

## **No Additional Positive Tests at Daniel Boone Elementary** *County Health Department Releases Final TB Test Results*

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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*St. Charles County*— The St. Charles County Department of Community Health and the Environment today released final results of Tuberculosis (TB) skin testing at the Daniel Boone Elementary School in the Francis Howell School District. Expanded screening of over 400 students, faculty and staff at the school, following one positive skin test in an earlier initial screening of one fifth-grade class and two teachers, found no additional positive tests.

The earlier screening was undertaken after a person with active TB disease was reported to the Health Department on January 4, 2002. A subsequent detailed case investigation revealed that the person was associated with Daniel Boone Elementary School, and further, that students in one fifth-grade class and two teachers were most likely to have been in contact with the active case and needed to be skin tested. On January 22, 24 students and two adults were tested. When the skin tests were read on January 24, one student was found to have a positive reaction to the test. The student is well and not

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suffering from TB disease and has been medically evaluated. A person who is well and does not have active TB disease is not sick and cannot infect other people.

Because of the one positive result, the Department of Community Health and the Environment offered testing to all students, faculty and staff at Daniel Boone Elementary School. Those tests were given on Tuesday, January 29 and read on Thursday, January 31 and Friday, February 1. All of those tested on January 29 had negative (normal) skin test readings.

If skin testing is done less than ten weeks after the last possible date of exposure to a person with active TB disease the testing must be repeated at a later date. The students and teachers tested on January 22, as well as any persons who were tested by their private healthcare provider prior to January 29, will be offered testing once again on March 5. Those tested on January 29 will not need to be tested again because, when they were tested, ten weeks had passed since the last possible date of exposure. The Health Department now considers the investigation closed. If the limited retesting on March 5 finds any positive test, that person would be referred to their normal healthcare provider for evaluation. They would not pose a risk since active disease could not have developed in the short period after the January negative test.

A positive skin test result indicates TB infection. A person with a positive test either now has, or has had, the organism that causes TB in their body and has developed antibodies to the disease. Those antibodies protect them from the TB bacterium. A person

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with active TB disease not only would have a positive response but also would be sick from the disease. A person who is sick with the disease may also be infectious and able to pass the disease on to others. Most people with positive skin tests do not have active disease and their bodies have either contained or overcome the bacterium.

After medical evaluation, a person who is only infected and who is without active disease may be put on a course of antibiotic treatment to destroy any TB organisms that may still be in the body. A person with active disease will be treated with multiple antibiotics for an extended period of time. The person with active disease is usually no longer infectious after 2 to 3 weeks of treatment.

TB is spread by coughing or sneezing and sometimes by laughing, singing or other activities that cause a forceful exhalation of breath. Repeated exposure to the infected person is usually necessary for another person to become infected and the germ must be inhaled. TB cannot be passed from an infected person by touching, sharing food or drink or from a contaminated surface.

Further information on TB can be found on the Department of Community Health and the Environment website at [www.scchealth.org](http://www.scchealth.org). Scroll to the bottom of the home page to the "Timely Topic" feature. Information is also available by calling 636-949-7400.