



## ARCHDIOCESE OF PHILADELPHIA

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### OFFICE OF CATHOLIC EDUCATION

Beginning with the 2009-2010 school year, 28 PA.CODE.CH.23 (School Immunization) will require students in all grades to need the following:

- 4 doses of tetanus
- 4 doses of diphtheria
- 3 doses of polio
- 2 doses of measles
- 2 doses of mumps
- 1 dose of rubella
- 3 doses of hepatitis B
- 2 doses of varicella (chickenpox) phased in by 2010/2011

Local Departments of Health may alter these requirements so please check with your school nurse for the specifics of your county.

In anticipation of parent concerns, I offer the following in regard to the position of the Church around the issue of immunization:

- ❖ The cells in question, which are used to manufacture these vaccines, were taken from two fetuses aborted 40 years ago. Since then, the lines have grown independently. It is important to note that the descendent cells are not the cells of an aborted child.
- ❖ After manufacture, the vaccines are removed from the cell lines and purified. One cannot accurately say that the vaccines contain any of the cells from the original abortion.
- ❖ The Pontifical Academy for Life encourages Catholics to use alternative vaccines when they are available. Unfortunately, none exist at this time. For this reason, Catholics may use these vaccines with a clear conscience and without fear of cooperating with a more evil.
- ❖ The Pontifical Academy also strongly encourages parents to vaccinate their children for the common good, since contact with a virus may cause serious harm to others, particularly in the case of a pregnant mother contracting the rubella virus.
- ❖ For these reasons, the Church does not consider parents' objections as grounds for a "religious exemption" form vaccination.

I hope this information assists you if and when questions arise from your parents or guardians. Thank you.