



STATE OF NEW YORK
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Corning Tower The Governor Nelson A. Rockefeller Empire State Plaza Albany, New York 12237

Richard F. Daines, M.D.
Commissioner

Wendy E. Saunders
Chief of Staff

September 2008

Dear Superintendent, School Administrator and Health Provider Network Coordinator:

The purpose of this letter is to inform schools about the availability of the New York State Department of Health Immunization Program Online School Survey Assessment (OSAS), guidelines for religious exemptions, and the annual grade-specific audit questionnaire. The 2008-09 online survey is now available for schools affiliated with the Health Provider Network (HPN) to use. Please see the enclosed OSAS Quick Guide for instructions on how to access and complete the survey.

The **School Survey Instruction Booklet** and **Immunization Worksheet** are available for printing at <https://commerce.health.state.ny.us/hpn/bcdc/immunization/immun.html>. The booklet and worksheet provide additional information and tools that are useful for completing the online survey.

The immunization survey form must be completed by **October 31, 2008**. Failure to complete and submit the survey form is a violation of Public Health Law, which may result in the imposition of a civil penalty of up to \$2,000. Previously, the superintendent, principal, or school administrator was required to sign the paper survey indicating that the data was correct. OSAS requires that one person who is authorized by the district/school submit the data.

The State Education Department has issued a religious exemption form and guidelines for public schools which are available online at http://www.schoolhealthservicesny.com/laws_guidelines.cfm. The New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) Immunization Program recommends that non-public schools also use the guidelines and form.

It is important to note at this time that a mandated NYSDOH Immunization Program audit questionnaire, requesting immunization data on all students in a randomly selected grade, will be sent in February 2009. The audit questionnaire will not be available online, so you will receive a paper survey form via mail.

Please contact me at 518-474-1944 if you have any questions. Thank you for your assistance in monitoring school immunization information and helping to ensure high immunization rates among the children of New York State.

Sincerely,

Robin Stiles-Tice
Public Health Representative III
Immunization Program

Enclosure