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MEASLES INFORMATION FOR PARENTS & GUARDIANS

[Date]

Dear Parent or Guardian:

We are reaching out to share important information about measles now that the school year is underway, and due to the recent cases reported in other Illinois counties. Measles is a highly contagious disease, but it's also preventable. Making sure your child is vaccinated is one of the most effective ways to protect them, their classmates, and individuals who may be too young or medically unable to get vaccinated themselves. This letter explains what measles symptoms look like, how to check your child's immunization status, and what to do if your child has symptoms of measles.

Signs & Symptoms

Measles can be serious. It can cause complications like pneumonia (infection of the lungs) and encephalitis (swelling of the brain). Symptoms include:

- High fever
- Rash (starts on the head or face)
- Cough
- Red and/or watery eyes
- Runny nose
- Some individuals may experience Koplik spots (white/blue-ish spots in the mouth)

The earliest symptoms (fever, cough, red/watery eyes, and runny nose) often begin 3-5 days before the rash appears. An infected individual is contagious starting 4 days before the rash appears, and 4 days after (9 days total).

Immunization

Your child is at risk of developing measles if she/he has never had the disease or has never received the measles vaccine.

Measles vaccine, which is given in combination with rubella and mumps vaccine (MMR) is effective and safe. Age-appropriate immunization is [required for Illinois school entry](#), unless your child has proof of prior infection or an accepted exemption.

- To access your immunization records, please visit [Illinois Vax Verify](#).
- The Kendall County Health Department offers MMR vaccination through the Vaccines for Children program, which serves un- and underinsured children. Appointments can be requested using [KCHD's Child Immunization Callback Request form](#).

If your child develops an illness with fever (101°F or more), cough, runny nose or red eyes, with or without rash, contact your healthcare provider for diagnosis and treatment, and keep your child at home until the doctor and the school staff have cleared him/her to return. If you have any questions, call the Kendall County Health Department at 630-553-9100.