

EXAMPLE LETTER TO PARENTS

[INSERT SCHOOL LOGO OR LETTERHEAD]

[INSERT DATE]

Dear Parents of Sixth Grade Students,

The Oklahoma State Board of Health recently added a new vaccine requirement for seventh grade students. Beginning in the Fall 2011 school semester, all seventh grade students must show proof of having received one dose of Tdap (tetanus, diphtheria and pertussis) 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, he or she will not be required to receive it again. Please bring the record with you when you pre-enroll or enroll your child for the seventh grade. Parents may also request and complete an immunization exemption form for valid medical, religious or philosophical concerns. These forms may be requested from the school.

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.

Two other vaccines are also recommended for all adolescents at 11-12 years of age: meningococcal vaccine (MCV4) and human papillomavirus vaccine (HPV). Although neither of these vaccines are required for school entry, you are encouraged to ask your doctor or healthcare provider about these vaccines when your child receives the Tdap vaccine.

For more information about Tdap vaccine, HPV vaccine, and MCV4 vaccine please refer to the enclosed information sheet or visit the Oklahoma State Department of Health Immunization Service website at <http://imm.health.ok.gov>. Thank you for your cooperation in keeping our students protected.

[INSERT SCHOOL ADMINISTRATOR SIGNATURE, NAME AND TITLE]