



ARBOR PARK MIDDLE SCHOOL

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Dear Parent or Guardian,

Numerous outbreaks of pertussis (whooping cough) have occurred recently among school children in Illinois. Pertussis is easily transmitted through coughing and sneezing and may cause an illness that persists for weeks to months. Pertussis does not typically cause severe illness in healthy students, but can cause prolonged absences from school and extracurricular activities. In addition, pertussis can be transmitted from healthy students to infants and illness with chronic illnesses, for whom pertussis can be life-threatening.

Protection against pertussis begins to wear off during grade school. This leaves pre-teens, teenagers and adults at risk for this illness. To address the increase in pertussis cases among older students, a booster vaccination (called Tdap) is recommended for all students in grades six through twelve.

Beginning January 2012, any child *entering 6th grade* shall show proof of receiving one dose of Tdap (tetanus, diphtheria, acellular pertussis) vaccine regardless of the interval since the last DTap, DT or Td does.

Students in 6th grade without one of the following will be subject to exclusion:

1. Proof of Tdap vaccination
2. An approved medical or religious exemption on file with school
3. An appointment to receive Tdap shot during the school year.

Many providers, local pharmacies, and most local health departments provide Tdap vaccinations. Many providers participate in the Vaccines for Children (VFC) program, which provides vaccines for no cost to doctors who serve Medicaid-eligible children younger than 19 years of age. Please check with your physician or IDPH for further information.

If you have any questions please call [Arbor Park School Nurse](#), at 342-7704.

Healthy children are best prepared to learn and thrive inside and outside our schools.

“Educational Excellence with Kindness”