

Washington State Department of Health Annual Immunization School Reporting Data Technical Notes



Data Sources

These data are submitted by all public and private schools, daycares, and preschools by December 1 of each school year in accordance with Revised Code of Washington (RCW) 28A.210-110 and Washington Administrative Code (WAC) 246-105-060. Once submitted, data are assessed for accuracy and completeness. Data is not imputed or changed by the Washington State Department of Health (DOH). Where obviously erroneous data are submitted, schools are asked to re-submit their data or are counted as non-reporters.

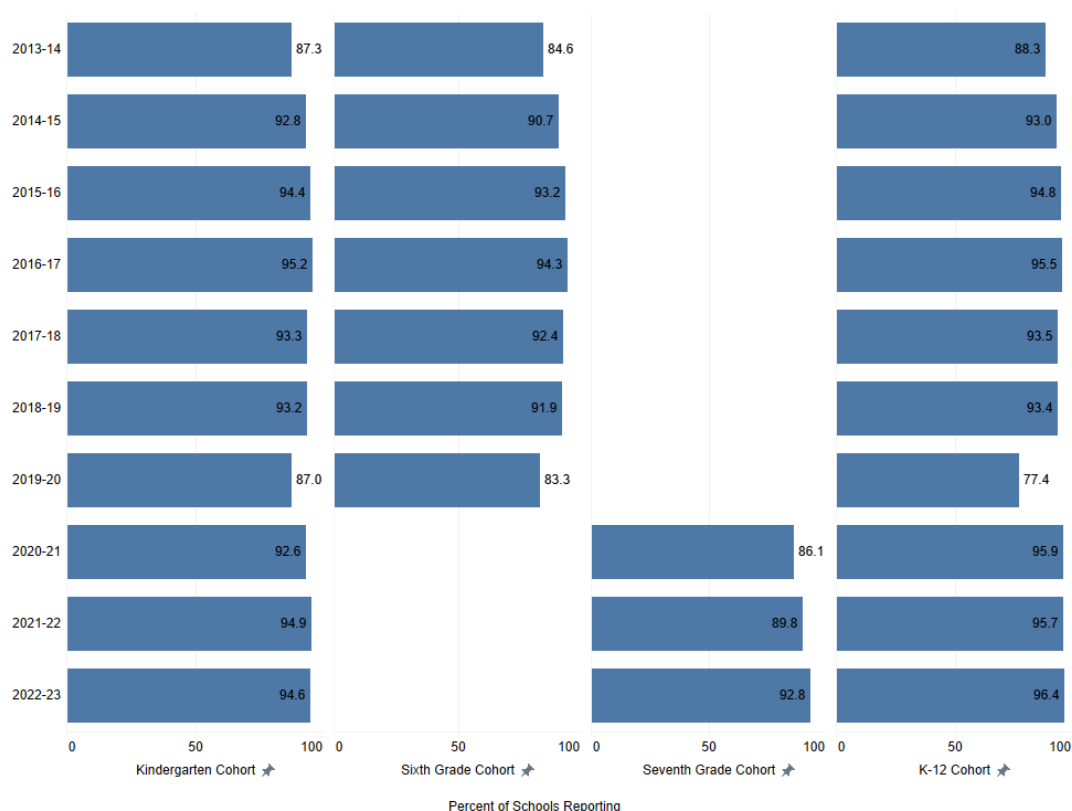
Each report requires school nurses or administrative staff to count information received from families attesting to the student's immunization status. For a complete description of the forms, status, and immunization requirements, please see the School and Child Care Immunization page at www.doh.wa.gov/SCCI.

