THE STATE of ALASKA
GOVERNOR BILL WALKER

Department of Health and Social Services
DIVISION OF PUBLIC HEALTH
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Dear Superintendent:

This follow-up letter describes NEW school tuberculosis (TB) screening requirements for students for the 2016/2017 school year, as required by 7 AAC 27.213 "Tuberculosis Screening of School Children". All school TB screening will be risk-based with significant changes being made to screening recommendations in areas of the state determined to have low TB risk. School categories – high risk or low risk – are determined based on evidence of current or historical increased risks of TB in the community served and are reviewed annually.

It is the district's and nonpublic school's responsibility to assess the tuberculosis status of each student within 90 days of enrollment per the guidance below. Lists of school districts and communities by TB risk categories, documents, reporting information, materials and additional school screening information can be found on our webpage: (http://dhss.alaska.gov/dph/Epi/id/Pages/tb.aspx).

- Schools in **high TB risk** areas of Alaska, formerly known as 'A' schools, and boarding schools will continue to provide tuberculin skin testing (TST) for **all students in all grades Kindergarten and higher annually.**

- Schools in **low TB risk** areas of Alaska, formerly known as 'B' schools, will do the following:
  - **Use *The Tuberculosis (TB) Risk Assessment for Alaska Students* questionnaire for all students NEW to DISTRICT in any grade Pre K-12.**
    - http://dhss.alaska.gov/dph/Epi/id/SiteAssets/Pages/TB/TB%20School%20Screening%20Risk%20Assessment%20Tool.pdf
  - **Provide TST only to new students identified with risk factors.**
  - **Discontinue routine TB testing in 7th grade students.**

- **TB screening reports may be submitted online or by written report and are due December 15, 2016.**

We are requesting that superintendents forward this information to all schools in your district as soon as possible to ensure that schools are aware of TB screening requirements for the 2016/2017 school year. Schools will not be getting individual letters this year; it is your responsibility to relay this information.

Please visit our Alaska TB Program webpage for additional information on school screening or contact our program at (907) 269-8000 if you have additional questions.

Sincerely,

Joseph McLaughlin, MD
State of Alaska TB Controller