



catawba county public health

August 19, 2025

Dear Principal,

Childhood immunizations have been in the news a lot over the past few months, especially related to an outbreak of measles in the U.S.

As students head back to classrooms, we know parents and educators may have questions and our School Nurses are there to provide support, answering questions and giving information on vaccines. These Catawba County Public Health Employees also link parents and guardians to physicians for specific recommendations for individual children, ensuring that information is tailored to that specific child.

School Nurses work diligently throughout the school year and even over the summer months to ensure that students have the healthiest start possible when they return to your classrooms by regularly communicating with families to ensure that children entering school for the first time receive a medical assessment and are up to date on state-required vaccines. Although they do their best, there are still students each year that aren't ready on the first day and sometimes don't have updated records by the 30-day deadline set by the state.

Although the majority of children in Catawba County are vaccinated, there has been an overall rise in the number of children who have exemptions and are not fully vaccinated. This corresponds with a rise in measles cases and other vaccine-preventable diseases across the country.

By North Carolina law, students who are not current on required vaccines are to be excluded from school. Principals can exclude a student after the 30th day of school (on 9/23/25) if not compliant.

Exclusion for communicable diseases is a serious impediment to learning because students who are sick or students who are not up to date on vaccines and potentially exposed may be out for extended periods of time. For example, when an unvaccinated child is exposed to pertussis (whooping cough) or measles, they must be excluded from school for about three weeks.

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MAKING. LIVING. BETTER.

Keeping children in school, where they learn best, is a shared priority for educators and School Nurses alike. As students return to classrooms, we ask that you help encourage parents and caregivers of students entering Kindergarten, 7th grade and 12th grade to make sure their child is up-to-date on state-required vaccines by day 1 and especially by the state's 30-day deadline. This helps ensure that students are in the classroom, healthy and ready to learn.

Sincerely,

Marianne Vogel,
School Health Supervisor