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News Release

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BACK-TO-SCHOOL NEWS

IMMUNIZATIONS AND HEALTH RECORDS FOR NEW STUDENTS IN L.A. SCHOOLS MUST BE UP-TO-DATE

Parents of incoming kindergarten students and any other students new to the Los Angeles Unified School District should remember to bring updated health records when they enroll their students for school.

Pre-registration opens at most local school offices on Aug. 17 for Fall semester classes that begin on Tuesday, Sept. 5, the day after Labor Day. Those who have just recently moved into a neighborhood with a year-round school should contact the school immediately to determine the track to which their child will be assigned. The district's two year-round calendars began on July 5.

Children are eligible for kindergarten if they will be five years old on or before Dec. 2 of this year.

L.A. school district and L.A. County Health Department regulations require that complete health and immunization records for incoming kindergarteners and other students new to the district must be presented in written form – authorized or signed by a public health clinic, health care provider or private physician – before a youngster can begin attending classes for 2000-01.

According to the immunization requirements, a student's medical records must show inoculations against the following diseases: polio; mumps, rubeola (10-day or "hard" measles) and rubella ("German" measles), often listed as "MMR" on health records; and diphtheria, tetanus and whooping cough, which may be listed as "DTP" for children younger than seven years and as "TD" for children seven years and older.

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Also, according to a requirement made effective two years ago, all children entering child care, pre-school or kindergarten programs in the district must now be immunized against Hepatitis B. Another fairly recent regulation requires all students entering grade seven to show proof of the Hepatitis B immunization series and a second MMR if the student has not already received it.

All children entering kindergarten must now have health records showing two doses of measles-containing vaccine, at least one of which must be MMR. This is a change from the previous requirement of a single dose of MMR.

Parents should be aware that there is no grace period – all immunizations must be up to date before a youngster can attend school. If parents have questions, they should contact the school nurse at the campus their child will attend or call the district's School Nursing Services office at (213) 763-8374.

All new kindergarten students and all new first graders who have never attended kindergarten must have the written results of a "Mantoux" test for tuberculosis that has been completed within the past 12 months. Children coming from out-of-state schools into the first grade or higher levels must show authorized written proof of an earlier TB test.

If a youngster's Mantoux test is "positive," a chest X-ray is required. The student will be admitted to school while results of the X-ray are being reviewed by physicians, but parents should provide written verification that the X-ray was taken.

Young children between the ages of two months to four-and-one-half years who are entering any of the district's pre-kindergarten programs must also be immunized against Haemophilus influenza, type b (HIB).

Officials in LAUSD's School Nursing Services office said that taking care of the required immunizations and having the health care provider list them properly on a child's health record is the best way for parents to "help us keep children and families safe and healthy." School nurses work in conjunction with the County of Los Angeles immunization program, as well as with community health agencies and private physicians. The overall goal is to make proper immunizations available to all families with children, regardless of their economic circumstances.

Local immunization requirements are based on state mandates that help school districts monitor and prevent communicable diseases.

At many public health facilities, immunizations may be available free or at very low cost.

Schools will either recommend local public health facilities where children can be inoculated, or school nurses may schedule immunization clinics at school sites when necessary. Younger children in a family can be immunized at the same time that an older, school-age child is brought in by a parent.

Parents of all new and continuing students should remember to update the emergency information card on file at school offices for **each student** at any time during the year that the family situation, address or telephone number at home or at work changes. It is vitally important, school principals say, to be able to reach parents or guardians or another designated adult quickly in case of an illness or emergency involving a student.

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