

☞ Washington Township School District ☞
“*Making a Difference*”

Brass Castle School
16 Castle St.
Washington, NJ 07882
908-689-1188
Jessica Garcia, *Principal*

District Central Office
Old Schoolhouse
One East Front Street
Washington, NJ 07882
908-689-1119
Keith T. Neuhs, *Superintendent*

Port Colden School
30 Port Colden Rd.
Washington, NJ 07882
908-689-0681
Michael Neu, *Principal*

April 25, 2017

Dear Parents/Guardians:

There is a suspected case of chickenpox (varicella) in our district. Chickenpox causes a skin rash of itchy, blister-like lesions all over the body. Often there is a fever before the rash. Chickenpox is usually not serious; however, it may cause more severe illness in some children leading to hospitalization. Chickenpox is very contagious. It spreads easily from person to person through the air by coughing and sneezing or by direct contact with the fluid from a chickenpox lesion. It usually takes 14 to 16 days to develop chickenpox symptoms after being exposed to someone with chickenpox, but symptoms may appear 10 to 21 days after exposure.

There is a Chickenpox vaccine (also known as varicella vaccine) available to help prevent chickenpox and it is recommended for persons 12 months of age or older who have never had chickenpox. Two doses of varicella vaccine are recommended, with the first dose given at 12-15 months of age and the second dose given at 4 to 6 years of age. Some persons who have received varicella vaccine may still get chickenpox, but is usually milder. The rash is less severe (sometimes only a few red bumps that look like insect bites) and there may be no fever in vaccinated individuals with chickenpox.

If varicella vaccine is given within three days of exposure to chickenpox, and possibly up to five days after exposure, it may prevent chickenpox or reduce the severity of disease. The Public Health Department recommends you contact your child's health care provider as soon as possible to obtain varicella vaccine for your child if they have not had chickenpox disease or have not received two doses of varicella vaccine. Children who do not have protection against chickenpox may be excluded from school as part of the NJDHSS outbreak control guidelines. Adults having contact with children attending school, who have not had chickenpox, should consider receiving varicella vaccine. If you have a newborn or are pregnant, it is advised that you contact your physician immediately regarding possible exposure to chickenpox.

If your child develops chickenpox, he/she should not attend childcare or school until the rash has crusted over. This is true even if your child was previously vaccinated. Please help us to protect your child and stop the potential spread of chickenpox.

Please call the Warren County Public Health Department at 908-475-7960, or your family medical provider, if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Keith T. Neuhs
Superintendent

Medical information provided by: Warren County Public Health Department