

January 2016

Dear Parents of Kindergarten-12th Grade Students in Colorado Schools (School Year 2016-17):

Immunizations are an important part of our children's and the community's health. Colorado law requires students attending a public, private or parochial school to be immunized against certain vaccine-preventable diseases. **The purpose of this letter is to remind parents about the need for back-to-school immunizations and to provide immunization information.** The chart on page 2 shows which vaccines are required for school attendance, along with recommended vaccines which provide more protection against vaccine-preventable disease. **There are no changes to the vaccines required from the previous school year.** It is helpful to share this letter with your child's healthcare provider or your local public health agency (LPHA) where your child receives immunizations.

Colorado follows the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices schedule. This schedule is approved by the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Academy of Family Physicians and the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists. This is the immunization schedule which will best protect your child from vaccine-preventable diseases and is the national standard for health care providers who vaccinate your children. Please note: In Spring 2016, it is anticipated the Colorado Board of Health will approve a recommendation that will require all students to receive their final doses of DTaP, Polio, MMR and Varicella (chicken pox) vaccine before kindergarten entry and one dose of Tdap vaccine before 6th grade entry.

Starting July 1, 2016, parents/ guardians seeking non-medical (religious or personal belief) exemptions for children in kindergarten-12<sup>th</sup> grade must submit non-medical exemption forms annually. Medical exemptions only need to be submitted once and require the signature of your child's doctor or advanced practice nurse. To submit a non-medical or medical exemption, go to [www.colorado.gov/vaccineexemption](http://www.colorado.gov/vaccineexemption) and follow the instructions. Children with an exemption may be kept out of school during a disease outbreak.

Parents may have questions or want more information about children's immunizations and vaccine safety. Resources for parents about the safety and importance of vaccines are available at: [www.ImmunizeForGood.com](http://www.ImmunizeForGood.com) and [www.colorado.gov/cdphe/immunization-education](http://www.colorado.gov/cdphe/immunization-education).

Colorado law requires schools to provide school-level immunization and exemption information to the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) by December 1, 2016. Immunization and exemption rates for each school will be posted on the CDPHE website as soon as they are verified. Many parents, especially those with children who can't be vaccinated due to a medical issue, may want to know which schools are best protected against vaccine preventable disease.

Please discuss your child's vaccination needs with your child's healthcare provider or LPHA and bring your child's updated immunization records to school each time your child receives an immunization. To find your LPHA or learn about free or low cost vaccines, call the Family Health Line at 1-303-692-2229 or 1-800-688-7777. For questions about school immunization requirements, please contact your school.

Sincerely,

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MINIMUM NUMBER OF DOSES REQUIRED FOR CERTIFICATE OF IMMUNIZATION  
Kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade: 2016-17 SY - Required for School Attendance

VACCINE	Number of Doses	Grades K-12 (4-18 Years of Age)
	Vaccines administered ≤ 4 days before the minimum age are valid	
Diphtheria/Tetanus/ Pertussis DTaP or DT only licensed through 6 yrs of age. (Tdap can be given as early as 7)	5 to 6	5 DTaP or DT (if dose 4 was administered on or after the 4 <sup>th</sup> birthday, the requirement is met). The final dose of DTaP must be given no sooner than 4 years of age. Tdap is required at 6 <sup>th</sup> grade entry and through 12 <sup>th</sup>
Tetanus/Diphtheria/ Pertussis For students 7 years of age or older who did not have full series of DTaP or DT	3 or 4	3 or 4 appropriately spaced tetanus/ diphtheria containing vaccines (DTaP, DT, Td, Tdap). Intervals between doses include 4 wks between first 2 (or 3) doses and 6 mos between last 2 doses. (Note: If 1 <sup>st</sup> dose is given before 1 year of age, the student will need 4 doses).
Polio (IPV)	3 to 4	4 IPV (or 3 doses if 3 <sup>rd</sup> dose is given on or after 4 <sup>th</sup> birthday). Students who were compliant with 3 or 4 doses prior to August 7, 2010 have met the requirement if at least 4 weeks between doses.
Measles/Mumps/Rubella (MMR)	2	The 1 <sup>st</sup> dose cannot be administered more than 4 days before the 1 <sup>st</sup> birthday. 2 doses are required for students entering Kindergarten. (2 doses are required through 12 <sup>th</sup> grade).
Varicella (Chickenpox)	2	The 1 <sup>st</sup> dose cannot be administered more than 4 days before the 1 <sup>st</sup> birthday. 2 doses are required for students entering Kindergarten. (2 doses are required through 12 <sup>th</sup> grade). Note: no vaccine required if there is documentation of chickenpox disease by a health care provider.
Hepatitis B	3	The 2 <sup>nd</sup> dose must be administered at least 4 weeks after the first dose. The 3 <sup>rd</sup> dose must be administered at least 16 weeks after the 1 <sup>st</sup> dose and at least 8 weeks after the 2 <sup>nd</sup> dose. The final dose must be administered no sooner than 24 weeks of age. Note: there is a specific 2-dose series is for ages 11-15 years only.

RECOMMENDED VACCINES FOR THE BEST PROTECTION AGAINST VACCINE-  
PREVENTABLE DISEASE

VACCINE	Number of Doses	Grades K-12 (4-18 Years of Age) Vaccines administered ≤ 4 days before the minimum age are valid
Influenza (Flu)	1 to 2	2 doses initially if under 9 yrs of age with a minimum interval of 28 days between doses, then 1 dose annually, thereafter. Recommended for children 6 months of age and older.
Meningococcal Meningitis (MCV)	1 to 2	Adolescents 11-18 years of age
Human Papillomavirus (HPV)	3	Adolescents 11-18 years of age
Hepatitis A (Hep A)	2	All children 1 year of age and older

Immunization requirements will be strictly enforced for all students. Students who do not meet the requirements will be denied attendance according to Colorado Revised Statutes 25-4-902. There are three ways to be in compliance with the school immunization law:

1. Student's immunization record shows they are fully immunized with required vaccines. A laboratory test showing immunity is also acceptable.
2. For the student who is catching up on receiving required immunizations, the school will notify the parent/ guardian that the student has 14 days to receive the required immunization(s) or to provide written documentation of the plan to receive the next required immunization(s) following the minimum intervals of the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) schedule. If the plan is not completed, the student shall be excluded from school for non-compliance.
3. Valid medical exemption signed by a healthcare provider or non-medical exemption (religious or personal) submitted by a parent/ guardian.



**COLORADO**  
Department of Public  
Health & Environment