Data Collection

- Each year, the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends changes to the required doses for immunizations. In addition, legislative and rule changes may affect the forms and required signatures for each form. Each of these affects the comparability of these reports from year to year.
 - Notable school immunization requirement changes include:
 - Separate Certificate of Exemption (COE) required in school year 2008-09
 - Health care provider signature required on COE in school year 2011-12
 - Changes in varicella requirements in school year 2016-17
 - Personal exemptions for MMR no longer accepted in school year 2019-20
- Data collection through the School Module, a feature within the Washington State Immunization Information System (WAIS), began in 2016. School districts and private schools new to the school module can experience higher out of compliance rates as they learn the system and gather documents. For a list of School Module schools and more information, please visit www.doh.wa.gov/SchoolModule.
- Some schools are not required to report, such as prison-based or tribal schools. Some schools fail to report their immunization data for various reasons. Additionally, several schools not yet registered with the Office of the Superintendent for Public Instruction (OSPI) may also submit reports. This variance in the total number of schools and total enrollment from official OSPI data should be noted and considered when comparing these data.
- The percentage of schools that report varies each year. This variance has not been studied to determine if specific sub-groups of schools are under- or over-represented. Although the average reporting percentage is above 90%, the users of this data should be aware of missing data in the summaries.

To request this document in another format, call 1-800-525-0127. Deaf or hard of hearing customers, please call 711 (Washington Relay) or email civil.rights@doh.wa.gov. DOH 348-915 May 2023.

Percent of Required Schools that Report by School Year



Statistics

Percentages in this report are calculated using the count of students divided by the student enrollment as reported by the school. Using an arithmetic average provides an unbiased estimate of how well the population of students are immunized. Because school percentage rates are characterized by outliers, using this average may be a biased estimator of how well *schools* are immunized.

Notable changes to WA school immunization data collection

- Prior to the 2019-20 school year, overall immunization status was only collected for kindergarten and sixth grade cohorts. For K-12, only complete and exempt statuses were collected. Starting in the 2019-20 school year, overall immunization status and status of documentation of disease immunity was collected for all cohorts.
- Prior to the 2019-20 school year, kindergarten and 6th grade vaccine-specific data measures count the percentage of students who are "incomplete," meaning they are in conditional, out of compliance, or exempt status for a vaccine series. The K-12 vaccine specific data measures count the percentage of students "exempt" from a vaccine.

- Vaccine Definitions – Beginning in the 2019-20 school year, DOH started collecting immunization status (complete, conditional, out of compliance, and exempt by type) by disease. Prior to this change, the following data by vaccine were collected for specific student cohorts:
 - **Diphtheria/Tetanus** - For Kindergarten and 6th grade, this is the number of students who are "incomplete." In K-12 students, this is the number who have a completed Certificate of Exemption (COE) exempting them from immunization requirements against diphtheria and tetanus disease.
 - **Pertussis** - For Kindergarten and 6th grade, this is the number of students who are "incomplete." In K-12 students, this is the number who have a completed COE exempting them from immunization requirements against whooping cough.
 - **Polio** - For Kindergarten and 6th grade, this is the number of students who are "incomplete." In K-12 students, this is the number who have a completed COE exempting them from immunization requirements against polio.
 - **Hepatitis B** - For Kindergarten and 6th grade, this is the number of students who are "incomplete." In K-12 students, this is the number who have a completed COE exempting them from immunization requirements against hepatitis B.
 - **Measles, Mumps, and Rubella** - For Kindergarten and 6th grade, this is the number of students who are "incomplete." In K-12 students, this is the number who have a completed COE exempting them from immunization requirements against measles, mumps and rubella diseases.
 - **Varicella** - For Kindergarten and 6th grade, this is the number of students who are "incomplete." In K-12 students, this is the number who have a completed COE exempting them from immunization requirements against chicken pox.
- The 2020-21 school year began collection of a 7th grade cohort rather than a 6th grade cohort. This change was due to the Tdap requirement shift from 6th to 7th grade, which began on August 1, 2020.
- The schools required to report have shifted over time. Prior to the 2021-22 school year, online schools were not required to report immunization information and schools were not required to report on students who did not share air space with other students.