

CHAMBERSBURG AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT
435 STANLEY AVENUE
CHAMBERSBURG PA 17201



October 19, 2007

Dear Parents:

I am writing to discuss the health issue currently gaining considerable national media attention. MRSA (methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus*) is an infection that is resistant to the most common forms of antibiotics. It is most commonly seen as a skin infection that looks like a pimple and can worsen to include redness, swelling, pain and discharge. It is most often misidentified as a spider bite. This infection is spread by skin-to-skin contact with drainage from the nose of the person infected, or contact with contaminated objects such as a towel, clothing or bandages. This infection is treatable with the appropriate antibiotics.

Please be assured that the Chambersburg Area School District has always conducted safety trainings and Universal Precaution measures to minimize the spread of infections in our schools. We are continuing this proactive approach to maintaining healthy schools by reminding our students and staff about proper hand-washing techniques and the appropriate containment of potentially contaminated items and surfaces. We are in the process of purchasing hand sanitizers for every classroom and our teachers and school nurses will be educating our students on the appropriate ways to minimize the spread of infection.

Here are some ways you and your family can prevent the spread of infections including MRSA by following good hygiene practices:

- Wash you hands thoroughly with soap and water or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer
- Keep cuts and scrapes clean and covered with a bandage until healed
- Avoid contact with other people's wounds and bandages
- Avoid sharing personal items such a towels or razors
- Wipe surfaces of exercise equipment before and after use

Early treatment of MRSA is important. If you are concerned about a wound or sore on your child, please contact your healthcare provider. One of the most important things we can all do is educate our children about the proper hygiene practices as outlined above. Our number one goal is to ensure our schools are healthy, safe and clean environments for learning.

Sincerely,

Dr. Joseph Padasak
Superintendent
Chambersburg Area School District