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for Quality Life**

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November 1, 2007

Dear Parents:

I am writing to inform you of a health issue that recently has received considerable attention in the media and is understandably a concern for parents. A number of school systems across the country and in Georgia have reported cases of students with a bacterial infection of the skin that is very treatable but resistant to the more common forms of antibiotics.

The infection is called Methicillin-Resistant Staph Aureus or MRSA. The skin condition most commonly looks like an infected pimple or boil and can worsen to include redness, warmth, swelling, pain, and discharge. It can be mistaken as a spider or insect bite.

I wanted to inform you that there have been two confirmed cases of MRSA in Floyd County this week at Coosa High School. The students are being treated by physicians and are doing well. These infections occur sporadically in the school environment, just as they do in all populations. Please be assured that Floyd County Schools and the Floyd County Health Department are using all available measures to prevent MRSA in the school environment. All principals have received and are using prevention information and are cleaning and disinfecting student common areas such as locker rooms, weight rooms and all restroom facilities on a daily basis. School nurses also are working with each school staff on this issue.

Please reinforce these preventative measures recommended by the CDC with your children to help prevent the spread of MRSA and other infections:

- Wash 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 as towels or razors
- Wipe surfaces of exercise equipment before and after use

Early treatment of suspected MRSA is important. If you are concerned about a wound or sore on your child, consult your health care provider. Floyd County Health Officials recommend that any draining sore or wound be cultured for MRSA. If you have any questions, contact the health nurse at your child's school or your family physician.

Health situations such as this can cause anxiety for children and parents. As parents and educators, we want to protect our children and ensure their safety. The most effective things that we can do are to remain calm, positive and reinforce good hygiene practices. Our children need to know that we are being proactive in dealing with this situation and they are safe. Please monitor your child's feelings and behavior for any signs of anxiety. You can get more information about MRSA and Staph infection on the Floyd County Schools web site at [www.floydboe.net](http://www.floydboe.net).

Sincerely

Kelly C. Henson  
Superintendent  
Floyd County Schools,