



Media Contact:
Madison Schmaedeke
madison_schmaedeke@itpr.com
312.573.5510

**THE INDIANA IMMUNIZATION COALITION APPLAUDS STATE FOR LEADING
THE NATION IN PROTECTING YOUTH AGAINST MENINGITIS B**
*High school seniors across the state will soon be required to receive
additional meningitis vaccine*

INDIANAPOLIS – JANUARY 18 – Students entering their senior year of high school in the fall of 2017 in Indiana will be advised to receive the vaccine that protects specifically against meningitis B – the Meningococcal Serogroup B vaccine (MenB). For those that follow them, starting fall of 2018, the MenB vaccine will be mandated.

The Indiana Immunization Coalition, which launched a “[Beware of B](#)” campaign on college campuses around the state this past year, applauded the State’s action that takes the specific MenB vaccine from just awareness and education to a requirement. Indiana is the first state in the nation to require students to receive the MenB vaccination.

“This is great news for the health of the young people in our state, and their families who love them. I hope that other states across the country will soon follow suit,” said Lisa Robertson, Executive Director of the Indiana Immunization Coalition. “Meningitis B can be deadly, and young people seem especially vulnerable to outbreaks.”

Indiana Health Code currently states that all students enrolled in IN elementary or high schools must receive the meningitis vaccine that protects against four major serogroups (A, C, W, and Y). However, this vaccine does not protect against one of the most common disease strains: serogroup B – which accounts for 50 percent of all cases in the U.S. All of Indiana’s meningitis cases in 2014 were caused by the meningitis B strain and in 2015, 5 of the 6 cases were due to meningitis B.

The meningitis B vaccine is critically important for students soon heading to college, where they are most likely to contract the disease. Dorm living, shared bathrooms, crowded events, sharing food and drinks are all catalysts for spreading the bacteria. Since the spring of 2013, meningitis B outbreaks have occurred on five major college campuses in the U.S., with three cases just reported last fall on the University of Wisconsin Madison campus.

For more information about the State of Indiana’s immunization requirements, visit <http://www.in.gov/isdh/17094.htm>.

###