

Dear Parent or Guardian:

Bed bugs are a problem throughout our community and can be found across the Midlands and across the globe. Though a few cases have been reported in our area recently, **no widespread cases** have occurred in our schools.

This letter is being sent home as a proactive measure to give our families the tools they need to thwart the spread and threat of bed bug infestation. Below is information on bed bugs from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:

- *What are bed bugs?*
Bed bugs (Cimex lectularius) are small, flat, parasitic insects that feed solely on the blood of people and animals while they sleep. Bed bugs are reddish-brown in color, wingless, range from 1mm to 7mm (roughly the size of Lincoln's head on a penny), and can live several months without a blood meal.
- *Where are bed bugs found?*
Bed bug infestations usually occur around or near the areas where people sleep. These areas include apartments, shelters, rooming houses, hotels, cruise ships, buses, trains, and dorm rooms. They hide during the day in places such as seams of mattresses, box springs, bed frames, headboards, dresser tables, inside cracks or crevices, behind wallpaper, or any other clutter or objects around a bed. Bed bugs have been shown to be able to travel over 100 feet in a night but tend to live within 8 feet of where people sleep.
- *Do bed bugs spread disease?*
Bed bugs are not known to spread disease. Bed bugs can be an annoyance because their presence may cause itching and loss of sleep. Sometimes the itching can lead to excessive scratching that can sometimes increase the chance of a secondary skin infection.

School District Five of Lexington and Richland Counties takes very seriously all reports of bed bugs. Any reports are immediately investigated and addressed. We greatly appreciate your efforts in helping us protect other families and our staff from having to deal with this issue.

Below are excellent reference sites if you need advice dealing with bed bugs.

<http://www.bedbugs.umn.edu/public-facilities/bed-bugs-in-school/>

<https://www.epa.gov/bedbugs>

If you have any further questions or concerns, please feel free to contact district officials at 476-8000 or communications@lexrich5.org