

**DATE:** May 19, 2015

**TO:** Board of Trustees

**FROM:** Darrel Robertson, Superintendent of Schools

**SUBJECT:** Immunization and Vaccination of District Students  
(Response to Request for Information #096)

**ORIGINATOR:** Dr. Sandra Stoddard, Executive Director, Governance and Strategic Support Services

**RESOURCE STAFF:** Jody Lundell

**REFERENCE:** April 7, 2015 Board Meeting (Trustee Ip)  
*School Act*, Section 45(8)

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#### **ISSUE**

Provide information regarding current district and provincial government policies, regulations and practice regarding the immunization and vaccination of students. The information should include what the District is currently doing to mitigate risks.

#### **BACKGROUND**

In Canada, vaccinations are not mandatory. Only the provinces of Ontario, New Brunswick, and Manitoba have legislation requiring students to show proof of vaccination in order to attend school. Parents, however, can apply for an exemption to this requirement based on medical, religious, or ideological grounds.

The province of Alberta does not have any legislation requiring students to be vaccinated in order to attend school. Therefore, no student can be denied entry to school because of their immunization status.

Alberta Health Services has the authority to exclude from school or work any students or staff who have been exposed to a case of measles and cannot provide acceptable evidence of immunity. The exclusion period starts five days after the first exposure to a case of measles to 21 days after last exposure to a case. This approach aligns with the Public Health Agency of Canada's guidelines and is outlined in Alberta Health Services' [Measles Disease: Q&A](#) (Appendix I).

Alberta Health Services also provides information letters about measles and measles vaccinations to Alberta school districts. School administrators are expected to share this information with parents. A letter to school administration, staff and parents was posted to the School News section of SchoolZone in February 2015 (Appendix II).

#### **CURRENT SITUATION**

The [Communicable Diseases Regulation](#) of the *Public Health Act* falls under the authority of Alberta Health Services. As a result, neither the *School Act* nor board policy make reference to

vaccination requirements related to school enrolment or attendance. However, Administrative Regulation [GICA.AR - Field Trips](#) refers to proof of measles vaccination, stating that, “The teacher-leader shall be responsible for ensuring, prior to travel beginning, that proof of measles vaccination is collected from students and supervisors travelling to measles endemic areas.” (Appendix III).

This regulation reduces the risk that students and staff participating in international field trips to measles endemic countries will contract measles and infect others upon their return and aligns with Section 45(8) of the *School Act* which requires a board to ensure that “each student enrolled in a school operated by the board is provided with a safe and caring environment that fosters and maintains respectful and responsible behaviours”.

Administrative Regulation GICA.AR – Field Trips is currently being revised to include a requirement that proof of measles vaccination is collected for students and staff travelling to areas experiencing measles outbreaks (e.g. California) in addition to areas identified as measles endemic.

This year, detailed information about measles has been shared through the Need to Know News (N2KN), including the requirement that staff participating in business travel (e.g. conferences) show proof of measles vaccination or immunity vaccination prior to travelling (Appendix IV).

#### KEY POINTS

- Policy and regulation related to vaccination requirements are the responsibility of Alberta Health Services. Neither Alberta Education nor Edmonton Public Schools has the authority to require students to show proof of vaccination in order to attend school.
- If a case of measles is confirmed in the District, school principals and/or central leaders will work with Alberta Health Services to ensure that students and/or staff unable to provide acceptable evidence of immunity to measles are excluded from school or work.
- Currently, Administrative Regulation GICA.AR – Field Trips requires proof of measles vaccination to be collected from students and supervisors travelling to measles endemic areas. This regulation is currently being expanded to include areas experiencing measles outbreaks.

#### ATTACHMENTS & APPENDICES

APPENDIX I	Alberta Health Services’ Measles Disease: Q & A
APPENDIX II	Alberta Health Services Letter to School Administration, Staff and Parents
APPENDIX III	Administrative Regulation GICA.AR – Field Trips
APPENDIX IV	Need to Know News - Measles Items

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## Measles Disease: Q & A

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### What causes measles?

- Measles disease is caused by a virus.
- This virus infects humans, causing measles disease in anyone who is not immunized or who has not previously had measles.

### What are the symptoms of measles?

- Symptoms of measles are:
  - Fever 38.3° C or higher; and
  - Cough, runny nose or red eyes; and
- Red blotchy rash appearing three to seven days after fever starts, beginning behind the ears and on the face and spreading down to the body and then to the arms and legs

### Is measles contagious?

- Measles is extremely contagious.
- The potential spread of measles is a serious health concern.

### Am I at risk for measles?

- If you have not had lab-confirmed measles in the past, or have not received measles vaccine, you are at risk for illness. Persons born before 1970 are generally considered immune.

### How does measles spread?

- As an airborne disease, measles is spread through the air.
- Measles can survive up to two hours in the air, even if the contagious person has left the space.
- Measles can also be spread through coughing and sneezing.

