



Oregon School Immunization Law Summary, 2017¹

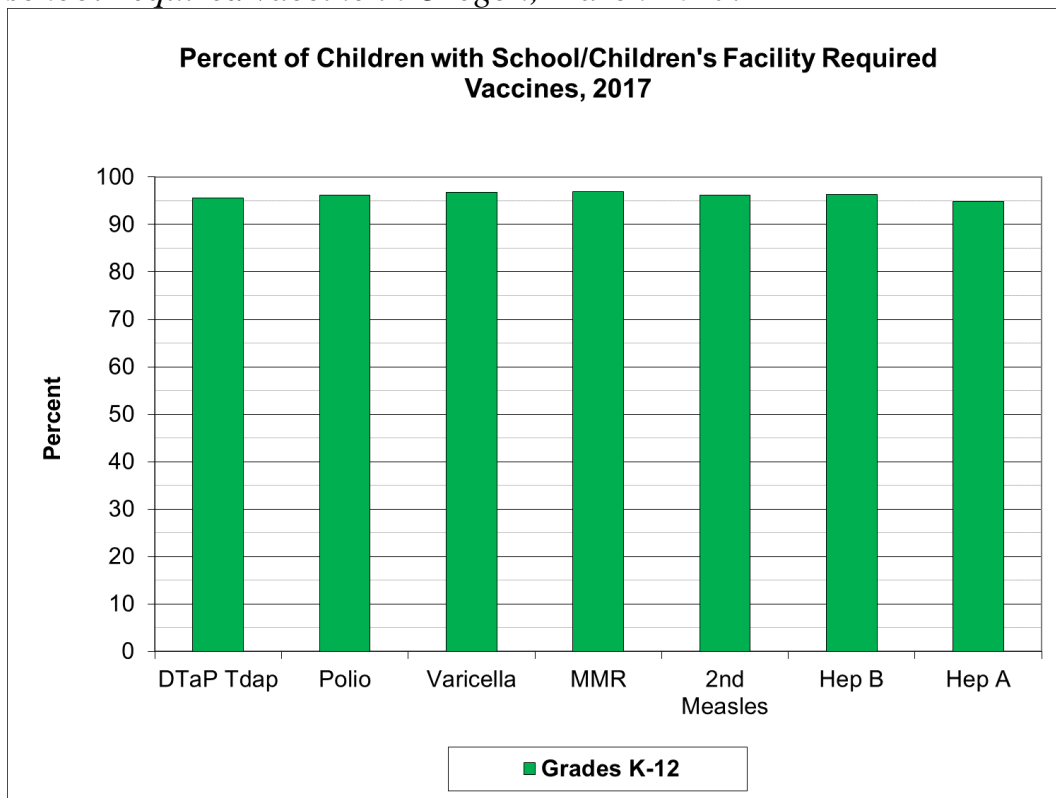
Background

Oregon’s immunization law helps ensure that children can go to school in a safe and healthy environment free of vaccine-preventable diseases. The law protects over 600,000 students in more than 1,800 public and private schools. School immunization mandates are an evidence-based best practice for increasing immunization rates and decreasing vaccine-preventable disease outbreaks.²

Oregon School Immunization Rates

By school-age, the vast majority of Oregon parents choose to fully immunize their children. Figure 1 shows the percent of students complete for each vaccine required for school attendance. These vaccine-level data were collected for the first time in 2016 after the passage of Senate Bill 895 (2015). Prior to 2016, schools kept immunization records for their full school populations, but only reported immunization rates at the vaccine level for kindergarten and seventh grade.

Figure 1. Percent of children in kindergarten through 12th grade complete for each school-required vaccine in Oregon, March 2017.



