



Think. Learn. **Grow.**

**IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS ENTERING
12TH GRADE IN THE 2017-18 SCHOOL YEAR**

Dear Parent/Guardian,

The Iowa Department of Public Health has made changes to the Iowa Immunization law for the start of the 2017-18 school year. This change requires that students entering 7th and 12th grades have meningococcal vaccine (MenACWY) before school starts this fall.

Students entering 12th grade born after September 15, 1999 need the following BEFORE school starts on Wednesday, August 23rd:

- **2 doses of meningococcal vaccine (applies to most students) OR**
- **1 dose if received when student was 16 years of age or older**

12th grade students who have not received any doses of meningococcal vaccine will NOT be allowed to attend school beginning August 23rd. Students who have received 1 of 2 doses may attend school but will be given a short window of time to get the 2nd shot and may not attend after that time expires.

NOW is a great time for your child to receive the required vaccines. Beat the back-to-school rush by making an appointment for your incoming 12th grader yet this spring! Please submit any new immunization forms to the school nurse as soon as possible this spring/summer.

If you have questions, please contact me at 242.7274 or nicole.cable@dmschools.org. If you do not have a primary healthcare provider, please contact me or the DMPS Health Services Department at 515.242.7618 for assistance in referral to a provider.

Sincerely,

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Frequently Asked Questions

How serious is meningococcal disease?

Meningococcal disease is a life-threatening illness that is caused by bacteria that infects the brain, blood, and spinal cord. Approximately 10-15% of people with meningococcal disease die even with appropriate treatment. Of those who recover, up to 20% suffer from serious after-effects, such as permanent hearing loss, limb loss, or brain damage.

Who is affected?

It easily spreads in crowded settings and typically affects older teens and young adults. The meningococcal vaccine requirement will help keep students, friends, families and communities safe.

How effective is the vaccine?

Meningococcal vaccines are very safe and are 85-100% effective at preventing infection.

Why are there two different kinds of meningococcal vaccine, and which one is required?

Meningitis is caused by different types of the bacterium *Neisseria meningitidis*. Five of these types are the most problematic and are preventable with vaccine. MenACWY covers four types and MenB covers one type. MenACWY is what is required. MenB is newer, and many providers are now starting to provide this in addition to MenACWY.

Where can I find more information?

Immunize.Org has an easy to read guide—Meningococcal: Questions and Answers—located here: <http://www.immunize.org/catg.d/p4210.pdf>

Where can my 12th grader get vaccinated?

Call your healthcare provider—it is usually possible to schedule vaccine only visits with a nurse in your provider's office. If you don't have a provider, contact the school nurse for a referral.

What happens if my 12th grader does not get the required dose(s)?

12TH GRADE STUDENTS BORN AFTER SEPTEMBER 15, 1999 WHO HAVE NOT RECEIVED ANY DOSES MAY NOT ATTEND SCHOOL ON AUGUST 23RD. Students who have received 1 of 2 doses may attend school but will be given a short window of time to get the 2nd shot and may not attend after that time expires.