



## **Wheeling-Ohio County Health Department**

### **WHEELING-OHIO COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH RESOLUTION WEST VIRGINIA SCHOOL IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS**

WHEREAS the greatest accomplishment in the history of medicine is the development of vaccinations that has led to the elimination or near elimination of many terrible diseases and prevented the deaths of millions of people worldwide; and

WHEREAS, until recently, the incidence of childhood diseases has been extremely low in the United States due to successful widespread vaccination efforts; and

WHEREAS, due to the success of widespread vaccination use, the potential devastating complications of childhood diseases have been forgotten; and

WHEREAS, the reported cases of childhood diseases particularly measles and whooping cough in 2014 have been the most in over 20 years; and

WHEREAS, this resurgence is due to the number of individuals contracting these diseases in other countries where these diseases are endemic and carrying them to United States and also due to the declining vaccination rates in communities and states throughout the country; and

WHEREAS, outbreaks of these diseases are occurring in communities and states that have a liberal exemption policy that is lowering vaccination rates; and

WHEREAS, these diseases have led to terrible complications including deafness, loss of vision, pneumonia and death; and

WHEREAS, these outbreaks also have a significant economic cost that totals several million dollars annually throughout the United States; and

WHEREAS, West Virginia's current school immunization requirements have been very effective at keeping immunization rates among the highest in the United States and thereby preventing disease outbreaks and keeping students healthy and in school; and

WHEREAS, allowing nonmedical exemptions to school immunization requirements would result in reduced immunization rates and lead to preventable disease outbreaks in our schools and our communities as has occurred in communities elsewhere in the United States where vaccination rates have been lowered due to liberal exemption policies; and

WHEREAS, vaccinations are not only very effective but very safe; and

WHEREAS, West Virginia does permit valid medical exemptions to its immunization requirements;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Wheeling Ohio County Board of Health support West Virginia's current school immunization requirements; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Wheeling Ohio County Board of Health reaffirms the current West Virginia Bureau for Public Health procedure and practice of obtaining a medical exemption to the state's immunization requirements; and

THAT IT BE RESOLVED that the Wheeling Ohio County Board of Health call upon all West Virginia local Boards of Health to adopt these resolutions.

***Approved & Adopted by the Board of Health  
January 9, 2019***

John Holloway, M.D., Board Chair  
Terry Sterling  
Chad Thalman  
Laura Wakim Chapman  
Tom Tuttle

William C. Mercer, M.D., Health Officer, Ohio County  
Howard P. Gamble, Administrator

**Wheeling-Ohio County  
Health Department**



**Public Health**  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.