In collaboration with the Olathe Public Schools and Johnson County Department of Health and Environment

I wanted to make you aware of a situation here at Olathe Northwest. The Johnson County Department of Health and Environment has notified the school district late Tuesday that an individual at Olathe Northwest was diagnosed with an active case of Tuberculosis (TB). While we are taking this very seriously, there is no cause for alarm or panic. Students and staff are not in any sort of inherent danger or harm and the safety of our students and staff is our first priority.

We want to make sure you have all of the information you need and additional information will be communicated on Thursday.

Individuals with active cases can potentially spread tuberculosis to other individuals. Medications are available to treat tuberculosis.

We are working closely with the health department today to determine individuals that may have been exposed to ACTIVE TB.  We will provide additional detailed information to staff and parents of students who have had close contact.

TB is preventable and curable. TB is spread through the air by coughing, laughing, singing and sneezing. The only way to contract the disease is by close contact (several hours a day) with someone who has the disease. It cannot be spread by contact with someone's clothing, drinking glass, eating utensils, handshake, toilet or other surfaces. Symptoms of TB can include a cough of longer than three weeks, unexplained weight loss, night sweats, chills, fever and coughing up blood.

Olathe Public Schools, the Olathe Northwest staff, the Johnson County Department of Health and Environment and the Kansas Department of Health and Environment are working closely together to investigate this case and assure that all precautions are being taken for the safety of all in the community, especially the students and staff of Olathe Northwest High School.

A forum will be held for students and parents of Olathe Northwest on March 10 at 5:30 p.m. in the Olathe Northwest High School commons. TB experts from the Johnson County Department of Health and Environment and the Kansas Department of Health and Environment will be on hand to present facts about TB and answer questions.

If have additional questions, please call the Johnson County Department of Health and Environment at (913) 826-1224.

For general information about tuberculosis go to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention link: [www.cdc.gov/tb](http://www.cdc.gov/tb) or JCDHE’s website, [www.jocogov.org/jcdhe](http://www.jocogov.org/jcdhe)