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NEWS RELEASE *FOR IMMEDIATE PUBLICATION*

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ACTIVE TUBERCULOSIS CASE IN LOCAL SCHOOL

A student at Mountain Crest High School has been identified with active tuberculosis (TB). TB is a disease caused by a bacteria that usually attacks the lungs but can also attack other parts of the body. While it is important for the entire Mountain Crest High School student body and staff to be aware of this active case, only a smaller group of individuals are likely to have had close and prolonged contact and be at risk.

Dr. Prafulla Garg, Medical Director of the Bear River Health Department, explains, "TB is spread through close and prolonged contact with an individual with infectious, active TB disease. TB is spread through the air from one person to another, but it is not spread by shaking someone's hand, sharing food or drink, touching bed linens or toilet seats, sharing toothbrushes, or kissing. Despite the fact that active TB only develops approximately 5-10% of the time in an exposed individual, testing of exposed individuals is highly recommended in order to prevent the spread of the disease. TB is a serious disease, and proactive testing is necessary to help prevent further spread and avoid severe complications."

Mountain Crest High School and Cache County School District personnel have been working closely with the Bear River Health Department to determine which students or staff had close or prolonged contact with the student. Complimentary testing will be made available to anyone the health department, in cooperation with the school, has identified as being at risk for exposure. Students and staff with weakened immune systems are also encouraged to test and will be offered complimentary testing.

The Bear River Health Department will begin contacting and testing affected students and faculty at the school on Monday, March 13th, and Tuesday, March 14th. The health department will work with individuals based on their exposure to determine if follow-up testing (8-10 weeks) is necessary.

Individuals who are not determined to be at-risk and would like testing should contact their healthcare provider or come to the South Logan Office of the Bear River Health Department, located at 635 South 100 East, Logan, UT. Please visit brhd.org for more information or if you can't find the answers to your questions online call the tuberculosis (TB) hotline at (435) 792-6567. Hours of operation are Monday-Thursday 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., and Friday 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.

The signs and symptoms of active TB disease are prolonged cough, fevers, chills, night sweats, weight loss, loss of appetite, or chest pain. If you are experiencing these symptoms, please contact your healthcare provider or seek medical care.