



BETHEL PARK SCHOOL DISTRICT

Where Futures Begin

Bethel Park High School

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Principal

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January 23, 2009

Dear Bethel Park High School Parents and Students:

On Friday, January 23 I was notified of one confirmed case of Methicillin Resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA) at Bethel Park High School. We have been in contact with the Allegheny County Health Department to properly report this case and have been assured we are fully complying with their guidelines. To prevent communicable disease transmission, the Bethel Park School District continues to follow the Allegheny County Health Department and the Center for Disease Control guidelines for infectious diseases/conditions.

MRSA is a type of *staphylococcus aureus* bacteria normally carried on the skin and nose of healthy people. Some staph bacteria are resistant to the class of antibiotics usually used to treat staph infections such as methicillin, and are referred to as Methicillin-Resistant *Staphylococcus aureus*. If a diagnosis of MRSA is made, the infection is treated with a different antibiotic. The infection commonly causes boils and soft tissue infection. The symptoms may include redness, areas warm to the touch, pain, drainage, discomfort and swelling.

Preventive measures include frequent hand washing, no sharing of towels, athletic equipment or other personal items, showering as soon as possible after physical activity, and washing personal items (such as practice gear) on a daily basis. In the event of a skin lesion, the area should be completely covered to aid in healing and to prevent transmission of infection. On the recommendation of the ACHD, any person who has been treated for MRSA and cleared to return to school, as well as any person who has been or may be referred to their family physician for MRSA screening, may attend school, practice and play sports as long as all wounds are completely covered.

We encourage you to talk to your student about good hygiene practices as well. Additional information about MRSA can be obtained on the school district's website at www.bpsd.org/HealthServices/MRSA.htm.

We recommend that if you have concerns about your student's health, to contact his or her private physician. As always, information regarding a student with a diagnosed or suspected infectious condition should be reported to the school nurse, and if your child plays a sport, to the athletic trainer as well.

If you have questions, please feel free to contact my office at 412-854-8581.

Sincerely,

Zeb Jansante, Ed.D.
Principal

MISSION

To lead an educational partnership with the community, maintaining an environment that challenges all students to reach their potential as lifelong learners and responsible members of society.