



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

Karen Shelton, MD
State Health Commissioner

Department of Health
P O BOX 2448
RICHMOND, VA 23218

TTY 7-1-1 OR
1-800-828-1120

February 27, 2024

Dear Parents/Guardians of Rising Kindergarteners:

As the Virginia State Health Commissioner and a doctor, your child and their health are a priority for me. Additionally, as a parent I share and value the role you have in protecting your child's health. Enrolling your child in kindergarten is an exciting time, but it can also be overwhelming. You can take a few steps to make sure your child, and their health, are ready for a smooth start to kindergarten.

Schedule an appointment with your child's healthcare and dental providers early to ensure you beat the rush later this summer. During your child's healthcare appointment, the provider will do a physical exam. This exam identifies any health concerns which helps you and your child's school provide support. Your child's healthcare provider may also administer any school-required vaccines your child needs. Routine vaccinations are a great tool to keep kids healthy, in school, and ready to learn. Vaccines support student health by preventing disease outbreaks, reducing the spread of disease in school, and reducing how long diseases last. Vaccines keep our students and teachers healthy and in school.

To enter kindergarten in Virginia, the following vaccines are required:

- DTaP (Diphtheria, Tetanus, and Pertussis)
- Polio
- Hepatitis A
- Hepatitis B
- MMR (Measles, Mumps and Rubella)
- Varicella (Chickenpox)

These vaccines are also recommended by the Virginia Department of Health (VDH), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), and the American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP). More information about school immunizations can be found at www.vdh.virginia.gov/immunization/requirements/.

If your child needs vaccines and does not have a healthcare provider, you can locate a provider in the Virginia Vaccines for Children (VVFC) program. These providers administer free vaccines to persons who are not able to pay. You can use this link to find a VVFC provider near you: www.vdh.virginia.gov/immunization/vvfc/locatevvfcprovider/

Please check with your child's school for other enrollment requirements. Enrollment information and a checklist are available on VDH's Back to School webpage: www.vdh.virginia.gov/backtoschool/. If you have any questions, please contact the VDH Immunization Outreach Coordinator, Andrea Mendes at andrea.mendes@vdh.virginia.gov or (804) 514-2649 or Joanna Pitts, VDH School Health Nurse Consultant, at Joanna.pitts@vdh.virginia.gov or (804)864-7590.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Karen Shelton".

Karen Shelton, MD
State Health Commissioner

GET YOUR CHILD READY FOR KINDERGARTEN!



- ✓ Make an appointment with your child's **healthcare provider** for a physical exam, school-required immunizations, and to complete the **school entrance health form**.

School required immunizations* for kindergarten include:

- ➔ 4 doses of DTaP
- ➔ 4 doses of Polio
- ➔ 2 Doses of Hepatitis A
- ➔ 3 doses of Hepatitis B
- ➔ 2 doses of MMR
- ➔ 2 Doses of Varicella



- ✓ Find your child's **original birth certificate** and **proof of address** for school enrollment requirements.



- ✓ Check with your child's school about any **additional requirements**. Information about enrollment requirements can be found on the Virginia Department of Education website: <https://www.doe.virginia.gov/parents-students/for-parents/enrollment-in-virginia-public-schools>



VDH has more information to help your child have a healthy start to school at <https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/backtoschool/>



Information on the website includes:

- ➔ A **back to school checklist** to help families stay organized
- ➔ Places for your child to receive free vaccines
- ➔ Get a **copy of your child's vaccine records** and **birth certificate**

* Please visit the VDH website to learn more about school immunization requirements and exemptions <https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/immunization/requirements/>

