



# Laurel Highlands School District

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October 9, 2019

To Laurel Highlands School District Families, Students and Stakeholders:

On Friday, October 4, 2019, a bedbug was found in the belongings of a student at the high school. The family of the student was notified and the student was excused from school. The high school nurse provided guidelines and procedures to educate the family on how to eradicate the bedbugs from the home. In any situation that involves the exclusion of a student from school, the student must be cleared prior to returning to school. This procedure was followed in this instance.

Bed bugs are not a sign of unhealthy living conditions. Individuals can unknowingly bring them home from public places such as restaurants, movie theaters, and other infested areas in clothes, shoes, and other items.

Because of such public nuisances, all public organizations and school districts maintain an Integrated Pest Management Program to help ensure the management of any such infestations. In addition to the district's regular pest management procedure, the high school was closed on Saturday, October 5, 2019 for a complete cleaning and extermination application. During the cleaning, exterminators discovered no additional insects. The materials applied maintain a residual effect on the insects for an excess of 30-60 days. Therefore, the high school is safe to occupy as a few isolated incidents does not mean that a building is "infested". However, as unidentified affected students return to school, the pests, in this case bedbugs, unfortunately "hitchhike" to school in the belongings of the students and the cycle may continue.

To help break this cycle, the district is asking all parents and guardians to thoroughly check their students and belongings for bedbugs. In addition, we are requesting that all families launder their students' bookbags and dry them on high heat for at least 30 minutes. This includes coats, PE clothes, swimsuits, and gym bags. Finally, as an additional measure, students will not be permitted to carry bookbags, gym bags, or athletic bags into the high school until Tuesday, October 15, 2019.

In a precautionary measure, the building will be closed this evening for a second pesticide application. In addition, all district transportation vehicles will be treated as well. The district is fully aware that no families want bedbugs brought into their homes and are implementing all necessary procedures to help protect the entire Laurel Highlands Community.

Sincerely,

Jesse T. Wallace, D.Ed.  
Superintendent