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Vaccinating kids against HPV saves lives!



Please reply to  
CalgaryHPV@gmail.com

July 4, 2012

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Email: [trustees@cssd.ab.ca](mailto:trustees@cssd.ab.ca)

Calgary Catholic School District  
Catholic School Centre  
1000 - 5 Avenue SW  
Calgary, AB T2P 4T9

Dear Members of the Board of Trustees,

As you know, we are a group of citizens who are deeply concerned about the health and wellbeing of children enrolled in the Calgary Catholic School District. Public health authorities have, since June 2008, recommended in-school vaccination against a common and widespread virus that can lead to cancer, among other health problems. A previous Calgary Catholic School Board banned the administration of this vaccine in these publicly funded schools. Your Board has neither placed on its agenda nor taken a vote on this public health matter.

Over a year ago, we arranged for three physicians to meet you. On June 28, 2011 they made a formal presentation to you about the importance of in-

school vaccination against this virus. Throughout the school year (2011-2012) that followed, they corresponded with you repeatedly asking you to vote in favour of permitting public health nurses to administer the HPV vaccine as part of their regularly scheduled vaccination program in Catholic schools. Your replies have been surprising because you have not explained how your refusal to permit access to the vaccine benefits the children enrolled in the school district. Every acceptable standard of care recognizes the centrality of children's best interests and the historic role that publicly funded schools have played in promoting public health.

On Monday, June 25, 2012, we asked that you meet and vote by June 30, 2012 in favour of opening the school doors to public health nurses by the time school resumes after Labour Day. We are dismayed that you have chosen not to do so. The disparity in vaccine uptake (Edmonton Catholic 70% and in Calgary Catholic 18.9% in 2009) demonstrates that it is not easy for all parents to make three appointments to take their children to public health clinics three times. Children of lowest socio-economic status are least likely to obtain the vaccine if it is provided only in the community yet these same children are most at risk of contracting cervical cancer.

So far, approximately 14,000 children have been affected by your decision. Most of these have not received the vaccine either in school or in the community. Some of these children will develop cervical cancer, which might have been prevented.

We persevere in corresponding with you because protecting the health of the most vulnerable children in Alberta and in Catholic schools is a matter of personal conscience for us. **We respectfully ask each of you to respond by noon, July 31, 2012 expressing what your conscience affirms to be in the best interests of the most vulnerable children in the Catholic schools in Calgary.** Following receipt of your correspondence, we will better be able to determine our future course of action.

Yours sincerely,

Ruth Dell, Keri Davis,  
Juliet Guichon, Heather  
Meyer and Cory Miller  
For HPV Calgary