



## **NEWS RELEASE**

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### **Multnomah County School Exclusion Date for Immunizations is February 17, 2010** *Parents receive notices this week*

This week, approximately 8,000 Multnomah County parents will receive letters stating that their children must be immunized or will not be admitted to school on the school exclusion date of February 17, 2010. The number of this year's letters is slightly more than sent in 2009 due to adding the Hepatitis A vaccine requirement for first graders and the Tdap (pertussis booster) for eighth graders. Previously, the number of exclusion orders issued was declining, from a high of 10,530 in 2004 to 4,280 in 2008, as children and students got caught up on the new vaccine requirements that were introduced in the year 2000.

The letters are the final notice informing parents of children in public schools, pre-schools, Head Start programs, kindergartens, private schools, and other children's facilities. Approximately 114,400 children in Multnomah County must meet the school exclusion requirements each year, with nearly 7 percent receiving exclusion orders. Less than 1 percent of students were actually excluded from school last year until they received their needed vaccines.

Multnomah County Health Department is sponsoring a series of immunization clinics for children who are uninsured or underinsured throughout February to bring them up to date on their vaccinations and enable them to stay in school. Parents are asked to bring letters they have received from the school or county health department and their children's immunization records to the clinics. Families with health insurance are encouraged to see their regular medical provider.

"More than ever, we depend on immunizations to ensure the health of our community. In addition to protecting the population from vaccine-preventable diseases, immunizations ensure children will not miss school days and make the classroom safe for all by preventing communicable diseases," states Lillian Shirley, Director of Multnomah County Health Department.

For more information contact:

- Multnomah County Health Department Community Immunization Program at
- 503-988-3828 or visit [www.mchealth.org/immunizations.html](http://www.mchealth.org/immunizations.html) for information on upcoming immunization clinics.
- Multnomah Education Service District at 503-257-1760 for information on public school student vaccination records.
- Oregon Department of Human Services' website at <http://oregon.gov/DHS/ph/imm/school/index.shtml>

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