April 19, 2016

Dear Parent/Guardian:

Information was provided on March 16, 2016, notifying you that some students attending Wando High School had been diagnosed with varicella, also known as chickenpox. Since March 16, the school has reported additional students with a chickenpox diagnosis.

Based on the identification of additional students with chickenpox, further guidance is being provided to prevent the spread of chickenpox. At this time, DHEC recommends the following:

- If you have not already done so, check with your health care provider to make sure that your child’s vaccines are complete and up to date. School-age children are recommended to have two doses of chickenpox vaccine.
- Students who have previously received one dose of chickenpox vaccine and who have not previously had chickenpox should receive a second dose as soon as possible.
- Students who have not previously had chickenpox and who have never been vaccinated against chickenpox should receive their first dose of varicella vaccine as soon as possible.
- Students who have not previously had chickenpox and who have never been vaccinated against chickenpox, and choose not to receive the varicella vaccine, will be excluded from school. Exclusion will continue until 21 days after the rash onset in the last identified chickenpox case at the school.
  - Students who receive their first dose of chickenpox vaccine can immediately return to school.
- If you think your child has chickenpox, call your health care provider. Make sure you tell them over the phone that your child has been exposed to chickenpox.
- Notify the school nurse if your child has chickenpox.
- If your child has chickenpox, she or he should remain at home until all the lesions have crusted over and no new ones appear for 24 hours.
- If your child has chickenpox, any other people who might have been exposed to your child should also be encouraged to contact their health care provider to ensure they have been adequately vaccinated.
- If your child has chickenpox and anyone in your household has a weakened immune system, is pregnant or has never had chickenpox or chickenpox vaccine, call your health care provider immediately to discuss their exposure to chickenpox.
• Pregnant women who have not had chickenpox or a second dose of vaccine should immediately contact their health care provider and inform them of the chickenpox cases at the school.

Contact your health care provider if your child needs to receive their first or second dose of chickenpox vaccine. If you are unable to get the vaccination from your health care provider, call 800-868-0404 to schedule an appointment at the Mt. Pleasant Health Department (1189 Sweetgrass Basket Parkway Mt. Pleasant, SC 29466). Vaccinations will be available Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. at this location.

Additional information regarding chickenpox can be found in the included fact sheet or at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s webpage: http://www.cdc.gov/chickenpox/.

If you have any questions, please contact the Lowcountry Region Public Health Epidemiology Office at 843-441-1091.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Katherine J. Richardson MD, MPH
Medical Director
Lowcountry Public Health Region