

March 9, 2017

Dear Parent/Guardian,

McHenry County Department of Health has notified us of a case of pertussis (whooping cough) at Jacobs High School. The student will not return to school until they are no longer contagious. Pertussis is a highly infectious and usually mild illness that is easily transmitted through coughing and sneezing and may last for several months.

Symptoms of pertussis may appear 5 to 10 days following exposure but can take up to 21 days. The first symptoms of pertussis are similar to those of a common cold: runny nose, low-grade fever and a mild occasional cough which can become severe and spasmodic and can progress to vomiting.

Please refer to the attached Pertussis Fact Sheet for more information. Although most people recover completely from pertussis, complications from the disease can be severe in high risk groups, especially infants under one year, and children who have not been fully immunized against the disease.

**Testing for pertussis is not indicated for individuals who are not symptomatic.** Frequent hand washing and respiratory hygiene (e.g. covering your cough, coughing into tissues, disposing of tissues promptly) are important practices that help to limit the spread of infection.

If you have any questions please feel free to contact us or call the McHenry County Department of Health at (815)334-4500.

Thank You,