### How is measles diagnosed?

- Measles is diagnosed by a combination of symptoms, history of exposure to a measles case, and lab testing including blood tests.
- Lab testing is not needed if you have measles symptoms and were exposed to an infectious measles case (that was confirmed by lab testing).

### When are people with measles contagious?

- A person with measles is considered to be contagious from one day before having any symptoms (which is usually about four to seven days before the rash appears), until four days after the appearance of the rash.

### How long is a person with measles contagious?

- A person with measles is contagious even before showing symptoms!
- From about one day before having any symptoms until four days after the appearance of the rash, a person is considered contagious.

### How long does it take to show signs of measles after being exposed?

- Symptoms of measles can be seen within seven to 21 days of being exposed to measles. If you are at risk for measles, typically you would start seeing symptoms 10 days after exposure
- Measles can be life-threatening, and tends to be more severe in infants and adults.

**I have been exposed to measles. What should I do? Do I need to stay home?**

- If you have been exposed to measles, please monitor for symptoms of measles.
- If symptoms do develop, stay home and call Health Link Alberta (1.866.408.5465) BEFORE visiting any healthcare facility or provider.

**If I was near to one of the [measles exposure locations listed in an AHS Health Advisory](#), but wasn't actually IN the exposure setting, am I at risk?**

- AHS lists very specific locations, times & dates of exposure in all AHS Health Advisories related to measles.
- As noted in those Advisories, only those individuals who were within the very specific exposure setting(s), in the noted timeframe(s) on the noted date(s), are at risk.
- Individuals who were not in the specific setting(s), within the specific timeframe(s), on the noted date(s) are not at risk of disease related to that exposure.

**My child is not immune to measles, and was in one of the [exposure settings listed in one of the AHS Health Advisories, regarding measles](#). Can he or she get immunized now to prevent the disease?**

- After exposure to measles, your unimmunized child must receive vaccine within 72 hours of exposure to the measles case, to receive prophylactic protection against the disease.
- If your child does not receive vaccine within that 72 hour window, he or she will need to wait for a full 21 days after his or her last exposure to the case, to be immunized.
- If your child does NOT develop measles within that 21 day period, he or she is strongly recommended to receive the vaccine at that time.

**If my child is exposed to measles, and is not immune, can he or she be excluded from school and/or childcare facilities?**

- Yes: under Alberta's Public Health Act, students or staff at any school or children or staff at any childcare facility in Alberta who have been exposed to measles and who are susceptible to measles, are required to stay home for the period of time starting five days after first exposure to a case of measles through 21 days after the last exposure to a case of measles.
- It's important that susceptible individuals who have been exposed to measles stay home from all public activities during the period of time in which they may develop the disease.
- By staying home, this greatly reduces the risk of further spread of disease to other vulnerable individuals.

**How does AHS determine who will be excluded from school or childcare facility?**

- When a case of measles is confirmed in a school or childcare facility, AHS immediately works with the case, and the school or childcare facility, to confirm when the case attended school or the childcare facility.
- If the case attended school and/or a childcare facility while infectious, the school and/or childcare facility provides AHS with a list of all individuals who may have been exposed to this case.
- AHS cross-references the list against public health immunization records, and identifies all those for whom AHS does NOT have a record of two doses of measles vaccine, at the appropriate ages.
- AHS directly contacts exposed adults and the parents/guardians of students and/or children for whom AHS does NOT have immunization records. These persons are asked to send documentation to AHS of immunizations received elsewhere. (For example, official immunization records documenting vaccines administered outside of Alberta).

- Anyone who cannot provide acceptable evidence of immunity to measles will be considered non-immune, and will be excluded from school and/or the childcare facility.
- The exclusion period will start five days after first exposure to the case to 21 days after last exposure to the case. During this time, the excluded individual is required to stay home from school and/or the childcare facility, and from all activities that take place outside of home.
- NOTE: Anyone for whom AHS already has record of adequate immunity on file will not be contacted by AHS.

### **How do I know if my child could be excluded from school and/or childcare facility if he or she were to be exposed to a case of measles?**

- Children who have not received two documented doses of measles vaccine, at the appropriate intervals on or after the first birthday, can be excluded from school and/or a childcare facility, if exposed to a case of measles.
- In Alberta, measles vaccine is offered, free of charge, through Alberta's publicly funded immunization program.
- Children in Alberta typically receive their 1st dose of measles vaccine at 12 months of age, and their second dose between the ages of four and six years.
- If you are uncertain of your immunization history, or your child's immunization history, please call your local public health office or Health Link Alberta (1.866.408.5465) to discuss.

### **What should I do if my child/myself have the symptoms of measles?**

- If you have symptoms of measles, do not visit any clinic or hospital.
- Instead, please stay home, avoid contact with others, and call Health Link Alberta (1.866.408.5465) before visiting any health care facility or provider.

