

Dear Elementary School Administrators,

As you are aware, the Windsor-Essex County Health Unit (WECHU) issued immunization notices in November 2023 and suspension order notices in January, to parents/guardians of elementary school students with incomplete immunization records. These families received information specifying which required vaccine(s) are missing from their child's record and were provided information on how to report their child's immunization to the WECHU.

Students with incomplete immunization records as of **6 pm on Wednesday, February 28<sup>th</sup>, 2024** will be suspended on March 1st, for up to 20 days or until the required information is provided.

Please refer to the information below for key dates and information regarding the [Immunization of School Pupils Act](#) enforcement process.

### **Important Dates and Steps Regarding the Elementary School Suspension Process**

#### **February 28<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 pm**

- Deadline for families to submit student immunization records to the WECHU. Students with outstanding records after this time will be considered non-compliant and will be suspended from school up to 20 days starting on Friday, March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024.

#### **February 29<sup>th</sup>**

- WECHU staff will finish processing all received immunization records submitted before the deadline and generate suspension lists for each elementary school.
- These lists of suspended students will be faxed to all elementary schools prior to the start of the school day on Friday, March 1<sup>st</sup>.
- Principals will receive **one sample OSR letter and** the list of suspended students for their school.
- A summary of the # of students suspended by school for each School Board will be individually shared via email with School Board Liaisons.

#### **March 1<sup>st</sup> Suspension Day**

- Suspension lists will be provided to the schools by the start of the school day March 1. School administrators should contact the WECHU if they did not receive a list.

School administration staff will review the list provided by the WECHU and ensure any students that have attended school are excluded from class effective immediately and directed to follow-up on their outstanding immunization records. Visit the WECHU's [School Administrators](#) page for resources that can be shared with families. Once the student is suspended, their parents/guardians cannot update immunization records over the phone, they must bring the immunization record to the health unit, have the Health Care Provider fax their child's record to the WECHU or update the record at [immune.wechu.org](http://immune.wechu.org) (must upload proof).

- Once a student's immunization record is determined up to date, they will be issued an embossed 'rescind letter' in hard copy. The rescind letter and/or their name off the suspension list is proof that the suspension order has been removed and the student can return to school effective immediately.

#### **March 4th – Apr. 8<sup>th</sup>(and up to 20 days after)**

- Updated lists of suspended students will be generated every evening and faxed to the school before the start of school the next day.
- School administrator will exclude individual students on the list who attended and do not have a rescind letter.
- Once a student's immunization record is determined up to date, they will be issued an embossed 'rescind letter' in hard copy. The rescind letter is proof that the suspension order has been removed and the student can return to school effective immediately. Lists will only be updated once per day, but schools can permit anyone with an official rescind letter to return upon presentation.
- The WECHU will continue to offer immunization clinic services at our Windsor and Leamington to get students appropriately vaccinated/records updated, so students can get back to class as quickly as possible.
- Ongoing communications will be shared with School Board Liaisons including summaries of the updated number of students suspended by school for each School Board.

#### Important Communication Messages:

- Once the school suspension is in effect, the WECHU cannot accept immunization information from the school (i.e., hard copy records or faxed records).
- Health care providers do not automatically send immunization records to the WECHU and it is up to the parents/guardians to ensure immunization records are updated.
- School administration staff can visit the WECHU's [School Administrators](#) page for resources available for distribution to families. Examples of helpful resources available include:
  - Answers to Parents' Frequently Asked Questions.
  - Elementary Student Suspension Next Steps Info Sheet (letter for parents with next steps in the suspension process details; available in English, French, Arabic, Spanish).
  - School Administrator tool for families who received a suspension notice (flow chart with next steps for families whose children received suspension orders).

School administrators with questions can contact the Healthy Schools Immunization Helpline at 519-258-2146, ext. 1555 (Parents and guardians can call ext. 1222).

Thank you for your continued commitment to the health and well-being of students in our community.