



JESSAMINE COUNTY SCHOOLS

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September 4, 2008

Dear East Middle Students and Families,

In our mission to protect the health and well-being of every child, every day at East Jessamine Middle School, we believe that it is of the utmost importance to maintain open lines of communication regarding issues which may affect the school community. Our aim is to provide accurate, up-to-date information to enable your family to take appropriate action to safeguard your welfare. It is not our intent to cause panic or alarm.

Late in the day on Wednesday, September 3rd, we received notice that an EJMS student has a physician-confirmed case of MRSA (Methicillin-Resistant S. Aureus), a type of staph infection which has become resistant to commonly used antibiotic treatments. **We are notifying you as a precaution and to aid in the prevention of the spread of MRSA.**

Common-sense preventative measures will lessen the potential of contracting MRSA or any other communicable disease in a school setting. Measures recommended by the CDC include hand washing or use of an alcohol-based hand sanitizer, covering all open wounds with a clean, dry bandage, and avoidance of sharing personal items including towels, razors, and athletic equipment. MRSA is transmitted primarily by skin-to-skin contact and contact with surfaces that have come into contact with someone else's infection.

It is not necessary to close schools to "disinfect" them when MRSA infections occur. Routine cleaning with an EPA-registered solution is effective at removing MRSA from the environment. Last evening we sent an extra custodial crew into East Middle to ensure that the entire facility was thoroughly cleaned. We will continue to review precautionary procedures and to follow CDC guidelines for infectious disease control at all of our schools. Please note that hand sanitizer dispensers were added at multiple locations throughout the school last year and we will continue to ensure that hand sanitizer is available to students and staff.

In accordance with Jessamine County School District protocol, any student(s) or staff confirmed to have MRSA will be permitted to return to school only if they have been cleared to do so, in writing, by their physician.

If your child displays symptoms consistent with MRSA, or if you have a concern about your child's health, please contact your child's health care provider or the Jessamine County Health Department. If your child is diagnosed to have or is suspected of having an infectious condition, it is important that you report this to the EJMS office immediately. Athletes who are confirmed to have MRSA will not be allowed to play contact sports until they have been cleared to do so, in writing, by their physician.

As always, please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or concerns. Thank you for working in partnership with us.

Sincerely,

Lu S. Young,
Superintendent