### **My child has been excluded from school and/or childcare facility. Why must he or she stay home? Is it important?**

- Yes, it is important that your child remain home and NOT attend school and/or the childcare facility (or any other activity outside of the home) if he or she has been excluded, following exposure to measles.
- If your child is not immune to measles, and has been exposed to measles, your child is at risk of developing measles.
- Your child can develop measles from seven to 21 days after being exposed to measles, and your child will actually be contagious before his or her symptoms even show.
- For this reason, it's very important that your child stay home from school and/or the childcare facility, and from all activities that take place outside of home, during the entire period of time in which he or she could develop the disease.
- By staying home, this greatly reduces the risk of further spread of disease to other vulnerable individuals.
- Remember: measles is an extremely contagious and potentially severe illness. Please help reduce the spread of illness.

### **What should I do if I think I'm sick with measles, but am not sure?**

- Stay home, avoid contact with others, and call Health Link Alberta (1.866.408.5465) before visiting any health care facility or provider.

### **Can someone get measles more than once?**

- It would be very unusual for an individual to have lab-confirmed measles disease more than once.

- Generally, once you have had measles, you are protected against measles for life.

## What are the possible complications from measles?

- In addition to the fever, rash and other symptoms, about one in three persons with measles will have one or more complications, including:
  - diarrhea
  - ear infections (which can lead to permanent hearing loss)
  - pneumonia
  - encephalitis (inflammation of the brain)
  - seizures
- A very rare but fatal disease of the brain and spinal cord can also develop months to years after measles infection. This fatal disease is called sub-acute sclerosing panencephalitis.
- Measles can also lead to death.
- Complications are more common among children under five years of age and individuals 20 years of age and older.

## I'm pregnant. Does measles put my unborn baby at risk?

- Yes, your unborn baby could be at risk if you are not immune to measles.
- Measles infection during pregnancy can lead to miscarriage, premature birth, and low birth weight. Birth defects are rare, but possible.
- If you are immune to measles, you will pass measles antibodies to your unborn child, mostly in the last third of your pregnancy. These maternal antibodies will provide some protection against measles to your infant, but this protection will disappear over time.
- Your infant will need to receive his or her own measles vaccines, to be immune to measles.
- Children in Alberta typically receive their 1<sup>st</sup> dose of measles vaccine at 12 months of age, and their second dose between the ages of four and six years. Both doses are needed, to be protected.

## I am pregnant and am not sure if I am immune to measles. What should I do?

- Pregnant women who have had two documented doses of measles vaccine are not at risk for measles.
- If you unsure of your immunization history, please call Health Link to discuss.
- If you are pregnant, are unsure if you are immune, and have been exposed to measles, please call Health Link to discuss.
- If you are not immune to measles, you should receive the measles vaccine as soon as possible your baby is born. (You cannot receive the measles vaccine while pregnant).

## I had a blood test (titre) to check if I am immune to measles. How do I get the results?

- If your blood test was completed by AHS Public Health, you will receive a phone call to advise you of the result.
- If your blood test was ordered by your doctor, you will need to speak to your doctor's office to find out the result.

## Is there a treatment for measles?

- No, there is no treatment for measles.
- Measles can be prevented through immunization.

## If I have measles, what care do I need?

- There is no specific treatment for measles.

- Most cases of measles should be treated through self-care, at home.
- Self-care for measles at home should include rest, drinking plenty of fluids, and taking acetaminophen or other non-prescription drugs to relieve fever and other symptoms. Avoid using over-the-counter medications containing ASA (aspirin) in children because of the risk of Reye syndrome, a rare but potentially fatal disease.

### **Is there medicine to cure the symptoms of measles?**

- No, there is no medicine to cure measles.

### **Can antibiotics cure measles?**

- No, there is no medicine to cure measles.
- Antibiotics are not used to cure or treat measles.
- Antibiotics may be needed if you develop a bacterial infection like an ear infection or pneumonia which can happen as a result of measles, but, antibiotics cannot be used to cure or treat measles.

### **Is measles preventable? How can I protect myself?**

- Immunization is the best defense against measles.
- In Alberta, measles vaccine is offered, free of charge, through Alberta's publicly funded immunization program.
- Children in Alberta typically receive their 1st dose of measles vaccine at 12 months of age, and their second dose between the ages of four and six years.
- If you are uncertain of your immunization history, or your child's immunization history, please call your local public health office or Health Link Alberta (1.866.408.5465) to discuss.

### **Is there a vaccine available for measles?**

- Yes. In fact, measles is preventable through immunization with the measles vaccine.
- In Alberta, measles vaccine is offered, free of charge, through Alberta's publicly funded immunization program.
- Children in Alberta typically receive their 1st dose of measles vaccine at 12 months of age, and their second dose between the ages of four and six years.
- Anyone uncertain of their immunization history should contact their local public health office, or Health Link Alberta, to discuss.

### **Who should get the measles vaccine?**

- Children in Alberta should receive their 1<sup>st</sup> dose of measles vaccine at 12 months of age, and their second dose between the ages of four and six years.
- Measles vaccine is also recommended for individuals born in or after 1970 who have not previously had measles disease.
- Members of the general public born before 1970 are considered immune because they would have been exposed to measles which circulated widely before 1970.

