

MILLERSBURG AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT



Mr. Thomas J. Haupt
Superintendent

"Striving for Excellence, One Student at a Time"

October 19, 2018

Dear Parent/Guardian:

A child at Lenkerville Elementary has contracted chickenpox and your child may have been exposed. Because the virus that causes chickenpox spreads easily, exposed children who have never had the vaccine or the disease will most likely get the disease. Although chickenpox is not usually a serious illness, it can cause severe complications such as pneumonia and can even result in death. Even a relatively mild illness can result in the loss of a week or more of class time for a child.

There is a chickenpox vaccine (varicella) available to help prevent chickenpox and it is recommended for persons older than 12 months of age who have never had the disease. If your child has already had this vaccine, it should be on his or her immunization records as varicella, VZV, or chickenpox. The chickenpox vaccine has proven that it can prevent chickenpox or serve to lessen the severity of the disease. Beginning with the 2011-2012 school year, the Pennsylvania State Department of Health Division of Immunizations required that all students be immunized against chickenpox with **2** doses of the varicella vaccine. Studies have shown that children who have been exposed to chickenpox and are vaccinated within 5 days of exposure are less likely to contract the disease. If your child has not had chickenpox disease OR has not received two doses of the vaccine, please contact your healthcare provider to make arrangements for obtaining the vaccination. If your child has had the disease or two doses of the vaccine, please ensure that your school nurse has it recorded on your child's school health record.

For their protection, immunocompromised children exposed to a case of chickenpox should be kept out of school. If your child is immunocompromised (i.e. HIV, cancer, leukemia, organ transplant, etc.), contact your child's physician immediately to report the exposure, ask for guidance for returning to school, and request a written statement for the school nurse.

Children who have not been vaccinated for religious or moral reasons may be at increased risk for contracting the disease.

If your child does develop chickenpox (even if previously vaccinated with the varicella vaccine), he/she should be kept from attending school until the rash has scabbed over.

Please help us to protect your child and stop the spread of chickenpox in our schools. If you have any questions regarding this notification letter, please contact the certified school nurse for the district at 692-2108 x 3153.