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May 15, 2019

**PERTUSSIS NOTIFICATION FOR STUDENTS OF
DaVinci-Science High School**

Dear Parent or Guardian,

The Los Angeles County Department of Public Health has been notified of at least one person with Pertussis (whooping cough) at Da Vinci-Science High School. Because your child shares a classroom with this person, we would like to give you this important information about Pertussis and the actions being taken to prevent the spread of disease.

Pertussis is a contagious disease that can spread when a person coughs or sneezes. It usually starts like a cold and gets worse. People with Pertussis have coughing attacks that may last several seconds. As the person catches his or her breath at the end of each coughing attack, they may make a "whoop" sound, vomit or choke. It can cause serious illness, leading to hospital stays and even death, especially in infants less than 6 months old.

Pertussis is treated with antibiotics. Antibiotics can also prevent the spread of the disease to others. Some people who are treated later in their illness may continue to cough for many weeks, but they cannot make other people sick with Pertussis anymore.

Children who have received all their Pertussis vaccines may get sick as vaccine protection can decrease over time. However, the best way to prevent getting Pertussis is still vaccination.

The following actions are being taken at Da Vinci -Science High School to prevent the spread of Pertussis:

- Children who are coughing cannot attend school until their doctor sees them.
 - Please take your child to see his/her doctor if your child has symptoms that include coughing, or begins coughing over the next three weeks. Let the doctor know that your child may have been exposed to Pertussis. If the doctor decides your child has Pertussis, your child must take at least 5 days of antibiotics before returning to school.
- It is recommended that your child take antibiotics for Pertussis, if he/she shared a classroom with the individual diagnosed with Pertussis AND meets one of the conditions below:
 - Your child has an underlying medical condition that can get worse with Pertussis (check with your doctor). Even if your child received all his/her Pertussis vaccines, the antibiotics will give your child extra protection from infection.

- Your child does not have all the recommended vaccines against Pertussis for his/her age. In some situations, children in this group who do not take antibiotics for Pertussis may not be able to attend school for up to 21 days (as allowed by California State Law). The Los Angeles County Department of Public Health will decide if this is necessary.

If any of the above actions apply to your child, the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health will be available to advise you.

Please note that all information regarding this public health investigation is confidential to protect all patients' privacy. The facility and the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health cannot release the name(s) of any ill person(s).

If your child has symptoms that include coughing, or your child begins coughing over the next three weeks, please take your child to see his/her doctor. Let the doctor know that your child may have been exposed to Pertussis. Your child should not return to any activity until the doctor tells you it is safe to return.

We encourage families to make sure that all family members, children and adults, have completed all the required vaccines against Pertussis. Please follow these recommendations:

- Children younger than 7 years old should have all the required number of shots of DTaP vaccine for their age.
- A Tdap booster vaccine is recommended for:
 - Anyone 7 years and older, who is not fully immunized.
 - Pre-teens (11-12 years of age), teens, and adults.

If you do not have health insurance or a regular doctor, no-cost and low-cost vaccinations can be provided to you at our public health centers. For more information please visit our website at www.publichealth.lacounty.gov/chs/ or call the Los Angeles County Information Line at 2-1-1 for a list of no-cost and low-cost vaccination doctors. For more information on Pertussis please visit www.publichealth.lacounty.gov/ip

If you have any other questions or concerns, please contact Aurelia Hopkins, Public Health Nurse at Curtis Tucker Health Center, (310) 419-5333 during regular business hours. You can also call the LA County Information Line at 2-1-1 after business hours.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Annette Guerrero, M.D.

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Physician Specialist

County of Los Angeles Department of Public Health

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