### **PLEASE NOTE:**

- During measles outbreaks, vaccine eligibility criteria can be expanded.
- Please visit [www.albertahealthservices.ca/measles](http://www.albertahealthservices.ca/measles) for information on changes to measles vaccine eligibility that were implemented on April 29, 2014, and will remain in place for the duration of the current outbreak declaration.

### **So, if I was born before 1970, I do not require vaccine?**

- Members of the general public born before 1970 are considered immune to measles, as these individuals were exposed to measles when it circulated widely before 1970.

- Please note: post-secondary students are considered immune, regardless of year of birth, only if they have received two documented doses of measles vaccine, at the appropriate ages and intervals.
- Health Care Workers (including post-secondary health care students) are considered immune, regardless of year of birth, only if one of the following is confirmed:
  - Two documented doses of measles vaccine at the appropriate time interval, or
  - Laboratory confirmation of measles disease, or
  - Serological evidence of measles immunity (measles IgG positive)

### **Do adults need two doses of the measles vaccine?**

- Two doses of measles vaccine are recommended for individuals born in or after 1970, who have not previously had measles disease.
- Members of the general public born before 1970 are considered immune to measles, as these individuals were exposed to measles when it circulated widely before 1970.

### **Where and at what cost can I get the measles vaccine?**

- In Alberta, measles vaccine is offered, free of charge, through Alberta's publicly funded immunization program.
- Children in Alberta typically receive 1<sup>st</sup> dose of measles vaccine at 12 months of age; second dose between the ages of four and six years. You can schedule your child for these immunization appointments by calling your local public health office or community health centre.
- PLEASE NOTE: only those individuals who require measles vaccine will be offered measles vaccine in Alberta. Measles vaccine is not for sale.

### **I was born before 1970 but I want to get the vaccine; can I purchase this vaccine?**

- No, you cannot purchase this vaccine.
- Measles vaccine is not approved in Alberta for use on individuals who were born before 1970, with the exception of healthcare workers and post-secondary students.
- Member of the general public born before 1970 are considered to be immune to measles and do not need vaccine.

### **My child is late receiving his or her measles vaccine. Can he or she get it now?**

- Yes, measles vaccine is available by appointment in all Zones, and by additional drop in clinics in some Zones, during an outbreak.
- We recommend you call your local public health office or Health Link Alberta to discuss your child's immunization needs, and access vaccine.

### **My child is less than four years of age and has received his or her first dose of measles vaccine. I want him or her to receive the second dose of measles vaccine before the age of four. Can this be done?**

- The second dose of measles vaccine is offered to children at age four or older, only.
- Second doses are not given early for this age group.
- Children age 12 months to less than four years of age who have received one dose of measles vaccine are considered adequately protected for that age range.
- Second dose is administered to children at age four and older.

### **Who should NOT receive the measles vaccine?**

- Measles vaccine should not be given to:
  - Pregnant women
  - Individuals with weakened immune systems due to disease or medications

- Individuals who have had severe allergic reactions to previous doses of this vaccine or any of its components

### **Does the measles vaccine cause autism?**

- No – the measles vaccine is safe.
- All vaccines in Canada go through rigorous testing before being approved for use.
- The claims that some individuals make about concerns with the safety of the measles vaccine are not supported by any scientific research, and in fact, have been debunked, proven false.

### **Can the measles vaccine cause measles?**

- No, the vaccine cannot cause measles. The vaccine elicits an immune response necessary to provide protection, without causing clinical disease.

### **How long does it take for the measles vaccine to work?**

- Your body will be protected against measles within two to six weeks of being immunized.
- If you come in contact with measles within that two to six week window, the vaccine can still provide you with protection.
- Remember: without two doses of measles vaccine at the appropriate ages and intervals, you are not fully protected against measles.

### **Does the measles vaccine fully protect me?**

- Two doses of measles vaccine, at the appropriate ages and intervals, is required to be considered immune to measles.
- One dose of measles vaccine provides approximately 95% protection.
- The second dose of vaccine is required for 99% immunity.
- Everyone's body responds slightly differently to vaccine, so, no vaccine is 100% effective; however, without vaccine, you are 100% at risk.



### **To School Administration, Staff and Parents:**

As spring holidays approach, we know that many families have vacations planned, both within and outside of Canada.

Travelling increases your family's risk of exposure to many different diseases, including measles. Measles is a very real threat in many parts of the world, including as close to home as California, where a measles outbreak is currently ongoing.

It is always important to ensure all your immunizations are up to date before you travel.

If you are travelling to an area where a measles outbreak is currently active (including, but not limited to, California), it is very important to ensure all travellers have received the right number of doses, for their age, of the MMR vaccine – the vaccine that protects against measles - before departing on the trip. Children six months to six years old may require an earlier dose of vaccine than provided in the routine schedule, anyone born in or after 1970 should ensure they have had two doses of vaccine, and adults born before 1970 should have one dose.