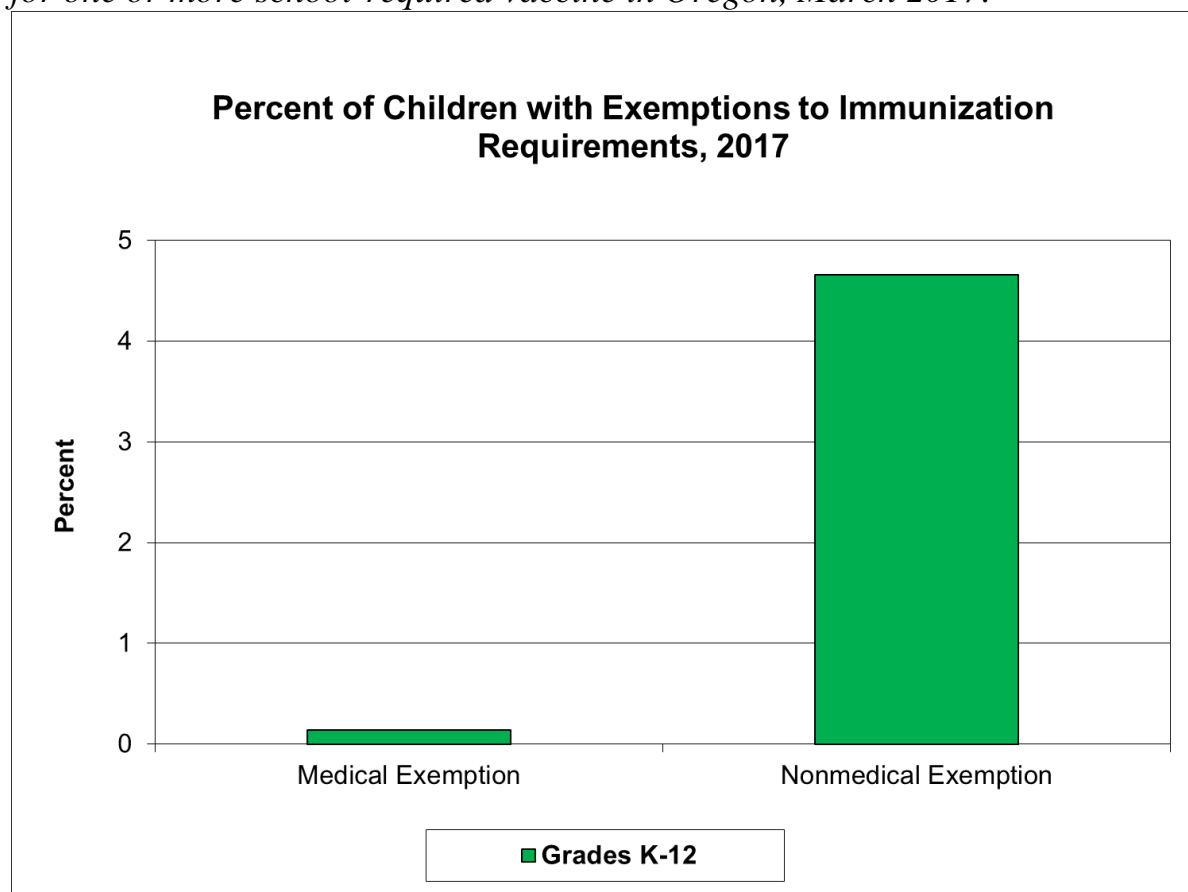
Statewide, 93.9% of students in kindergarten through 12th grade were complete for all required vaccines. At the county level, the percent of students complete for all required vaccines ranged from 98.2% in Malheur County to 89.2% in Josephine County. One hundred schools with 10 or more children reported 100% of students complete for all required vaccines. On the opposite end of the spectrum, one school reported only 18% of students complete for all required vaccines.

Immunization rates for individual schools with 10 or more students and county rates are available on the Oregon Immunization Program school data webpage at www.healthoregon.org/immdata.

Oregon School Exemption Rates

Figure 2 shows the percent of students with exemptions to one or more required vaccines. In 2017, 4.7% of students in kindergarten through 12th grade had a nonmedical exemption. Only 0.1% of students had a medical exemption.

Figure 2. Percent of children in kindergarten through 12th grade with exemptions for one or more school-required vaccine in Oregon, March 2017.

