

TOWNSHIP HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT 214



RECOGNIZED FOR EXCELLENCE BY THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Forest View Educational Center
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October 2007

Dr. David R. Schuler
Superintendent

Dear Parents/Guardians:

We are writing to discuss a health issue that has received considerable attention in the media recently and is understandably a concern for parents. Although Township High School District 214 **has not** had any reported cases this year of students with community-acquired methicillin-resistant staphylococcus infection (CA-MRSA), more commonly known as a "staph" infection, there are steps students can take to reduce their risk of contracting the infection.

"Staph" bacteria are frequently carried on the skin or in the nose of 25 to 35 percent of healthy people. In most cases this bacteria does not present a concern. Sometimes "staph" bacteria, including MRSA, can cause skin infections that may look like a pimple or boil and can be red, swollen, painful, or have pus or other drainage. In most cases, these infections are minor and can be treated with antibiotics. More serious infections may cause pneumonia, bloodstream infections, or surgical wound infections. In some cases, the bacteria may become resistant to antibiotics and may become more difficult to treat, thus the emergence of MRSA. MRSA infections usually begin with a skin infection that can become serious or fatal if left untreated. While we most often hear of student athletes contracting MRSA, all students should take precautions.

The best way to prevent MRSA is to practice good personal hygiene and to avoid contact with another person's open skin lesions. You and your family can help prevent the spread of MRSA by following good hygiene practices:

- Wash your hands often and thoroughly with soap and water for 15 seconds or use an alcohol-based waterless hand sanitizer.
- Avoid sharing personal and skin care items such as athletic clothing, skin balms, moisturizers, towels, or razors. Students should not share individual bars of soap and never wipe their face with a towel used on athletic equipment.
- Wash clothes, uniforms, towels, and sheets that become soiled with water and laundry detergent. Use a hot dryer rather than air-drying clothes.
- Keep cuts and scrapes clean and covered with a bandage until healed.
- Avoid contact with other people's wounds and bandages, and wash hands immediately after changing a bandage.

(cont'd on back)

Buffalo Grove High School
Elk Grove High School
John Hersey High School
Prospect High School
Rolling Meadows High School
Wheeling High School



Forest View Alternative School
Vanguard School
Newcomer Center
Project Reclaim
Young Adult Program
Community Education

- Disinfect computer keyboards daily.
- Students and teachers should report known or suspected MRSA infections to the school nurse.
- Seek medical attention immediately if a wound does not heal properly or appears to be infected.

The District 214 school system provides safe and clean athletic facilities and equipment, and we follow all cleaning guidelines and procedures recommended by the National Athletic Trainers' Association. The prevention of MRSA requires a community effort, so please observe prevention measures. If your child notices any skin infection, such as pimples, pustules, or boils, which are abnormally red, painful or have drainage, please have them checked by your family doctor.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the Cook County Health Department or your child's school nurse.

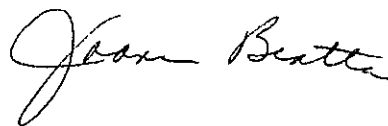
Sincerely,




David R. Schuler, Ph.D.
Superintendent



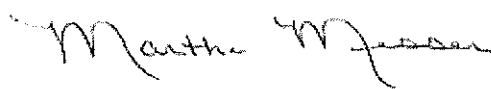
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