If you are uncertain whether you and/or your children need the MMR vaccine before travelling, please call your local community health centre to discuss. If you are not sure how to reach your local community health centre, you can also call Health Link Alberta at 1.866.408.5465.

### **Please remember:**

#### **Measles is a serious disease:**

In addition to fever, rash and other symptoms, about one in three persons with measles will have one or more complications, including diarrhea, ear infections (which can lead to permanent hearing loss), pneumonia, inflammation of the brain and seizures. Measles can also lead to death. Although complications are more common among children under five years of age, individuals 20 years of age and older and those with compromised immune systems, even healthy people are a risk of complications. In fact, about one in ten people with measles need hospital treatment.

#### **Measles is extremely contagious:**

Measles disease is caused by a virus that spreads easily through the air. When someone with measles has been in a room, the virus can survive in the air for up to two hours after the person has left and infect people who simply breathe the air during that time. People who have never been vaccinated or who have never had measles disease are 90 per cent likely to get sick with measles, if exposed to the measles virus.

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**Measles can be prevented with vaccine:**

Two doses of the MMR vaccine, at the appropriate ages and intervals, are required to be protected against measles. One dose of MMR vaccine provides approximately 95% protection. The second dose of MMR vaccine is required for 99% protection. Although everyone's body responds slightly differently to vaccine, we do know that without any vaccine, you are 100% at risk.

Be sure you and your family are protected. For more information on measles disease and the MMR vaccine, please visit [www.immunizealberta.ca](http://www.immunizealberta.ca) or call Health Link Alberta at 1.866.408.5465.

Sincerely,

Dr. Richard Musto  
Medical Officer of Health  
Alberta Health Services  
Calgary Zone

Dr. Christopher Sikora  
Medical Officer of Health  
Alberta Health Services  
Edmonton Zone

Dr. Albert de Villiers  
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South Zone

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CODE: GICA.AR

EFFECTIVE DATE: (05-07-2013)

TOPIC: Field Trips

ISSUE DATE: (27-08-2013)

REVIEW YEAR: (07-2018)

## OBJECTIVE

To articulate the Superintendent of Schools' requirements for the organization, supervision, documentation and approval of field trips to ensure a focus on student learning outcomes and the safety of students.

## DEFINITIONS

**Field trip** is a school activity that occurs outside the boundaries of the student's school, designed to support the student in:

- learning specific curricular outcomes for courses that the student is enrolled in; or
- co-curricular activities such as athletics or student leadership.

Note: For the purposes of this regulation, off-campus courses and work-study programs as outlined in Administrative Regulation GAA.AR – Off-Campus Education, are not considered to be field trips.

**High-risk activity** is an activity listed by our district insurance broker as one that has contributed to the most serious claims across Canada.

**Parent(s)** includes all legal guardian(s) or independent students.

**Principal** includes the:

- principal of a school; or
- director of Metro Continuing Education.

**Student(s)** includes funded children in Early Education, Early Learning and Kindergarten Programs as well as student(s) as defined within the *Alberta Education Funding Manual*.

**Supervisor** includes any staff member or registered volunteer, as per FBCE.BP Volunteers – Registration and Records Checks and FBCE.AR Volunteers – Registration and Records Checks accompanying students on a field trip.

**Teacher-leader** is a teacher from the school or an instructor with Metro Continuing Education designated by the principal to be in charge of the field trip.

## RESPONSIBILITY

1. District Support Services shall be responsible for providing advice and assistance to support principals in meeting all requirements of this regulation and exercising due diligence on behalf of the District to ensure student safety. District Support Services shall:
  - identify best practices, and develop common forms, templates and processes to support schools in meeting the requirements of this regulation;

- review both out-of-province field trip and high-risk field trip packages on behalf of the Assistant Superintendent; and
  - receive, for inclusion in the database, signed checklists for any in-province, low risk overnight field trips.
2. Principals shall be responsible for:
    - ensuring adequate preparation and supervision for all field trips;
    - ensuring all district approved field trip forms and templates are used in preparing the field trip package;
    - designating a teacher-leader to be in charge of each field trip on the Principal's behalf to ensure planning, supervision, communication, and approval is in compliance with this regulation;
    - providing to parents a *Field Trip Waiver Request: Notice to Parents* when a third party requires a waiver to be signed by parents;
    - approving each proposed field trip; and
    - providing final approval for in-province, low risk overnight field trips on behalf of the school or submitting completed packages for both out-of-province field trips and high-risk field trips to District Support Services.
  3. Principals can deny any child access to a particular activity. When a principal denies access to a field trip they must provide the rationale to the parents.
  4. Assistant Superintendents shall be responsible for:
    - approving all field trips involving high risk activities; and
    - approving all out-of-province field trips.
  5. The Superintendent of Schools reserves the right to cancel or alter a field trip at any time. No request for compensation will be entertained.

