

# LOUDON COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

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Dear Parents and Guardians,

TCA 49-6-5005 ensures that schools provide parents and guardians with information about meningococcal meningitis and the effectiveness of vaccination against meningococcal disease at the beginning of every school year.

Meningitis is an inflammation of the tissues and fluid surrounding the brain and spinal cord. It can be caused by bacteria or viruses. Symptoms include fever, sudden severe headache, stiff neck, rash, nausea, and vomiting.

The bacteria that cause meningococcal meningitis are very common. Most people will carry these bacteria in the back of their nose and throat at some point in their lives without getting sick.

Meningitis is spread through exchange of respiratory droplets or saliva with an infected person, including kissing, coughing, sneezing, sharing drinking glasses, or eating utensils.

Meningitis can be extremely serious and progress rapidly. It may cause blindness, hearing loss, mental retardation, loss of limbs or death. If you get sick, it will be within two to seven days. You may be contagious from the time you are infected until the bacteria have disappeared.

There is a vaccine that will decrease the risk of some types of meningococcal meningitis, but it does not give 100% protection.

Additional information about meningitis and vaccinations may be obtained at your local Health Department or from your physician.

The above information was adapted from the TN Department of Health Website.

Respectfully,

Jason Vance, Director of Schools