

Dear Parent/Guardian,

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 7<sup>th</sup> 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 put in place since the 2013/14 school year and requires a booster dose of Tetanus, Diphtheria, and acellular Pertussis containing vaccine for students entering 7<sup>th</sup> 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 7<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grades.

All students entering 7<sup>th</sup> grade must have proof of having both the Meningococcal and the Tdap vaccines **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.

Now is a great time for your child to receive these immunization requirements and beat the back-to-school rush by making an appointment for your incoming 7<sup>th</sup> grader. Please contact your healthcare provider.

If you have questions, do not hesitate to contact me at 563-547-2764 or [adrees@howard-winn.k12.ia.us](mailto:adrees@howard-winn.k12.ia.us)

Thank you for your time and attention to this requirement,

Amy Drees, RN  
School Nurse