

# MARQUETTE AREA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

1201 WEST FAIR AVENUE  
MARQUETTE, MICHIGAN 49855  
TELEPHONE [906] 225-4200  
FAX [906] 225-5340  
WEBSITE [www.mapsnet.org](http://www.mapsnet.org)

Deborah L. Veiht, Interim Superintendent

Debra L. Barry, Assistant Superintendent for Finance

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Dear Parents,

Within the Marquette schools we have had a confirmed case of pertussis or more commonly called whooping cough. I am sending you a "Fast Facts" informational page from the Centers for Disease Control to make you aware in the event your child should develop symptoms. Remember, children are required to have pertussis vaccines to enter school in the State of Michigan, so most children are not susceptible to this disease. If they do get pertussis it is much less severe if children have been adequately immunized.

- In 2009, nearly 17,000 cases of pertussis were reported in the U.S., but many more go undiagnosed or unreported.
- Coughing fits due to pertussis infection can last for up to 10 weeks or more; it is also sometimes known as the "100 day cough."
- Pertussis can cause serious illness in infants, children and adults and even be life threatening, especially to infants.
- The most effective way to prevent pertussis is through vaccination with DTaP for infants and children or Tdap for pre-teens, teen and adults. Protection from the childhood vaccines fades over time.
- Vaccinated children and adults can become infected with and transmit pertussis; however, the disease is less likely to be severe.
- Worldwide there are 30-50 million cases of pertussis and about 300,000 deaths per year.
- Since the 1980s, there has been an increase in the number of reported cases of pertussis in the U.S., especially among 10-19 year olds and infants under 6 months of age.
- More than half of infants less than one year of age who get pertussis must be hospitalized.
- Vaccination of pre-teens, teens and adults with Tdap is especially important for families with new infants.
- Pertussis is generally treated with antibiotics, which are used to control the symptoms and to prevent infected people from spreading the disease.

With that said, please take the time to check if your child's vaccinations are up to date. Also, if you are not immunized or have not had a pertussis vaccine since you were a child, this may be a good time to talk to your personal care physician.

If you have any questions please call me at 225-5354. You may also contact the Health Department at 475-7844 or your private physician.

Sincerely,

*Jeanette Wealton* R.N  
MAPS School Nurse

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