

Oklahoma State Department of Health
Creating a State of Health

March 16, 2011

Dear School Administrator,

This letter is to inform you of a new vaccination requirement. Beginning with the 2011-2012 school year, all students entering the seventh grade will be required to present a record of having received one dose of Tdap vaccine. Tdap vaccine is a combination vaccine that provides a booster dose of pertussis (whooping cough) along with the tetanus and diphtheria booster (Td). Tdap vaccine is routinely recommended for all children at 11-12 years of age. This new requirement is one of the best means we have to decrease the rate of pertussis incidence in Oklahoma.

There is no grace period allowed for students to comply with this requirement with the exception of military children transferring from another state. Military children may be allowed up to thirty days from the date of enrollment to obtain any immunizations required in Oklahoma that were not required in the state where the child previously attended school. All other students must receive the vaccine and present an immunization record **before entering the seventh grade**.

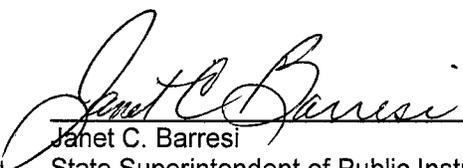
Exemptions to this requirement are allowed under Oklahoma Law for medical, religious, or personal reasons. The procedure to obtain an exemption to the Tdap requirement is the same as the procedure to obtain an exemption for all other vaccines.

This requirement will be implemented incrementally over a six year period; each year another grade will be added to the requirement. Please refer to the enclosed information sheet, *Tdap School Requirement: Information for Schools*, for details on implementation of the requirement. Parents of sixth grade students should be informed of this new requirement before the end of the current school year. An information letter template for parents is enclosed along with a Tdap Question and Answer sheet. These documents may also be found on the Immunization Service web page at <http://imm/health.ok.gov>. Additional copies of the information sheet may be ordered from the Immunization Service by fax: (405) 271-6133 or email: immunize@health.ok.gov. When requesting your order, please be sure to include the name and address of your school along with the quantity desired.

Thank you for your cooperation in implementing this new requirement. If you have questions about the requirement, please call the Oklahoma State Department of Health Immunization Service at (405) 271-4073.

Sincerely,


Terry L. Cline, Ph.D.
Commissioner


Janet C. Barresi
State Superintendent of Public Instruction

Enclosures

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1000 NE 10th Street
Oklahoma City, OK 73117-1299
www.health.ok.gov
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