



# ALVORD UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

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## AB 354: The New 7th – 12th Grade California Immunization Law

California Department of Public Health, Immunization Branch

### What PARENTS Need To Know: Frequently Asked Questions

#### What is the new Tdap requirement for 7th – 12th graders?

Starting July 2011, a new law (AB 354) goes into effect. The law requires:

- This coming school year (2011-2012), all students entering into 7th, 8th, 9th, 10th, 11th or 12th grades will need proof of an adolescent whooping cough booster shot (called "Tdap") before starting school.
- For the next school year (2012-13) and future school years, all students entering into 7th grade only will need proof of a Tdap shot to start school.
- Any student who does not have proof of getting a Tdap booster shot will not be allowed to start school until proof of immunization is given to the school.

#### What is Tdap?

Tdap is a booster vaccine for older children, adolescents, and adults. It safely protects against 3 dangerous diseases: tetanus, diphtheria, and whooping cough (also called pertussis). Whooping cough is a serious disease that causes coughing fits that can last for months. It can be deadly for infants. In recent years, whooping cough has been increasing in the United States.

#### When should my child get vaccinated?

- Now. A large number of students need a Tdap shot before the start of school next year. Avoid the rush and make sure your child can start school on time. Make an appointment for your incoming 7th – 12th grader to get a Tdap booster shot now.
- Children as young as 10 years old are recommended to get vaccinated with Tdap. This will protect them against the ongoing threat of whooping cough and will meet the Tdap school requirement for when they are in 7<sup>th</sup> grade.
- Keep documentation of your child's Tdap booster shot in a safe place. Your child will need proof of immunization in order to start school.

#### What if my child has had whooping cough recently or in the past?

Your child will still need a Tdap booster shot.

#### Where can my child get vaccinated?

Children should visit their regular doctor or health care provider. Children 18 years old and younger who are uninsured or underinsured may qualify for the Vaccines for Children Program. To find a provider near you, call 1-877-243-8832 or visit: [www.eziz.org/pages/vfc\\_locations2.html](http://www.eziz.org/pages/vfc_locations2.html).

#### What if my child has received a Tdap booster shot before 10 years of age?

Your child will be considered to have met the new school requirement with proof of getting a dose of Tdap on or after their 7th birthday. However, we recommend that children receive Tdap on or after their 10th birthday to provide better protection throughout their adolescent years.

#### Should parents and others at home get the Tdap vaccine?

All persons 10 years and older are recommended to be vaccinated with Tdap now if they haven't done so to protect them against the ongoing threat of pertussis.