

New 6th Grade Vaccination Requirements

The South Dakota Department of Health (DOH) is now revising its administrative rules to require both the Tdap (Tetanus, Diphtheria, Pertussis) and MCV4 (Meningococcal ACYW) vaccines for entry into the 6th grade beginning with the 2016-17 school year. Vaccine requirements for kindergarten entry have been in place for many years but this will be the first such requirement for middle school entry in South Dakota.

The change is a direct result of Senate Bill 28, which was passed by the 2016 South Dakota Legislature and signed into law by Gov. Daugaard. SB 28 adds meningococcal infection to the list of diseases specified in [South Dakota Codified Law 13-28-7.1](#) for which Department of Education, based on recommendations from the Department of Health can require vaccination for school entry in South Dakota.

With the change, school entry requirements for South Dakota 6th grade students include:

- One dose of Tdap vaccine
- One dose of MCV4
- The requirements apply only for 6th grade entry and transfer students 6th – 12th grade
- If a child is 10 years old when entering the 6th grade they have 45 days after their 11th birthday to be vaccinated

The DOH utilizes the recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to determine which vaccines are necessary. See <http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/who/teens/downloads/parent-version-schedule-7-18yrs.pdf>.

Schools will be required to report immunization data of 6th grade students yearly to the DOH just as they currently do with kindergarten students.

Since this is a new requirement, providers should expect an increase in demand for Tdap and MCV4 vaccines. Both of these vaccines are covered by the Vaccines for Children program and most insurance plans should offer first dollar coverage for them as well.

While only Tdap and MCV4 are being added as middle school requirements, providers are encouraged to review the entire vaccination status of the patient and immunize for other recommended vaccines.