your child gets the proper treatment.

**Can my child be immunized now?**

Immunizations are available. If you have not been vaccinated, getting an MMR shot within 3 days of being exposed may prevent measles. Please contact the school health office and we will assist you in getting an appointment if you would like to be immunized. We are happy to assist with insurance and financial barriers. Included with this letter is a “Vaccine Information Sheet” about the MMR.

Most importantly, we wanted to connect with you as we are sure you have many questions. There is a lot of information circulating and we encourage you to access the [Minnesota Department of Health Measles](http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/idepc/diseases/measles/) page which has current, reliable information for parents regarding measles. My phone number and email address are included with this letter, please don’t hesitate to call or email with any questions you may have.

Sincerely,

School Nurse

Phone

Email

Enclosed: Student Immunization Form, MMR Fact Sheet, MMR VIS