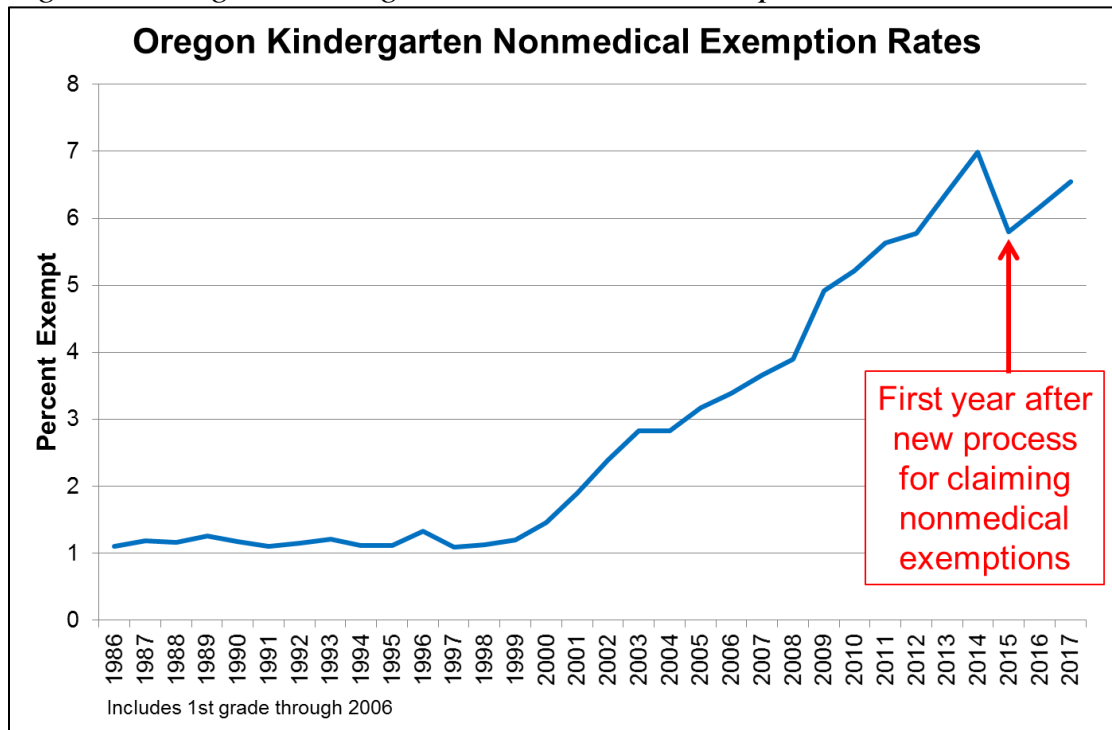


Nonmedical exemption rates in Oregon counties in 2017 for students in grades K-12 ranged from 0.7% in Morrow County to 9.4% in Josephine County. One hundred forty-five schools with 10 or more students had zero nonmedical exemptions. The highest rate of nonmedical exemption in a school with 10 or more students was 83%.

In 2013, Oregon had the highest kindergarten nonmedical exemption rate in the U.S. In effort to address Oregon’s high rate of exemption, Oregon passed a law in 2013 to strengthen regulations for claiming a nonmedical exemption. Prior to the new law, a parent needed only to sign a form to claim a nonmedical exemption. Now, all nonmedical exemptions require a parent to receive education about the benefits and risks of immunization from one of two sources: from a health care practitioner or from watching the online vaccine education module at www.healthoregon.org/vaccineexemption.

In 2015, the first year post implementation of the new law, Oregon’s kindergarten nonmedical exemption rate fell from 7.0% to 5.8% (a relative decrease of 17% from 2014). In 2016, the kindergarten nonmedical exemption rate increased to 6.2% (a relative increase of 7% from 2015). In 2017, the rate increased again to 6.5% (a relative increase of 5% from 2016). Figure 3 shows kindergarten nonmedical exemption rates for the past three decades.

Figure 3. Oregon Kindergarten Nonmedical Exemption Rates, 1986-2017.



¹ Data source: Oregon Health Authority, Public Health Division Immunization Program, May 2017

² http://www.thecommunityguide.org/vaccines/requirements_school.html