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Date: April 6, 2016

Subject: Pertussis Notification (Whooping Cough)

There has been a case of whooping cough (pertussis) at Spencer High School. Your child may have been exposed to pertussis while at school from March 29th through April 5th, 2016. If your child currently has or develops symptoms of pertussis, keep your child home and contact your child's doctor.

Pertussis symptoms: Among infants and young children, the disease begins with cold-like symptoms including a runny nose, possible low-grade fever, and a mild cough. After 1-2 weeks, the illness progresses to spells of explosive coughing that can interrupt breathing, eating, and sleeping. After a coughing spell, patients may make a loud crowing or "whooping" sound as they struggle to inhale air (hence the name "whooping cough") and may also gag or vomit. Patients may experience severe coughing spells for several weeks or months. Among vaccinated individuals, symptoms may be milder and without the typical whoop.

Please monitor your child for the development of a cough illness. Symptoms typically appear 7-10 days after exposure, but can occur as early as 5 days and as late as 21 days after exposure. If your child has or develops the symptoms described in this letter, the health department recommends that:

- Your child should be evaluated as soon as possible by a health care provider. Patients with pertussis are most infectious during the early stages of the disease; therefore, seeking medical evaluation as soon as possible is very important to stop the spread of the disease.
- Your child should be tested for pertussis and receive antibiotic treatment beginning the same day.
- Your child should be isolated at home until completion of five days of appropriate antibiotics.
- Your health care provider should report positive test results to the health department.

To prevent the spread of illness: Wash hands often. Cover your cough. Stay home when sick.

Ensure your child is up-to-date for pertussis vaccinations. Please check with your child's doctor or the Marathon County Health Department regarding your child's vaccination status and to see if your child is due for additional vaccinations.

Attached is an information sheet on pertussis. For more information, you or your physician may call the Marathon County Health Department at 715-261-1900.

Thank you for your cooperation.