August 15, 2014

Dear Parents/Guardians:

As we begin another great school year, we know you have questions about the status of Sacramento County Public Health’s (SCPH) tuberculosis (TB) contact investigation at one of our schools and in the surrounding community.

Public health concerns like TB are significant issues for communities throughout the state and across the country. In Sacramento County alone last year there were 84 cases of active TB. Children and adults can become infected when traveling and through family members or visitors who have the active disease.

In an effort to communicate strongly and clearly about TB and its impact, we have prepared the following information to answer questions you may have.

What do we know?

Right now there are no known infectious cases of tuberculosis in our schools. However, a Grant Union High School (GUHS) student was diagnosed with active TB in February 2014. The student was successfully treated, is no longer infectious, and medically cleared to return to school in April of this year. As part of the initial contact investigation, four students were diagnosed with active TB. It’s important to note they are also on medical treatment and they are not contagious. Another 120 students and staff tested positive for exposure to TB (latent TB). This means that their immune system has encountered the TB bacteria and has contained the infection. They are not sick and cannot pass TB infection to others. They are receiving preventive treatment so they don’t develop active TB in the future.

SCPH has screened 605 GUHS students and staff. Public Health Officer Dr. Olivia Kasirye has assured us that ALL exposure to the disease occurred PRIOR to March, during the time the active case was in school.

What happens now?

All GUHS families will receive an informational letter from SCPH about next steps and the upcoming TB clinic at Grant. We will continue to monitor the situation and work closely with SCPH. The next clinic is scheduled to take place Aug. 22 in the Auxiliary Gym on the main campus. The focus is on individuals who were part of the original contact investigation who did not return for subsequent monitoring and a third group identified by public health officials. TB screenings will also be available from 3 to 5 p.m. on
the same day for any student or staff member who wants to be tested. Everyone who is screened must return Aug. 25 so medical personnel can read their TB skin test. Since the original case in February, our District—in collaboration with SCPH—has held two community forums and two separate sessions with parents of students who had positive skin tests. Dr. Kasirye also met twice with the Grant staff.

In addition, we are working with two independent TB consultants on implementing a Community TB Action Plan, which includes:

- A Community Forum the week of Sept. 1
- A Student Health Fair the week of Sept. 15
- An Employee Health Fair the week of Sept. 22

Yolanda Mayoral Falkenberg, the district’s Family and Community Involvement Coordinator, is our contact for all community and staff TB related questions. You can reach her at 566-1600, ext. 50035.

We will keep you updated through emails, our website, School Loop and auto calls.

Please know that we are making every effort to assure the health and well-being of our students and staff, and we appreciate your cooperation in helping us to protect your health and the health of the community.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Steven Martinez, Ed.D.
Superintendent
General Information about Tuberculosis

TB is caused by a bacterium called mycobacterium tuberculosis. The bacteria usually attack the lungs, but TB bacteria can attack any part of the body such as the kidney, spine and brain. It is a serious contagious disease spread when a person with active TB disease coughs into the air. The air and the germs are then inhaled by others. Doctors say it generally takes at least eight hours over a period of time of breathing infected air in close contact with the person with TB disease to get TB infection, but it could take longer, depending on the size of the room and other factors.

According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, TB is NOT spread by: clothes, handshakes, eating utensils, drinking glasses, toilets and other surfaces.

What’s the difference between TB infection and TB disease?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Latent TB Infection</th>
<th>Active TB Disease</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TB germs are dormant in your body. This phase can last for a very long time—even decades.</td>
<td>TB germs are reproducing and spreading in your body, causing tissue damage.</td>
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<tr>
<td>You don't look or feel sick. Your chest x-ray is normal.</td>
<td>You usually feel sick. Symptoms include: a cough lasting 3 weeks or longer, fatigue, pain in the chest, coughing up blood or sputum, unexplained weight loss, chills, night sweats and fever. A chest x-ray and other tests are needed to diagnose TB disease.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You cannot spread TB to other people.</td>
<td>If the TB germs are in your lungs or larynx, you may spread TB to other people by coughing, sneezing, talking or singing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Usually treated by taking one medicine for up to 9 months.</td>
<td>Treated by taking three or four medicines for at least 6 months.</td>
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If you think you or your child has been exposed to TB, you should contact your doctor or local health department, SCPH at (916) 874-9597. There are two tests that can be used to help detect TB infection: a TB skin test or a TB blood test. The skin test is used most often. Depending on the time of exposure, additional testing may be necessary even if the first test is negative.

For more information:

Click [HERE](http://www.sacred.co/publichealth/tb) - Sacramento County Public Health website
Click [HERE](http://www.sacred.co/publichealth/tb) - More Q & A about TB
Click [HERE](http://www.sacred.co/publichealth/tb) - The TB Contact Investigation