FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

JCDHE Media Contact:
Barbara Mitchell, Public Information Officer
barbara.mitchell@jocogov.org
Jennifer Dunlay, Risk Communicator
jennifer.dunlay@jocogov.org
Johnson County Department of Health and Environment Media Line: (913) 477-8436

KDHE Media Contact:
communications@kdheks.gov
785-296-0461

Results of TB testing at Olathe Northwest High School

JOHNSON COUNTY, KAN. (APRIL 14, 2015) – Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE) and Johnson County Department of Health and Environment (JCDHE) report that out of the approximately 70 additional individuals tested for tuberculosis (TB) at Olathe Northwest High School last week, only four (4) people have tested positive for the infection. Health officials have called those with positive TB infection test results and letters were mailed to the homes of those with negative test results (no infection).

People with TB infection are not contagious, do not feel sick, and do not have TB symptoms. People with TB disease can spread the bacteria to others, feel sick and can have symptoms including fever, night sweats, cough and weight loss.

Individuals with positive test results will take a chest x-ray and begin treatment with antibiotics to kill the TB bacteria to prevent the development of TB disease. Chest x-rays and medication will be provided free of charge by KDHE and JCDHE.

“Early identification and treatment of TB infection is the key to preventing progression to TB disease,” said Lougene Marsh, director of the Johnson County Department of Health and Environment. “We continue to work closely with the school and KDHE in this investigation to ensure that all precautions are being taken for the safety of everyone in the school and the community.”

Blood tests will be repeated on May 5 for those contacts who were identified as exposed to TB disease during the spring semester of the school year. This second test is necessary as it can take up to eight to ten weeks for TB bacteria to show up positive in a TB test. Anyone with a question about results can call the TB phone line 913-826-1224.


###

About Johnson County, Kansas
Located in the southwestern quadrant of the Kansas City Metropolitan Region, Johnson County, Kansas is a community of choice with a current population of more than 560,000, making it the most populated of the 105 counties in Kansas, but traditionally having the lowest mill levy in the state. For more information visit the county’s website at www.jocogov.org.