

Dear 6th Grade Parents:

Summer is fast approaching and your child will be entering 7th grade in the fall. The Iowa Dept of Public Health has a student health requirement that students entering 7th grade and above if born on or after Sept 15, 2000, shall have a **one-time dose** of tetanus, diphtheria, acellular pertussis (**Tdap**) vaccine and students entering 7th grade born on or after September 15, 2004 shall have **one dose of meningococcal conjugate vaccine (A,C,W,Y)**. There is no provisional period to implement this requirement. They must have the vaccines prior to entering 7th grade in the fall.

Pertussis or whooping cough is one of the most common vaccine-preventable diseases. Pertussis causes serious illness in infants, children, and adults. Coughing fits due to pertussis infection can last for up to 10 weeks or more; this disease is sometimes known as the "100 day cough." The most effective way to prevent pertussis is through vaccination with DTaP for babies and children and with Tdap for preteens, teens, and adults.

Meningococcal disease is a very serious, life-threatening illness. It is caused by bacteria that can infect the blood, brain, and spinal cord. Meningococcal bacteria are spread through upper respiratory droplets, such as saliva (kissing, living in close quarters). Meningococcal vaccines are very safe and effective at preventing meningococcal disease. The meningococcal vaccine is 85 - 100 percent effective at preventing infection from the subtypes of meningococcus found in the vaccine.

Your child will need to have proof of Tdap and meningococcal vaccine administration before the 2020-2021 school year. Please call your medical provider for vaccine information or to schedule an appointment. Commercial insurance and Hawk-I insurance holders will need to receive vaccines at their physician's office. Medicaid insurance holders will need to receive vaccines from Decatur County Public Health. Decatur County Public Health holds an immunization clinic the second Tuesday of every month at the Decatur County Public Health office. To schedule your appointment with Decatur County Public Health please call 641-446-6518.

Other vaccines *recommended* for your child's age is HPV. Please talk to your child's doctor or nurse about the vaccines recommended for their age. HPV vaccine is recommended for both boys and girls in this age group.

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