

February 2, 2015

School District of Lodi:

Dear Parents and Guardians,

The CDC has reported an outbreak of measles in the U.S. currently involving eleven states. The Lodi School District would like to take this opportunity to provide some information about measles and how to prevent it.

Measles is the most deadly of all childhood rash/fever illnesses. It is a serious infection that causes fever, cough, a rash, sore eyes and occasionally dangerous complications. Measles spreads very easily, so it is important to protect against infection. Getting vaccinated is the best way to prevent measles.

Specifically, to have the best protection against measles, two doses of the MMR vaccine are required. As part of the childhood immunization program the first dose is given between 12-15 months of age and the second dose is given before entering school at 4-6 years old.

It is important to check your child's immunization records to see when they have had the vaccine or if they are due for one. Measles spreads easily and the early signs are runny noses and cough before the rash appears, so it is being spread before you know it's the measles. In addition to being at risk for getting sick if exposed to measles, children with one or zero doses of MMR will not be able to come to school for two weeks if they have been exposed. So check with your health care provider if you are unsure about your child's vaccine status.

A fact sheet about measles is included with this letter. If your child does develop a rash with fever, they should not attend school and you should call your health care provider. Please tell the clinic you want to be checked to rule out measles. It is important to call the clinic or hospital before taking your child in and tell them the symptoms. Note fact sheets also referenced.

Sincerely: Terry Haag RN School Nurse (Elementary, MS and HS) and Rodney Barrow RN School Nurse (Primary and OSC) and the Columbia County Public Health Department