

Information for Parents of Sixth Grade Students: New Tdap Vaccine Requirement For Students Entering 7th Grade for the 2012-13 School Year

A new requirement has been added to Oklahoma's school immunization requirements. All students entering the seventh grade (2012-2013) school year will be required to have one dose of Tdap vaccine **before attendance is allowed**.

To meet this requirement, an immunization record must be provided to the school showing the date your child received the vaccine and a signature or stamp of the doctor or clinic that provided the vaccine. If your child has already received this dose, they will not be required to receive it again.

Tdap vaccine is considered a booster to the DTaP (diphtheria, tetanus and pertussis) vaccine that is required for Kindergarten entry. Tdap vaccine provides continued protection to students from three diseases: tetanus (lockjaw), diphtheria, and pertussis (whooping cough). Whooping cough has been on the rise in the U.S., especially among pre-teens and teenagers 10 through 19 years of age and children under 5 years of age. All of these diseases can have very serious consequences including death.

Tdap vaccine is available from your doctor, clinic or healthcare provider and is covered by most health insurance plans. All county health departments also provide Tdap vaccine, especially for children who do not have health insurance. Please contact your healthcare provider or local health department to schedule an appointment or to find out the hours when vaccines are given.

For more information refer to <http://imm.health.ok.gov>.

OSDH officials urge parents of sixth graders to seek vaccination for their children now, rather than waiting for the July and August back-to-school rush.

Thank you for your cooperation in keeping our students protected.

Please feel free to call me if you have any questions.

Amanda Meldrum, RN (918-833-9710)