

Telephone

508 835 4461 (MEES)
508 835 4475 (WBMHS)

FAX

508 835 4119 (MEES)
508 835 3925 (WBMHS)



Alex Audette-Principal MEES
Brooke Beverly-Assistant Principal
/ Team Chair
Christopher Fournier-Principal WBMHS
David Lizotte Jr, PhD-Asst Principal
WBMHS

Richard Meagher-Superintendent of Schools

Dear Families

This letter is to update you of the state of Massachusetts recent extension regarding the Influenza immunization school entry requirements. **Effective August 19, 2020**, The Massachusetts School Health Unit at the Department of Public Health was notified by the Immunization Assessment Unit of the following:

“Beginning with the 2020-2021 school year, influenza vaccine **will be required for all students**. Influenza vaccine is always important to receive to reduce the risk of getting sick with influenza, reduce the severity of disease if one does get sick (including the risk of hospitalization) due to influenza, as well as preventing the spread of influenza to others. During the COVID-19 pandemic, influenza vaccine will be especially critical to reduce the overall impact of respiratory illness on the population, protect vulnerable populations from severe illness, and decrease the overall burden on the healthcare system.”

On December 22, 2020 The Massachusetts State Department of Public Health extended this deadline through to February 28, 2021. What has not changed? The Massachusetts Immunization Assessment Unit maintains an updated school entry requirement for the 2020-2021 School year, this document web link is provided below and a few questions you may have regarding this are below.

Which students need to receive influenza vaccine? Students in Pre-Kindergarten – Grade 12 will be required to receive influenza vaccine for the current influenza season for school attendance **unless they have a medical or religious exemption**. When does your student need to receive influenza vaccine? Students must receive influenza vaccine for the current season by February 28, 2021.

Are there any exemptions to receiving influenza vaccine?

Medical and religious exemptions are allowable in the state of Massachusetts.

What type of influenza vaccine can students receive?

Any age-appropriate licensed influenza vaccine for the current season fulfills the requirement. This includes injectable and nasal spray vaccine types.

Please find below a link to the Massachusetts School Year 2020-2021 Immunization requirements for School Entry. Please contact your child’s Health Care Provider to schedule an appointment to discuss this new mandate and/or an appointment for your child to receive the influenza vaccine. **Documentation must be received (per the new mandate) by the school nurse on or before February 28, 2021:**

1. **Immunization record**-signed by your child’s health care provider and/or an office practice stamp)
2. **A medical exemption** is allowed if a physician submits documentation attesting that immunization medically contraindicated, as per **M.G.L. c. 76, § 15; This MEDICAL EXEMPTION must be renewed and submitted annually** at the start of every school year (by a medical health care provider)
3. **A religious exemption** is allowed if a parent or guardian provides a written statement that immunizations conflict with their sincere religious beliefs, as per **M.G.L. c. 76, § 15; This RELIGIOUS EXEMPTION must be renewed and submitted annually** at the start of every school year.

[Immunization Requirements for School Entry](#)

Kind Regards,

Marion Karsina MEd, BSN, RN and Kate Ahearn-Rota, BSN, RN

marionkarsina@wbschools.com

katerota@wbschools.com

***Please do not hesitate to contact either one of us with any questions or concerns**