



June 9, 2016

Contact:

Jose Arballo Jr., Senior Public Information Specialist
Riverside University Health System—Public Health
Cell: 951-712-3705 Office: 951-358-5599

Email: jarballo@rivcocha.org

Barbara Cole, R.N., PHN, MSN Director, Disease Control
Office: 951-358-5107 Call: 951-906-9001

Joan Boiko, Communications Manager
Palm Springs Unified School District
760- 861-9023

Palm Springs elementary school student diagnosed with active tuberculosis

A student at Cahuilla Elementary School in Palm Springs has been diagnosed with active tuberculosis, and education officials are working with Riverside County public health representatives to identify classmates who may have been exposed to the illness so they can get tested.

The student, who will not be identified, has already been treated and is expected to recover.

“While there is some risk of transmission, that risk is low. We are working together to ensure that anyone who may have been exposed is tested as a precaution,” said Dr. Cameron Kaiser, Riverside County public health officer. “The testing takes only a few minutes, but can provide students and their parents peace of mind as they prepare for the summer break.”

Staff and parents/guardians of students who may have been exposed are being notified by letter and advised to be tested. Those who do not receive a letter from the Health Department are not considered at risk for the illness. The screening for TB includes a simple skin test. If the skin test reads positive, the individual will be asked to get a chest x-ray and follow up with an appropriate provider.

“While we don’t anticipate that any of this student’s classmates have contracted TB, we urge parents who receive the letter to have their child tested as a precaution,” said Supt. of Schools Dr. Christine Anderson. “The health and safety of our students is our number one priority.”

Cahuilla Elementary has an enrollment of about 560 students and Thursday (June 9) is the final day of classes before the summer recess. Students will be tested by their health care provider or through a Riverside University Health System Care Clinic.

Tuberculosis is a disease spread through the air during prolonged, repeated and close contact with an individual who is infected with active tuberculosis. People may contract TB when breathing air exhaled by someone who is sick with TB. When left untreated, TB can result in complications that can be serious.

TB is not spread by shaking hands, sharing food or drink, or via bed linens or toilet seats. Not everyone infected with TB bacteria becomes sick. A person with inactive (latent) TB cannot spread it to others.