

{DATE}

Dear Parent/Guardian/Staff,

A student who attends {INSERT} School was recently diagnosed with methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA). Our district is working closely with the Nassau County Health Department to minimize any risk to students and to school employees. While your child has not been identified to be at any increased risk of contracting MRSA, I believe it is important that all families and staff be provided with the same information about the infection and about actions that can be taken to help prevent its transmission.

Staphylococcus aureus (SA) is a germ (bacterium) that frequently causes skin infections. Methicillin-resistant staph aureus is a strain that is resistant to certain antibiotics. MRSA was first identified more than 40 years ago and has steadily been increasing in frequency across the country.

Staphylococcal infections are usually spread from one person to another by close skin-to-skin contact, usually through contaminated hands. Community-acquired MRSA (CA-MRSA) most commonly causes skin infections (pimples, boils, or pustules) and can occasionally cause more significant soft tissue infections (furuncles or cellulitis). If medical treatment is indicated and an appropriate antibiotic is prescribed, almost all superficial skin infections heal. In rare cases, particularly in a person who has other medical conditions, more serious infection can occur. MRSA skin infections are usually not worse than typical staphylococcal infections in previously healthy school children or healthy adults. If you have any concerns about your child's health or your health, you should contact your health care provider.

The simplest and most important measure to prevent the spread of infection is to use good personal hygiene, which consists of hand washing, proper care of skin injuries and skin infections, and avoiding sharing personal items such as razors, headgear and towels. Children who do have MRSA infections should be allowed to go to school as long as they are not ill and as long as wounds can be fully covered by bandages. Environmental clean-up is rarely indicated.

I have included with this letter the New York State Department of Health CA-MRSA fact sheet. More information about CA-MRSA in schools can be found at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's website at www.cdc.gov/features/MRSAinSchools/. Should you have questions or concerns, please contact {INSERT}

Sincerely,

{SUPERINTENDENT OR OTHER APPROPRIATE INDIVIDUAL}