



# ASCIP *RISK ALERT!*

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**Date:** September 25, 2008

**Attention:** ASCIP Members

**Subject:** **Communicable and Reportable Diseases - Updated**

In view of the recent media attention given to Methicillin-Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus (MRSA) infections and food recalls, ASCIP has received numerous inquiries regarding reporting procedures for communicable diseases and other such health concerns/hazards in schools.

Per California Code of Regulations Title 17, Section 2508 - "It shall be the duty of anyone in charge of a public or private school, kindergarten, boarding school, or day nursery to report at once to the local health officer the presence or suspected presence of any of the communicable diseases." Title 17, Section 2500 provides definitions and a listing of diseases required to be reported to the local health officer. In Los Angeles County, reports can be made to the office of Morbidity at 888-397-3993.

While Title 17, Section 2500 (j) lists the diseases which are reportable, some diseases and illnesses which are not listed may still be reportable under the definitions of "outbreak" or "unusual disease". An outbreak occurs when a disease has affected a portion of the population which is above the expected/baseline level for a geographic area over a given period of time. Outbreaks are relative to the subject disease. Unusual disease "means a rare disease or a newly apparent or emerging disease or syndrome of uncertain etiology which a health care provider has reason to believe could possibly be caused by a transmissible infectious agent or microbial toxin."

In the event that a communicable disease is reported by staff or students at the district or the school sites, the district should contact the local public health department to report the disease. In the case that the disease is not listed in Section 2500 (j), the district may inquire with the local public health department to determine if the disease is reportable under the definitions of 'unusual disease' or 'outbreak'. In Los Angeles County, questions can be directed to Dr. Bancroft at 213-240-7941.

Local health officers may request the school or district to isolate affected individuals, isolate rooms, notify affected parties and/or take other necessary actions to control the transmission of communicable diseases.

Schools may elect to ensure that parents are aware of the health concerns related to specific communicable diseases and, where suspect exposures are observed, develop a mechanism by which those parents might be alerted to such exposures.

ASCIP staff is available to assist in addressing potential communicable disease exposure concerns as they may arise.