



Pat Quinn, Governor

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To: Local Health Departments

From: Kenneth Soyemi, MD, MPH, Acting Director

Date: January 25, 2012

Re: Implementation of Tdap Vaccination Requirement

As outlined in the attached information for parents, students entering sixth and ninth grades will be required to provide documentation of receipt of one dose of Tdap for the 2012-2013 school year.

Proof for the Tdap requirement includes the following information from a student's health care provider:

- Physician's note or letter which documents the vaccine (Tdap) and date (month, day, year) administered.
- Print-out from health care provider's electronic medical record system that identifies Tdap vaccination(s) and date administered.
- School physical form (Certificate of Child Health Examination) specifying Tdap and date (month, day, year) administered.

Students without proof of Tdap vaccination, an approved medical or religious exemption on file with the school, or an appointment to receive the Tdap shot during the school year will be subject to exclusion.

Please contact the Immunization Section at 217-785-1455 if you have questions about this requirement.

Additional guidance for the 2013-2014 school year will be provided later this year.



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January 25, 2012

Dear Parent:

Numerous outbreaks of pertussis (whooping cough) have occurred recently among school children in Illinois. Pertussis is easily transmitted through coughing and sneezing and may cause an illness that persists for weeks to months. Pertussis does not typically cause severe illness in healthy students, but can cause prolonged absences from school and extracurricular activities. In addition, pertussis can be transmitted from healthy students to infants and individuals with chronic illnesses, for whom pertussis can be life-threatening.

Protection against pertussis begins to wear off during grade school. This leaves pre-teens, teenagers and adults at risk for this illness. To address the increase in pertussis cases among older students, a booster vaccination (called Tdap) is recommended for all students in grades six through twelve.

**This fall, students entering sixth and ninth grades will be required to provide proof of Tdap vaccination along with the school physical forms that are also required for these grades.**

Students in these grades without one of the following will be subject to exclusion:

1. Proof of Tdap vaccination
2. An approved medical or religious exemption on file with the school,
3. An appointment to receive the Tdap shot during the school year.

See the "Frequently Asked Questions About the Tdap Vaccine Requirement" for more information.

Many providers, local pharmacies and most local health departments provide Tdap vaccinations. Many providers participate in the Vaccines for Children (VFC) program, which provides vaccines at no cost to doctors who serve Medicaid-eligible children younger than 19 years of age. If you need assistance, check with your local health department for resources for getting Tdap vaccination.

Check with your doctor if you are not sure if your child has received Tdap, and if not, get your child vaccinated.

Healthy children are best prepared to learn and thrive inside and outside our schools.