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Now is the Time to Check Children's Immunization Requirements
Shots Required for Kindergarten, 7th and 12th Grade Students in West Virginia

CHARLESTON, W.Va. – The West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources Division of Immunization Services urges parents to take action to ensure children have the proper vaccinations before school starts.

Dr. Letitia Tierney, Commissioner of the West Virginia Bureau for Public Health and State Health Officer, says now is the best time for parents of students entering kindergarten, 7th and 12th grades to make sure their child has the required immunizations.

- Children entering a West Virginia school for the first time from kindergarten through grade 12 are required to have the DTaP, polio, MMR, chickenpox and hepatitis B vaccines. Children who are not behind schedule can receive school entry "booster" doses in just two vaccinations (DTaP-Polio and MMR-chickenpox) with combination vaccines.
- **7th graders** must show proof they received a dose of Tdap vaccine, which protects against tetanus, diphtheria, and pertussis (whooping cough); and a dose of the meningitis vaccine.
- **12th graders** must show proof of a dose of Tdap and a second dose of the meningitis vaccine, if the first dose of the meningitis vaccine was given before the child's sixteenth birthday. If the first dose was given after the sixteenth birthday, a second dose of the meningitis vaccine is not required.

"These immunization requirements will not only lengthen the time for which immunized students are protected from vaccine-preventable diseases, but also will lower their chances of passing diseases to classmates with weakened immune systems, pre-school aged children, infants, the elderly and others," Dr. Tierney said.

The Division of Immunization Services encourages parents to schedule these vaccinations now as doctors' offices will be extremely busy with immunizations and sports physicals in the weeks leading up to the start of school.

To learn more about required school entry shots, visit www.immunization.wv.gov.

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