



Illinois State Board of Education

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Gery J. Chico
Chairman

Christopher A. Koch, Ed.D.
State Superintendent of Education

August 2011

Dear Parents,

We hope you and your families are having a fun and safe summer. As we head back to school, we encourage you to check your children's immunization records and ensure they have the proper vaccines before the start of the school year.

In Illinois, proof of up-to-date immunizations is required for children entering any grade. Required immunizations include diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus, poliomyelitis, measles, rubella, mumps, Haemophilus Influenzae Type B (Hib), hepatitis B and varicella, or chicken pox.

There are many health issues that can arise in one's life that are, unfortunately, out of our control. But diseases such as chicken pox, measles, mumps, whooping cough and diphtheria can be prevented with vaccines. Taking this critical precaution can prevent children from missing school and parents from missing work but more importantly, they can prevent illness, hospitalizations and even premature deaths.

In addition to immunizations, all students enrolling in kindergarten in a public or private school and any student enrolling for the first time in Illinois (with the exception of preschoolers) must have an eye examination performed by a licensed optometrist or medical doctor. Also, children entering Illinois schools for the first time, those entering kindergarten or first grade, as well as those entering sixth and ninth grade, must complete a physical examination prior to starting the school year. The physical should include an evaluation of height, weight, BMI, cardiovascular health (including blood pressure), respiratory, gastrointestinal and other evaluations deemed necessary by the health care provider.

Please be sure your children are properly vaccinated and up to date on any required health exams. Healthy children are best prepared to learn and thrive inside and outside school doors. We wish you and your families good health and success in the new school year!

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Christopher A. Koch in black ink.

Christopher A. Koch, Ed.D.
State Superintendent of Education

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Damon T. Arnold in black ink.

Damon T. Arnold, MD, MPH
Illinois Department of Public Health