

IMMUNIZATION CHANGES AFFECT VISD STUDENTS OF ALL AGES

by Sally Andrews

VISD Director of Community Relations

The Texas Department of State Health Services has announced some significant revisions for immunization requirements for children and students in Texas schools. These changes were made in order to update the Texas school requirements to adhere to those of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Parents should note that these changes affect students of all ages.

Beginning August 1, 2009, all students entering Kindergarten in the State of Texas will be required to have two doses of Hepatitis A vaccine, as well as two doses of MMR (measles, mumps and rubella). Beginning August 1, 2009, all students entering Kindergarten and 7th grade will be required to have two doses of the varicella vaccine, if they have not had chicken pox. Beginning August 1, 2009, all students entering 7th grade will be required to have a booster dose of Tdap (tetanus, diphtheria and acellular pertussis) if it has been more than five years since their last dose of a tetanus-containing vaccine. Students in grades 8-12 are required to have a booster dose of Tdap if it has been 10 years since their previous doses of a tetanus-containing vaccine. Students entering 7th grade are also required to have one dose of meningococcal vaccine beginning August 1, 2009.

Requirements for the immunizations will be phased in for all students K-12 in upcoming years. Parents may check the website, www.dshs.state.tx.us, for requirements and phase-in dates.

Students will **not** be allowed to register for Kindergarten if immunizations are not up to date, so parents are encouraged to take care of this as soon as possible, according to VISD Nurse Coordinator Terry Rhodes.