The West Virginia Council of School Nurses (WVCOSN) supports West Virginia immunization laws and rules for required and recommended immunizations for all students attending public schools, whether voluntary or compulsory. The utilization of the yearly published age-appropriate, research-based “Recommended Immunization Schedule for Persons Aged 0-18” from the United States Department of Health and Human Services (USDHHS) and Centers for Disease Control (CDC) should be the gold standard for determining the yearly school entry requirements. The recommended immunizations schedules for persons 0-18 years are approved by the Advisory Committee on Immunizations Practices, the American Academy of Pediatrics and the American Academy of Family Physicians.

The West Virginia Bureau for Public Health should have the ability to establish recommendations for school immunization requirements based on the USDHHS and CDC yearly recommendations. The current minimum requirements are necessary to support an environment conducive to learning while practicing effective disease prevention especially for those already immunocompromised or chronically ill and attending schools. Since the creation of vaccinations, several communicable diseases have been eradicated. The safety and welfare of WV public school students is dependent upon immunization requirements.

The WVCOSN supports “medical exemptions only”. Medical exemptions should be based on a valid medical contraindication or precaution to a particular vaccine from a physician who has treated or examined the child. The local health officer in the county where the child attends school should be consulted for any questionable medical exemptions.
References


DISCLAIMER:

The “Recommendation” of the West Virginia Council of School Nurses (WVCOSN) is not representative of West Virginia State Code or West Virginia State Board of Education recommendation or policy. This is a recommendation based on consensus, evidence-based practice reviews and current research from the WVCOSN. The WVCOSN is set forth by W.Va. Code §18-5-22.

The certified school nurse is responsible for utilizing nursing judgment and skill to determine the safest delivery of health care on an individual case-by-case situation in the West Virginia public school setting while protecting the welfare and health of the student. Every situation is unique and requires a collaborative team approach lead by the certified school nurse, which includes, but not limited to, the student, parents/guardians, school administrator, experts in the field and the student’s primary health care provider, at the local level.

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