## REGULATION

1. Each field trip shall have received the appropriate level of vetting and approval, including where appropriate, the Assistant Superintendent's, prior to:
  - any information being sent home to parents or commitments being made to students and parents;
  - any contracts being signed, or commitments being made, to vendors or service providers;
  - any funds being expended; and
  - any money or deposits being collected from, or on behalf of, students and or parents.
2. For all in-province low risk overnight field trips, the Principal shall review arrangements and document approval of the field trip by completing, dating and signing the *Overnight Field Trip Checklist: In-Province/Low Risk* and attaching all information provided to parents. A copy of the completed and signed checklist shall be submitted to District Support Services, on behalf of the Assistant Superintendent, at least one week prior to the field trip.

3. For field trips involving high-risk activities, and for all out-of-province field trips, the Principal shall review arrangements and document approval of the field trip by completing, dating and signing the *Overnight Field Trip Checklist: Out-of-Province and/or High Risk*. The checklist and all information to be provided to students and parents shall be submitted to District Support Services on behalf of the Assistant Superintendent, as follows:
  - a minimum of six weeks prior to departure for field trips involving either high-risk activities or for out-of-province field trips within Canada and the continental United States; and
  - a minimum of six months prior to departure for out-of-province field trips involving travel outside of Canada and the continental United States.

A. SUPERVISION:

1. No teacher shall be assigned instructional time specifically to organize field trips.
2. Each field trip shall have a designated teacher-leader in charge. The teacher-leader shall be in attendance for the duration of any high risk; overnight; or out-of-province field trips. For all other field trips, when a principal deems it appropriate, the teacher-leader may have an alternate assigned to be present on a field trip.
  - a. The teacher-leader on all out-of-province trips shall provide a daily update by phone or email to District Support Services.
  - b. The teacher-leader shall provide a report by phone or email to District Support Services in the event of unusual circumstances resulting in a major modification to the itinerary of the field trip.
  - c. The teacher-leader shall immediately report any serious injury, ambulance call out, or hospital visit to:
    - District Support Services during business hours; or
    - Security Services after business hours.
  - d. Whether or not the teacher-leader is present on a field trip, the teacher-leader must always have overall responsibility for the field trip to ensure compliance of the field trip with this regulation. The teacher-leader shall ensure that supervision is available at all times and that supervisors are prepared to deal with any emergencies that may arise. The supervisory arrangements shall consider:
    - the age, maturity, needs and ability levels of the students;
    - the inherent risk of the activity; and
    - the circumstances of the particular activity.
  - e. The teacher-leader shall be familiar with, and conduct a safety assessment of, the proposed site of the field trip.
  - f. The teacher-leader shall ensure that training, preparation, orientation and expectations are provided to all students and supervisors.
  - g. The teacher-leader shall be responsible for ensuring, prior to travel beginning, that:
    - proof of measles vaccination is collected from students and supervisors travelling to measles endemic areas; and
    - proof of additional medical coverage is collected from students and supervisors for international trips.

- h. The teacher-leader shall be responsible for ensuring that the following items are present and readily available on field trips:
- list of student participants;
  - phone contact numbers of parents;
  - Alberta Health Care numbers of participants;
  - information regarding medication and medi-alert needs of participants; and
  - an appropriately equipped portable first aid kit. Occupational Health and Safety Code provides information on the contents of first aid kits (see Schedule 2, Table 3) and the type of kit required relative to the number of participants (see Schedule 2, Table 5) can be found by following the link.
3. Where a principal deems it appropriate or where it is required by law, supervision shall include individuals suitably trained in first aid. Staff can access first aid training from a vendor approved by Purchasing and Contract Services. Alternatively, first aid training can be obtained from another vendor. In this case, the principal is required to ensure that any vendor not on the approved district list has appropriate training, insurance and certification, and is offering a course approved by *Alberta Workplace Health and Safety*.
4. On overnight field trips involving students of both genders, male and female supervisors shall be present, and on other field trips when necessary.
5. For high-risk activities, competent instruction and supervision in these activities are mandatory. Competence may be established by virtue of a certificate from a governing body for activities such as skiing and canoeing. In areas where certificates are not issued, competency may be recognized by virtue of experience and demonstrated expertise in the activity.
6. A principal may authorize persons other than teachers to provide supervision or instruction when warranted by the nature of the specific field trip, to meet the safety requirements of this regulation.
7. Only assigned teachers and authorized supervisors shall accompany students on a field trip. Volunteers must be approved as a supervisor by the Principal and are required to complete the following forms, as stated in GBCE.AR – Volunteers – Registration and Records Checks:
- Volunteer Registration Form;
  - Police Information Check; and
  - where required, Volunteer Driver Form.
8. Where a school has only one or two qualifying students for a field trip, a teacher from another Edmonton Public School which is also sending students, may agree, with their principal's approval, to be designated as the teacher-leader for the field trip and assume supervision of the one or two students. This could occur for field trips such as provincials for badminton, wrestling, or a student leadership conference. A Field Trip Notice: *Alternative Supervision Form* must accompany the *Field Trip Information* and *Parental Consent Form*. The requirement for adherence to all other sections of this regulation remains. In situations where a school is sending three or more students on a field trip, it is expected that a teacher-leader from the school be assigned.

