



Department of Health  
Agency of Human Services



## Vermont Superintendent Works to Inform Parents About Immunization

*Vermont Celebrates National Immunization Awareness Month*



**News Release:** August 15, 2013

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WILLIAMSTOWN – Susette Bollard, superintendent of the Orange North Supervisory Union, was not surprised to learn that the district she supervises has among the highest school vaccination rates in Vermont, including a 100 percent rate for four of the required vaccinations before entry into the Washington Village School (84 students).

The percent of students entering kindergarten who were fully immunized was 86.9 percent in 2012-2013.

“We are in the business of providing a healthy and safe environment for kids. Vaccinations fall under that broad umbrella,” Bollard said. “I think Vermont does a good job of providing parents with options (such as exemptions), and we work hard with the principals and nursing staff to support parents through the process.”



Part of routine school preparation is making sure children are up to date on their vaccines.

Children ages 4 to 6 are due for boosters of four vaccines prior to kindergarten: DTaP (diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis), chickenpox, MMR (measles, mumps, rubella) and polio. Older children – like pre-teens and teens – need Tdap (tetanus, diphtheria, pertussis), and MCV (meningococcal conjugate virus).

When children are not vaccinated, they are at increased risk for disease and can spread disease to others in their classroom and community – including babies who are too young to be fully vaccinated, and people with weakened immune systems. Schools are highly susceptible to outbreaks of infectious diseases.

Bollard sees the role of the school as providing consistent and ongoing support to parents who have not submitted immunization forms on time. The attention and effort on behalf of the staff is one reason the vaccination rates for all four schools in the Orange North Supervisory Union are well above the state average.

“We offer to meet parents to help them complete the forms and meet state requirements, even if it is getting together at the public library,” Bollard said.

For more information on the immunization schedule and childhood vaccines, visit [healthvermont.gov](http://healthvermont.gov). Also see our new “It’s OK to Ask” <http://oktoaskvt.org/> campaign for parents with questions, or call our immunization program toll-free at 1-800-640-4374.

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