



SAMPLE LETTER FOR SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION/SUPERINTENDENT

[INSERT DATE]

Dear [INSERT ADMINISTRATOR NAME]:

As [INSERT AFFILIATION (e.g. a member, president)] of the [INSERT SCHOOL] PTA, I'm writing to inform you about a potentially deadly bacterial infection that can strike adolescents and young adults in our community called meningococcal disease, and ask for your support in generating awareness about the disease and prevention to parents in [INSERT SCHOOL DISTRICT].

Meningococcal disease, commonly known as meningitis, strikes nearly 3,000 Americans each year. Adolescents and young adults are at an increased risk of contracting meningococcal disease compared to the general population, accounting for nearly 30 percent of all U.S. cases annually. Though rare, the disease comes on quickly and can cause death or permanent disability within hours. The disease is often misdiagnosed, since early symptoms can resemble the flu.

According to one study, as many as one out of every four adolescents infected with the disease may die. Of those who survive, up to 20 percent live with long-term disabilities, including brain damage, hearing loss, kidney disease and limb amputations. However, the majority of cases occurring among adolescents and young adults may be prevented through immunization.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends meningococcal immunization for all adolescents 11 through 18 years of age.

A meningococcal conjugate vaccine, expected to provide longer-term protection against meningococcal disease, is available for use among persons aged 11 to 55 years.

[INSERT NAME OF PTA] has joined the National Meningitis Association (NMA) in its efforts to inform [middle/high] school students and parents in our community about this potentially deadly disease. [INSERT PTA] and NMA want parents to know that this devastating illness is potentially vaccine-preventable. Immunization is the most effective means of preventing the disease.

We hope you agree on the importance of educating parents and students about this issue and support us in our efforts to encourage them to speak with their children's physician.

NMA, a national nonprofit organization, was founded by parents whose children died or live with permanent disabilities from meningococcal disease. NMA is dedicated to educating communities about the dangers of meningococcal disease and available prevention approaches. For more information about the NMA, please visit their Web site at www.nmaus.org.

Sincerely,

[INSERT NAME AND TITLE, I.E. DISTRICT PTA PRESIDENT]