2/28/07
School's Letterhead

Sample Exposure Letter *From School Principal, Nurse or Medical Advisor to Parents and Staff re: VARICELLA IN SCHOOL*

Date

Dear Parent/Guardian:

A child/Children at our school ***has/have*** contracted ***chickenpox/shingles*** and your child may have been exposed. Because this virus spreads easily, most children who have never had chickenpox and come into contact with someone who has either of these illnesses will become ill with chickenpox. A relatively mild illness can result in the loss of a week or more of class time for a child. Although chickenpox is not usually a serious illness, it can cause serious complications and can even result in death.

There is a varicella (chickenpox) vaccine 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 shot record as "varicella", "VZV", or "chickenpox". Our records indicate that your child has never had chickenpox nor been vaccinated against it.

Studies have shown that children who have been exposed to chickenpox/shingles and are vaccinated within 5 days of exposure are less likely to become sick. **If your child has not had chickenpox or has not been vaccinated,** we suggest that you contact your child's regular health-care provider as soon as possible to discuss the use of varicella (chickenpox) vaccine for your child. Children who do not have protection against chickenpox may be excluded from school as part of the CT Department of Public Health outbreak control guidelines.

It is vital that parents of immunocompromised children (i.e., HIV, cancer, leukemia, organ transplant, etc.) contact their child's physician immediately. For their own protection, immunocompromised children will be excluded until the school nurse receives written instructions from the physician whether they can return to school.

If your child does develop chickenpox, he/she should be kept from attending school until the rash has scabbed over. This is true even if your child was previously vaccinated. Please help us to protect your child and stop the spread of chickenpox in our school.

Sincerely,
Administrator's Name
Administrator's Title
School Name