



**OFFICE OF INSTRUCTION**

November 22, 2017

Dear Parents and Guardians,

This letter is to inform you that there have been confirmed cases of Pertussis (also known as Whooping Cough) in the Valley. Pertussis is an infection of the respiratory system. Infants are especially susceptible to Pertussis and have higher risk of severe complications, including death.

Early symptoms include cold-like symptoms-runny nose, low-grade fever, mild occasional cough, and in infants, apnea (pause in breathing).

Progressive symptoms include:

- Series of rapid coughs followed by high pitched "whoop" (sound made from a person gasping for air after prolonged coughing fit)
- Coughing followed by vomiting
- Fatigue and exhaustion following coughing fits
- Prolonged cough lasting weeks to months

If you or your child is having symptoms of Pertussis, you may learn more from the Alaska Department of Health & Social Services, the National Center for Disease Control, or from your primary medical provider. A Whooping Cough Fact Sheet is included. Links for all of this information are available on the District website.

The Mat-Su Public Health Clinic offers vaccines to children six weeks through 18 years, and the cost is based on a sliding scale fee. It is also provided to adults who do not have insurance, have insurance that does not cover vaccines, and those with Medicare Part B. The Mat-Su Public Health Clinic is located at 3323 E. Palmer Wasilla Highway, Wasilla, AK 99654, and may be reached by telephone at 907-352-6600.

Sincerely,

Amy Spargo

MSBSD Assistant Superintendent of Instruction