

March 27, 2020

Alan Campbell, President
Josh Watt, Executive Director
Manitoba School Boards Association
Email: jwatt@mbschoolboards.ca

Dear Alan Campbell and Josh Watt:

Your letter concerning the low immunization rates of Manitoba children has been referred to me. I am pleased to respond on behalf of Health, Seniors and Active Living Minister Cameron Friesen.

Increasing the immunization status of Manitobans, especially school-aged children, remains a priority goal of Manitoba Health, Seniors and Active Living (MHSAL). Manitoba has a robust publicly funded school immunization program which, based on regulation in The Public Health Act, is voluntary. MHSAL is continuously examining ways of overcoming vaccine hesitancy and increasing vaccine coverage.

At this time, MHSAL's Public Health Branch is currently focusing on the COVID-19 response, but would welcome opportunities to work with the Manitoba School Board Association to develop innovative and evidence-based solutions to increase immunization uptake among school-aged children. For instance, "Kids Boost Immunity" is a program that has had success in other Canadian jurisdictions. If you would like to speak further about this issue, please contact the Public Health Branch at Vaccines@gov.mb.ca.

Thank you for being an advocate for children in Manitoba regarding immunization. Immunization is the most important public health intervention to prevent disease and protect the health of the population.

Sincerely,



Avis Gray
Assistant Deputy Minister

c Honourable Cameron Friesen