

BETHPAGE UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT

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Dear Parents,

Recently there have been a number of news stories regarding a drug resistant staph infection referred to as "MRSA," clinically known as Methicillin-Resistant Staph Aureus. While staph infections have historically been associated with people being treated in hospitals, these infections now appear to be coming somewhat more prevalent among the general public.

For this reason, and to reduce the possibility that any of our students, staff, parents, and community members would acquire this infection, steps are being taken to diminish the chance of any occurrence, and everyone can help:

- Wash hands with soap frequently. Last year, waterless anti-bacterial soap dispensers were installed in our Elementary School classrooms, cafeterias in each building, and other locations where appropriate. We are adding more of these dispensers, especially in gymnasium and locker room areas where physical contact could occur.
- Regularly clean telephone receivers, computer keyboards, and similar equipment with alcohol wipes.
- Do not share beverage cups, drinking straws, food items, towels, clothing, face makeup, etc.
- Keep cuts, bruises, and other wounds covered at all times.
- If you notice an unusual, reddened area of the skin, possibly resembling a "spider bite," have this examined by a health professional.

The best defense against MRSA is good personal hygiene, especially for anyone involved in close physical contact such as on sports teams. Our teachers and coaches will continue to remind students about the importance of good hygiene, and working together with parents we know that the possibility of contracting MRSA will be greatly minimized.

Thank you for your continued support. If you would like additional information on MRSA, please contact the school nurse, your family physician, and/or access the New York State Board of Health website: <http://www.health.state.ny.us>.

Sincerely,

Richard S. Marsh

Richard S. Marsh, Ed.D.
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