Dear Families,

Recently Minnesota has been experiencing a Measles outbreak, which you may have seen on the news. According to Minnesota Statute 121A.15, children that are school age are required to have two MMR vaccines prior to starting school. Families may seek exemption from the requirement in either medical or nonmedical reasoning. Further information can be found on the attached “Student Immunization Form”.

This letter is being sent to inform all families in our district: about the measles disease, that your child may be excluded from school if they are not fully immunized or do not have an exemption on file for not obtaining the MMR vaccine (medical or nonmedical), and to provide updated resources and contacts for families to utilize for any questions.

As of June 2, 2017 there have been 73 confirmed cases of Measles in MN. Of the 73 cases, 68 were unvaccinated.

**Information Regarding Measles (Per Minnesota Department of Health and Centers for Disease Control):**

Measles spreads easily among people who are not vaccinated. Measles starts with a fever, runny nose, cough, red eyes, and a sore throat. It’s followed by a rash that spreads over the body. Measles is a virus that is highly contagious and spreads through the air through coughing and sneezing. Unvaccinated people who are exposed to measles will be contacted by public health or a healthcare facility and asked to stay home for up to 21 days. This means not going to school, child care, work, and other places where many people gather. Areas with low immunization rates are a concern not only for those who are unvaccinated by choice, but also for those who cannot be vaccinated due to health status or age. Make sure your child(ren) are protected with measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR) vaccine.

Symptoms appear about eight 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 was declared eliminated (absence of continuous disease transmission for greater than 12 months) from the United States in 2000. However, due to lower vaccination rates we are seeing a rise in measles cases in the United States. Herd Immunity is a great source to help families, children, and individuals who cannot vaccinate due to medical concerns or age. Herd immunity needs a 95% immunity or vaccination rate in the community to be effective.

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Please review the attached documents regarding Measles as they include information about immunizations, and a fact sheet with relevant questions for families.

We want to ensure families have the most accurate and up to date information regarding health concerns in our community as there is various information circulating about measles. Families are encouraged to research information through the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) website regarding measles, as well as the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) website as both have reliable and current information.

No student is required to have an immunization which is contrary to the conscientiously held beliefs of his/her parent or guardian. To receive this exemption, a parent or legal guardian must complete, sign and have notarized a conscientious objector form. A copy of this form is also included with this letter (Student Immunization Form-back side)

If you have any questions regarding the information you have received or reviewed, please don’t hesitate to contact me through the included phone and/or email.

Respectfully,

Antonia Barrick RN, BSN

Health Services Cordinator

Hutchinson School District 423 District Nurse

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* enclosed:MMR  Vaccine Information Statement (VIS),  Measles Fact Sheet, Student Immunization Form.