February 23, 2011

Dear ISM Parent/Guardian:

Whooping cough, also known as pertussis, has recently become widespread in California. Many students have had to miss school because they were sick. To help protect your children and others from whooping cough, a new California law, effective beginning July 1, 2011, will require students to be vaccinated against whooping cough.

For the coming 2011-12 school year only, all students entering 7th through 12th grades will need proof of an adolescent whooping cough booster shot (Tdap) before starting school.

Thereafter, in future school years, beginning 2012-2013, only students entering 7th grade will need proof of an adolescent whooping cough booster shot (Tdap) before starting school.

By law, students who do not have proof of having received a Tdap booster shot will not be able to start school until proof is provided to the school. Please note: The tetanus-diphtheria booster shot, Td, will not meet the requirement.

Attached you will find a flyer with more information about Tdap vaccine and this immunization requirement.

In order to ensure that all 7th and 8th graders attending ISM for the 2011-2012 are informed of this new vaccination requirement and are able to start school on time, we urge you to:

1. Review the attached flyer.

2. Assess your child’s status in meeting requirement.
   Note: the requirement is met if your child received the TdaP vaccine after his/her 7th birthday; the DTaP given at 5 years old does not meet the requirement. Most kids should receive the TdaP as part of their routine health maintenance visits at 11-12 years of age.

3. Get your child’s Tdap shot now, if necessary.
   Due to this new immunization requirement, many students will need a Tdap shot between now and the start of the 2011-2012 school year. Make an appointment as soon as possible with your child(ren)’s doctor or clinic to get a Tdap booster shot now. Doing so now will ensure that you avoid the back-to-school rush!

4. Save your proof of immunization.
   Be sure to keep the written proof of your child’s Tdap booster shot in a safe place. Your child will need to provide proof of immunization in order to start school.

Getting the adolescent whooping cough shot now will not only help protect your child, as well as infants not old enough for the vaccine, against the ongoing threat of whooping cough, but will also meet this new school requirement in a timely fashion and ensure that your child will start school in the Fall! Be proactive now!

If you have any questions, please contact me at (831) 583-2165 or via email at lburns@ismonterey.org.

Sincerely,

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