



## Protecting Our Children: The Urgent Need for Measles Vaccination

**Summary: Measles cases are present in Michigan. Vaccination rate is too low to prevent spread of this disease. If this spreads to our communities, it will likely be too late to get the vaccine at that time. Please consider getting your child vaccinated (must be over 1 year old), and talk to your primary care provider if you have reservations.**

Dear Parents and Guardians,

We are reaching out to share an important message about the health and safety of our children, especially as measles cases are once again appearing in Michigan and across the country.

In 2024, Michigan reported multiple measles cases — the first since 2019. Nationally, the number of outbreaks is rising, with 87% of cases occurring in unvaccinated individuals and 17% requiring hospitalization.

This year, we have had reports of multiple cases in the airports around Grand Rapids and Detroit as well as several confirmed cases around Lansing. My concern is that measles is one of the most contagious viruses, and spreads quickly in settings like schools.

Unfortunately, vaccination rates in our state are too low to keep measles from spreading. Among elementary-aged children, local immunization rates are hovering around 76%. But to achieve herd immunity — the level of protection needed to keep outbreaks from occurring — we need at least 90–95% of children to be fully vaccinated.

It's also important to know that the measles vaccine takes 14 days to provide protection after it's given. That means waiting until there's a known case in your community could be too late. With the ice storm, a lot of vaccine stockpile was lost and waiting until there are cases in the community will likely result in too little too late, as well as shortages. Early vaccination is key to protecting your child and those around them.

We encourage all families to ensure their children are up to date on their MMR (Measles, Mumps, and Rubella) vaccinations. If you're unsure of your child's status, please contact your



healthcare provider or check the Michigan Care Improvement Registry (MCIR). Many local clinics and pharmacies offer vaccinations, often at little or no cost.

By acting now, we can prevent the spread of measles and protect all children — especially those who are too young or medically unable to be vaccinated.

Thank you for your continued commitment to the well-being of our school community.

Warm regards,

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