9. When necessary, principals are expected to seek advice and assistance from experts in planning field trips and in assessing risk. The following are recommended personnel and publications:
  - a. Personnel:
    - District Support Services
    - Human Resources
    - District insurance contact (Financial Services)
    - District General Counsel
    - other senior staff
  - b. Publications:
    - *Safety Guidelines for Physical Activity in Alberta Schools*
    - *Occupational Health Code 2009*
    - *The Canadian Association for Health, Physical Education and Recreation*

## B. FIELD TRIP CONSENT FORMS:

1. Prior to each field trip, written parental consent shall be obtained for each participating student. The *Field Trip Information and Parental Consent and Authorization Form* is available for schools on the District intranet under District Support Services.
2. In order to ensure informed consent, the teacher-leader must utilize the standard *Parental Consent and Authorization Form* as prepared by the District, and provide parents the following information in writing:
  - purpose or educational goal of the field trip relative to the specific learner outcomes of the course the student is enrolled in;
  - proposed itinerary;
  - description of the activities or events proposed;
  - an indication of extraordinary or unusual hazards that may be encountered on the field trip;
  - safety precautions in place to deal with activities involving risk, including, when appropriate, the name of the designated first-aider and the expiry date of their certificates;
  - emergency procedures to be followed in the event of injury, illness or unusual circumstances;
  - method(s) of transportation to be used;
  - arrangements for supervision; and
  - cost to the student.
3. Parental consent forms shall:
  - include consent from parents authorizing the supervisors to arrange for necessary medical treatment;
  - include contingency plans in the event of cancellation, adverse weather and road conditions, or other conditions that may require a change to the original itinerary;
  - specifically require parents, or a qualified instructor, to indicate a child's skill level in swimming, skiing or snowboarding and in any high-risk activity. For skiing and

snowboarding, the District *Levels of Ability - Ski Form or Levels of Ability - Snowboarding Form* must be used;

- provide for parents to be able to consent to particular activities, and withhold consent with respect to others in relation to the same field trip;
  - include information that the Superintendent of Schools reserves the right to cancel or modify any trip and that no request for compensation will be entertained; and
  - include notification to parents that photos or videos of students attending or participating in a field trip, that is open to the general public, may be taken by participants, others, or the media, and that Edmonton Public Schools cannot control or prevent the further distribution of these images.
4. Special provisions may be required when seeking permission from parents if language, literacy, or cultural barriers exist.
  5. For school activities that involve more than one trip outside the boundaries of the school such as swimming lessons, physical education classes, outdoor education classes, and interschool sports within the league, a single parental consent will suffice if the information to the parent includes both a schedule and dates of all activities. Should any of these be high-risk activities, separate field trip parental consents must be obtained.
  6. A single parental consent will suffice for scheduled and unscheduled walking field trips in the neighbourhood of the school.
  7. Supervisors should not entertain major deviations to the proposed itinerary of any field trip once parental consent has been received.

#### C. FIELD TRIP RECORDS:

If the Principal believes that the records pertaining to a field trip might be important because of an incident that occurs on the field trip, then the Principal must retain those records in accordance with CN.AR - Creation, Use and Maintenance of District Information.

The schools shall keep a record for two years of each field trip, which will include:

- principal authorization;
- Assistant Superintendent's authorization, where required;
- parental consent;
- all information provided to parents;
- any copies of passports or immunization records, where required;
- list of participating students; and
- list of supervisors.

#### REFERENCES

CN.AR - Creation, Use and Maintenance of District Information

DEAC.AR - Chartering of Buses by Schools

DEBA.AR - School-Purchased Vehicles

DIBA.AR - Liability Insurance

FBCE.BP - Volunteers – Registration and Records Checks

FBCE.AR - Volunteers – Registration and Records Checks

GA.BP - Student Programs of Study

GAA.AR - Off-Campus Education

Alberta Occupational Health and Safety Code – Schedule 2, Tables 3 and 5

District Support Services:

- Field Trip Information and Parental Consent Form
- Field Trip Waiver Request: Notice to Parents
- The Field Trip Information and Parental Consent and Authorization Form – District Services
- Overnight Field Trip Checklist: In-Province/Low Risk
- Overnight Field Trip Checklist: Out-of-Province and/or High Risk
- Levels of Ability - Ski Form
- Levels of Ability - Snowboarding Form

Purchasing and Contract Services

## Need to Know News on Measles Immunization

### Message from Alberta Health Services for Parents to Immunize Children

**October 10, 2014** - Alberta Health Services has sent an email to schools requesting they share immunization information with parents and staff. The following has been posted for parents on SchoolZone under **District News**.

