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Kolva, Patti

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From: Denise A. Barkman <dbarkman@crsd.k12.pa.us>
Sent: Monday, April 18, 2016 12:37 PM
To: Findley, Cynthia
Cc: Michelle Hall; Sharron L. Baer; Alice L. Smith; Denise A. Barkman
Subject: Proposed changes to Immunization Regulations

2016 APR 22 AM 11:35

Dear Ms. Findley,

I would like to share a few concerns about the proposed changes to the Immunization regulations for school-age children in the state of Pennsylvania. I have been a certified school nurse for 23 years and have been a strong proponent of vaccines during my nursing career. I actually did vaccine research for a number of years and assisted in a number of studies that allowed the Varicella and acellular Pertussis to become licensed, among others.

Although the proposed changes make sense health-wise, I am concerned about the enforcement of these regulations. From my personal experience and participation as a PSNAP and NASN member, it is typically the certified school nurse who does the monitoring of immunization compliance, the contact of parents/guardians, and the contact of health care providers. While this seems to fit our role as the "health professional" in the school setting, most of the school nurses do not work during the summer months, or should I clarify, are not paid to work over the summer months. We are typically treated as part of the teacher contract (Education Specialist II). So, how are we to have an accurate list of those students who need to be excluded from school on the first day and how do we process the 5 day exclusion rule in those first few days? Our administrators are very supportive of our efforts, but I have yet to see an administrator track immunizations or contact parents or doctor's offices to insure compliance with immunizations. Are the school administrators willing and able to track these students and learn the immunization regulations and nuances of when they can be administered? If the CSN will be the designated person to monitor these regulations, with the present standard of one CSN per 1500 students, I don't see how these new regulations can be enforced without staff/schedule changes. Why put something into law that cannot be enforced?

Second concern: we have a PA Dept. of Health Center located within 10 miles of our school. However, some families still lack the transportation and other resources necessary to access this wonderful resource. Our school district is rural and covers over 224 square miles. How is this change in immunization requirements going to help those families?

Again, immunizations are of great benefit and are needed to protect our children. I am just not convinced that these changes will solve the problem of the inadequate percentage of school age children who are compliant with the recommended immunizations in the state of Pennsylvania.

Sincerely,

Denise Barkman

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"Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see." Hebrews 11:1

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