

NEW IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS FOR STUDENTS ENTERING BOTH 7TH AND 12TH GRADES FOR THE 2017/2018 SCHOOL YEAR

The Iowa Department of Public Health has made changes to the Iowa Immunization law for the start of the 2017/18 school year. This change requires that all students entering 7th grade have both a Meningococcal vaccine and a Tdap (Tetanus, Diphtheria, and Pertussis/whooping cough) booster ***before school starts this fall.***

The Tdap requirement has been in place since the 2013/14 school year and requires a booster dose of Tetanus, Diphtheria, and acellular Pertussis containing vaccine for students entering 7th grade, *regardless of the interval since the last Tetanus/Diphtheria containing vaccine.* Pertussis (whooping cough) is a very contagious disease that causes violent coughing fits that make it hard to breathe.

Meningococcal disease is a life threatening illness that is caused by bacteria that infects the brain, blood, and spinal cord. It easily spreads in crowded settings. **The vaccine will be required prior to both the 7th and 12th grades.**

All students entering 7th grade must have proof of having both the Meningococcal and the Tdap vaccines, and students entering 12th grade must have the Meningococcal vaccine, before school starts in August, unless the student has a Certificate of Immunization Exemption.

There will be **no** grace/extension period for the implementation of this requirement. According to state law, these vaccines, or exemption certificate must be submitted to the school BEFORE the first day of school this fall, or student will NOT be able to attend until this is completed.