**INVOLVEMENT OF MULTICULTURAL PARENTS IN IMMUNIZATIONS FOR CHILDREN IN CHARTER SCHOOLS**

**Introduction**

Healthy bodies and minds are the foundation of academic success. Schools play an important role in keeping students safe, healthy, and ready to learn. Many infectious diseases, such as measles, are highly contagious and dangerous for our youngest District residents. In order to prevent the spread of these infectious diseases, it is vital that all students are fully immunized before entering school. Immunizations are the best defense against some of the most common and sometimes deadly infectious diseases. They are necessary to prevent an outbreak among unimmunized children and children and adults who are unable to receive immunizations.

**Immunization**

[Immunization](https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/healthyliving/immunisation) is one of the best ways you can protect yourself, your children and future generations from [infectious diseases](https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/conditionsandtreatments/infections-bacterial-and-viral). In other words, if you vaccinate, you help wipe out diseases that could spread now and into the future.

Immunization is the process whereby a person is made resistant to a disease, typically by the administration of a vaccine. Vaccines stimulate the body’s own immune system to protect the person against subsequent infection or disease. Immunization prevents diseases, disabilities, and deaths from vaccine-preventable diseases (VPDs), such as cervical cancer, poliomyelitis, measles, rubella, paroditis, diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis, hepatitis A and B, bacterial pneumonias, rotavirus diarrheal diseases and bacterial meningitis. Historically, children who did not receive vaccinations were more likely to be part of an underserved population.

**Who are multicultural parents?**

These are parents from different cultures that are included n a particular setting. These parents represent different ethnicity in the world.

**What are charter schools?**

A **charter school** is a school that receives government funding but operates independently of the established [state school](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/State_school) [system](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/School_district) in which it is located. It is independent in the sense that it operates according to the basic [principle of autonomy](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charter) for accountability, that it is freed from the rules but accountable for results.

According to the [Education Commission of the States](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Education_Commission_of_the_States), "charter schools are semi-autonomous public schools that receive public funds. They operate under a written contract with a state, district or other entity (referred to as an authorizer or sponsor). This contract – or charter – details how the school will be organized and managed, what students will be expected to achieve, and how success will be measured. Many charters are exempt from a variety of laws and regulations affecting other public schools if they continue to meet the terms of their charters. These schools, however, need to follow state-mandated curricula and are subject to the same rules and regulations that cover them, although there is flexibility in the way this is realized.

Some of the countries that have charter schools include:

* United states
* Australia
* Bulgaria
* Canada
* England
* Denmark
* Chile
* Finland

For instance, in the united states, Charter schools are required to comply with the requirements of the New York State Department of Health (DOH) in effect since September 1, 2016, and should refer to the DOH’s 2022-23 NYS Guide to Required Immunizations.

**Benefits of Parent Involvement**

Decades of research point to the numerous benefits of parent involvement in education for not only students but also for the parents involved, the school, and the wider community (Barnard, 2004; Epstein, 2001; Fan & Chen, 2001; Henderson & Mapp, 2002; Jeynes, 2003, 2007; Lee & Bowen, 2006). Despite the challenges in establishing a causal link between parent involvement and student achievement, studies utilizing large databases have shown positive and significant effects of parent involvement on both academic and behavioral outcomes (Fan & Chen, 2001; Jeynes, 2003, 2007). For example, research has found that parent involvement is related to a host of student achievement indicators, including better grades, attendance, attitudes, expectations, homework completion, and state test results (Astone & McLanahan, 1991; Cancio, West, & Young, 2004; Dearing, McCartney, Weiss, Kreider, & Simpkins, 2004; Gutman & Midgley, 2000; Izzo, Weissberg, Kasprow, & Fendrich, 1999; Senechal & LeFevre, 2002; Sheldon, 2003). Additional academic outcomes such as lower dropout rates (Rumberger, 1995), fewer retentions, and fewer special education placements (Miedel & Reynolds, 1999) have been found as well. In addition to academic outcomes, parent involvement also appears to have positive effects on students’ behavior. Brody, Flor, and Gibson (1999) found that parenting practices contributed to an increase in students’ ability to selfregulate behavior. Higher levels of social skills and improved overall behavior were also documented. In a study of American Indian students, researchers found that a parent intervention approach reduced students’ disruptive behavior in the classroom; students were less aggressive and withdrawn after parent participation in the program (Kratochwill, McDonald, Levin, Bear-Tibbetts, & Demaray, 2004). Other studies have documented the ways in which parent involvement supports children’s social competencies in school (Hill et al., 2004; McWayne, Hampton, Fantuzzo, Cohen, & Sekino, 2004). Some researchers have found that only specific types of parent involvement appear to correlate with student achievement. These studies conclude that involvement at home, especially parents discussing school activities and helping children plan their programs, appeared to have the strongest impact on academic achievement (Ingram, Wolfe, & Lieberman, 2007; Sui-Chu & Willms, 1996; Van Voorhis, INVOLVEMENT IN URBAN CHARTERS 73 2003). Other researchers found involvement at the school site made the key difference (Hoover-Dempsey, Bassler, & Brissie, 1987; Lee & Bowen, 2006). A dominant theme in the parent involvement literature is the lack of common understanding between school staff and parents about what constitutes parent involvement; parents consistently report higher levels of involvement compared to teachers’ reports (Barnard, 2004). In one study, parents described involvement as keeping their children safe and getting them to school punctually, while teachers expected parents’ presence at the school. While both teachers and parents felt that involvement was important, the lack of consensus around what constitutes parent involvement has caused teachers to blame families and parents to feel unappreciated (Lawson, 2003). On the other hand, DePlanty, Coulter-Kern, and Duchane (2007) found in their survey that parents did know the activities expected of them, such as attending school events, but they might not know the benefits of such involvement.

**Parent Responsibilities**

* + Have a doctor fill out the prescription form completely
  + Parent/guardian must sign and date the prescription form
  + Parent/guardian must bring prescription and medication to the school office staff
  + Medication must be in the properly labeled containers with the same orders as noted on the prescription form
  + An accurate measuring spoon must be provided, if medication is in liquid form
  + Parent/guardian must bring any change in prescriptions or medications in writing from the doctor
  + Parent/guardian must pick up any unused medication at the end of the school year.
  + New authorizations are required at the beginning of each school year

**Conclusion**

Therefore, every parent must ensure that his or her child has received the required immunizations.

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