*Edmonton Public Schools has been asked by Alberta Health Services to share the following information with parents whose children are not immunized against measles.*

*If the school your child attends has a measles outbreak and your child has not been vaccinated, they will not be allowed to attend school until **three weeks** (3) after the last case of measles in their school. If your child gets the measles they have to stay home until four (4) days after the appearance of the rash.*

*If your child was immunized for measles, in another province or country, contact your local Health Unit so your child's records can be updated.*

*More information about this is available [here](#).*

*If you have any questions, please contact HEALTHLink Alberta at 1-866-408-5465.*

The same message holds true for staff who have not been immunized. If a school has a staff member who has measles and been in the school while infectious, other staff and children will need to show proof of immunity to measles. If staff and students do not have proof of two doses of measles vaccine, they will not be able to return to school until three weeks after the last case of measles has been detected at the school, unless they are assessed as immune by local public health.

Further information is available [here](#).

### Revised Field Trip Parental Consent and Authorization Form – Measles Immunity

**January 30, 2015** - The District parental consent and authorization form for field trips has been modified to provide enhanced clarity regarding existing protocols for trips including travel to countries deemed to be measles-endemic by the Government of Canada.

Students participating in such trips are required to provide proof of measles immunity (documentation of either vaccination or prior contraction of the disease) in order for their child to be permitted to participate in the trip. The revised form includes a check box where the school must indicate (after printing if using the PowerSchool version, or on the document itself if using the Word version) if the trip itinerary does or does not include travel to a measles-endemic country.

Information about countries that are currently reported to be measles-endemic can be found [here](#).

The updated Word version is available on the [District Support Services website](#), and PowerSchool has now been updated with this change.

Further information: [Jody Lundell](#), or [Bob Morter](#), District Support Services, 780-429-8030.

## Message from Alberta Health Services re Immunization and Travel

**February 6, 2015** - Alberta Health Services has asked the Superintendent to share additional information with staff about travel and measles immunization. Below is what has been posted on SchoolZone for parents under **District News**.

**Measles Information from AHS** – *As spring holidays approach, we know that many families have vacations planned, both within and outside of Canada. Travelling increases your family's risk of exposure to many different diseases, including measles. Measles is a very real threat in many parts of the world, including as close to home as California, where a measles outbreak is currently ongoing.*

*If you are uncertain whether you and/or your children need the MMR vaccine before travelling, please call your local community health centre to discuss. If you are not sure how to reach your local community health centre, you can also call Health Link Alberta at 1-866-408-5465.*

The same message holds true for staff who have not been immunized. The item below outlines new requirements for field trips to California as a result of the measles outbreak there.

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### New Requirements for Field trips to California

**February 6, 2015** - As a result of the current outbreak of measles, all students participating in field trips to California are required to provide proof of measles immunity (documentation of either vaccination or prior contraction of the disease) in order to participate in the trip. This applies to all upcoming trips, including those already approved by the Assistant Superintendents of Schools.

Principals are responsible for ensuring processes are in place to confirm proof of measles immunity. Students who do not provide proof of measles immunity prior to departure will be denied opportunity to participate in the field trip.

Further information: **Jody Lundell** or **Laurie Barnstable**, District Support Services, 780-429-8030.

## News Flash - Thursday, February 12, 2015

 [Subscribe](#)



### Measles Immunity/Immunization for Staff and Parent Volunteers

**February 12, 2015** - The Public Health Agency of Canada reminds travellers to make sure their measles vaccination is up-to-date.

Travellers who are not immune to measles (those who have not been fully vaccinated or have not been infected with the disease) have an increased risk of infection. For example, travel through international airports, including those in Canada, may increase your chance of exposure to the disease.

All Staff and Parent Volunteers, born **in or after 1970**, participating in field trips to measles endemic areas (as per [Regulation GICA.AR](#)) and California (where there is a current outbreak) are required to provide proof of measles immunity/immunization.

Principals are responsible for ensuring processes are in place to confirm proof of measles immunity. Staff and Parent Volunteers who do not provide proof of measles immunity prior to departure will be denied opportunity to participate in the field trip. This includes travel for upcoming trips, including those already approved by the Assistant Superintendents of Schools.

If you are uncertain whether you need the measles vaccine before travelling, please call your local community health centre to discuss. If you are not sure how to reach your local community health centre, you can also call Health Link Alberta at 1-866-408-5465.

Further information: **Lynn Norris**, Manager, Employee Health, 780-429-8072.



**Measles Immunization and Business Related Travel for Staff**

**February 19, 2015** - Staff will not be permitted to conduct business related travel (professional learning, meetings, field trips, etc.) to California (or areas where there is an outbreak) without proof of measles immunization if they were born in 1970 or later.

The [Public Health Agency of Canada](#) reminds travellers to make sure their measles vaccination is up-to-date.

Travellers who are not immune to measles (those who have not been fully vaccinated or have not been infected with the disease) have an increased risk of infection. For example, travel through international airports, including those in Canada, may increase your chance of exposure to the disease.

If you are uncertain whether you need the measles vaccine before travelling, please call your local community health centre to discuss. If you are not sure how to reach your local community health centre, you can also call Health Link Alberta at 1-866-408-5465.

Further information: [Lynn Norris](#), Manager, Employee Health, 780-429-8072.

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