**Preparing Students for 2021-2022 School Year**

Salutation

You are receiving this letter because you have one or more children in (insert school administrative unit name). We want you to know that as of September 1, 2021, changes to the immunization law takes effect for Maine’s school-aged children.

No child will be permitted to attend school without evidence of immunization or proof of immunity against disease unless they meet the allowable exceptions as defined by the law. The changes in the law remove both philosophical exemptions and religious exemptions from the exceptions to immunization requirements. A student covered by an individualized education plan (IEP) on September 1, 2021 who elected a philosophical or religious exemption from immunization requirements on or before September 1, 2021 pursuant to the law in effect prior to that date may continue to attend school under that student's existing exemption as long as the parent or guardian of the student provides a statement from a licensed physician, nurse practitioner or physician assistant that the physician, nurse practitioner or physician assistant has consulted with that parent or guardian and has made that parent or guardian aware of the risks and benefits associated with the choice to immunize.

 **Required for Kindergarten entry:**

* 5 DTaP (diphtheria, tetanus, and pertussis; 4 DTaP if 4th is given on or after 4th birthday)
* 4 Polio (if 4th dose given before the 4th birthday, an additional age appropriate IPV should be given on or after the 4th birthday)
* 2 MMR (measles, mumps, rubella)
* 1 Varicella (chickenpox) or reliable history of disease

**Required for 7th grade entry:**

* 1Tdap (tetanus, diphtheria, and pertussis)
* 1 Meningococcal Conjugate (MCV4)

**Required for 12th grade entry:**

* 2 MCV4, only one dose is required if the 1st dose is given on or after 16th birthday

Vaccinations help keep your child healthy, and when they are vaccinated it helps to keep their peers, teachers, and other school staff healthy as well. In addition to the above required vaccines, Maine DHHS and CDC strongly encourage you to use this opportunity to consider the following recommended vaccines, which are instrumental in helping ensure the health and safety of your children, their peers, and the most vulnerable in the community.

* [COVID-19 (for those 12 years and older)](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/recommendations/adolescents.html)
* [Human Papilloma Virus (HPV)](https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/vpd/hpv/index.html)
* [Meningococcal B](https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/vpd/mening/hcp/recommendations.html)
* [Influenza](https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/vpd/flu/hcp/index.html)

**Immunization “Catch-Up” Resources from the U.S. CDC:**

* [Catch-Up Immunizations Schedule from the CDC](https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/schedules/hcp/imz/catchup.html)
* [Diphtheria-, Tetanus-, and Pertussis-Containing Vaccines Catch-Up Guidance for Children 4 Months through 6 Years of Age (PDF)](https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/schedules/downloads/child/job-aids/dtap.pdf)
* [Inactivated Polio Vaccine (IPV) (PDF)](https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/schedules/downloads/child/job-aids/ipv.pdf)
* [Tetanus-, Diphtheria-, and Pertussis-Containing Vaccines Catch-Up Guidance for Children 7 through 9 Years of Age (PDF)](https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/schedules/downloads/child/job-aids/tdap-1.pdf)
* [Tetanus-, Diphtheria-, and Pertussis-Containing Vaccines Catch-Up Guidance for Children 10 through 18 Years of Age (PDF)](https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/schedules/downloads/child/job-aids/tdap-2.pdf)

If you have questions regarding the immunization schedule or vaccines in general, please contact the Maine Immunization Program’s Educator Line at 207-287-9972 or speak to your child’s doctor.

Questions about immunization law and its implementation in Maine schools should be directed to: [DOESchoolandStudentSupports@maine.gov.](file:///C%3A%5CUsers%5CKelli.Deveaux%5CAppData%5CLocal%5CMicrosoft%5CWindows%5CINetCache%5CContent.Outlook%5CPNTJLPQ5%5CDOESchoolandStudentSupports%40maine.gov)