

LTUSD urging students to be vaccinated

By Margaret McKean

According to the California Department of Public Health, there are 99 cases of confirmed measles cases in California.

Measles is a highly infectious, airborne disease that typically begins with fever, cough, runny nose and red eyes, and within a few days a red rash appears, usually first on the face and then spreading downward to the rest of the body.

The measles virus can live for up to two hours on a surface or in an airspace where the infected person coughed or sneezed. If other people breathe the contaminated air or touch the infected surface, then touch their eyes, noses, or mouths, they can become infected. Measles is so contagious that if one person has it, 90 percent of the people close to that person who are not immune will also become infected. Infected people can spread measles to others from four days before to four days after the rash appears.

About three out of 10 people who get measles will develop one or more complications including pneumonia, ear infections, or diarrhea. Complications are more common in adults and young children.

If your child has not been vaccinated for the measles and is eligible for vaccination, it is urgent that you contact your healthcare provider and have your son or daughter vaccinated. It takes two weeks to build up immunity to the vaccine. So those who receive an MMR now would be immune if a case of measles occurred two weeks or more from now.

You may also call the health department if you have questions – 530.573.3155.

For the safety of your child and students and staff who are unable to be vaccinated due to leukemia, cancer, immune disorders and pregnant women we urge you to get your child immunized against measles.

Contacts to a “confirmed” case, who do not have immunity against the measles, would be excluded for 21 days after exposure.

Lake Tahoe Unified School District waivers as of Feb. 5:

School	Students	Waiver %	No Immunizations	Partial Imm	MMR	Tdap
Bijou	574	5	16	12	24	
LTESM	398	16	32	30	58	
SH	497	6	19	11	23	
TV	503	7	31	6	33	
STMS	814	9	30	42	43	48
STHS	1025	9	36	53	38	69
Mt Tallac	86		2	2	2	1

Source: LTUSD

If you believe your son or daughter may have been exposed to the measles, please keep them home and contact your health care provider for next steps as well as the school to inform them.

If a case of measles appears within our school community, students that have not received the measles vaccine will be sent home from school. Should you have additional questions, please contact your healthcare provider.

Margaret McKean is a registered nurse who works for Lake Tahoe Unified School District.