



Hello,

Like you, we believe the health and safety of the students and families in our states is a vital component for all that we do. That is why we're coming together to ask you to take an additional step to ensure the students at your schools are the most protected in the nation.

This spring, Indiana University and Purdue University – two of the earliest members of the Big Ten Conference – announced a new policy to require students entering school this fall to be vaccinated against meningitis B, the strain of meningococcal disease not protected by the common vaccine many students already receive.

Each year, approximately 1,000 people contract a form of meningococcal disease in the United States. Since 2013, at least 46 college campuses have reported cases of meningococcal disease. The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) has found that among those who become infected, 10 to 15 percent will die. Of those who survive, another 20 percent will suffer from permanent disabilities, such as brain damage, loss of limbs, hearing loss and/or other serious impacts to the nervous system.

Students and young adults are among those most likely to contract meningitis B, especially in settings like college dorms where students are living in close proximity to each other and sharing drinks and food.

Like most universities, students at both Indiana University and Purdue University have a list of required vaccinations that includes the meningococcal conjugate vaccination, which protects against meningitis strains A, C, W and Y. But just being vaccinated against those four strains is not enough. The B strain accounts for 50 percent of all meningococcal cases in the U.S. and 100 percent of the college outbreaks since 2011.

We're proud of the traditions that run long and true for all the schools in the Big Ten Conference. And we're proud of the leadership that student athletes and coaches exhibit, both on and off the playing field. We ask that you join together as a Conference to once again be a leader, this time in the field of your students' health and safety, and require students on your campuses to be vaccinated against all strains of meningococcal disease by requiring the conjugate (MenACWY) and meningitis B immunizations.

We, the undersigned, will support your efforts on this front every step of the way.

Sincerely,



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The Meningitis B Action Project



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