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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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HEALTH DEPARTMENT LIFTS STUDENT EXCLUSIONS AT BURNS PARK AND WINES ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

Student Exclusions Still In Place at Angell Elementary, Site of Positive Measles Case

YPSILANTI, Mich., October 19, 2007—Washtenaw County Public Health Department officials today announced that students it excluded from attending classes at Burns Park and Wines elementary schools may return to school effective Monday, October 22. The decision affects five students—one at Burns Park and four at Wines—who were told to stay home until the threat of measles infection had passed at the two elementary schools. Two students are still excluded at Angell Elementary, where a confirmed case of measles was reported on October 11. The CDC is currently retesting serum samples that a local, commercial lab said tested positive for measles.

“The preponderance of evidence suggests that the threat of measles has passed at Burns Park and Wines elementary schools,” said Dr. Stan Reedy, Medical Director at the Washtenaw County Department of Public Health. “While the CDC has not completed testing all of its samples from Burns Park and Wines, our analysis indicates that the evidence for excluding students from these two schools is no longer present. Unless the CDC testing indicates otherwise, there is very little chance we could see another measles case at either of these two schools anytime soon,” he said. “We’ve discussed our decision with our counterparts at the Michigan Department of Community Health, and they support our conclusion.”

Laura Bauman, Epidemiologist for the Washtenaw County Health Department, released the following rationale for lifting the exclusion order:

- Samples from the former index case of measles at Burns Park have retested negative at the CDC.

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- Since the index case retested negative, it could not have been the source of any transmission to additional suspect cases of measles at either Burns Park or Wines.
- Suspect measles cases at Burns Park and Wines have not been linked to any other known source of measles in southeast Michigan.
- Test results for suspect cases at Burns Park and Wines are still pending from the CDC. Based on clinical presentation and some preliminary results, it is less likely that these suspect cases will be confirmed as positive measles cases.
- There have been no reports from Burns Park or Wines of any additional suspect cases of measles.
- Children who have been excluded from Burns Park and Wines have exhibited no symptoms of a rash illness.
- The positive measles case at Angell cannot be associated with suspect cases at Burns Park or Wines because the incubation and transmission periods did not align.

“We have not been successful in constructing a plausible chain of transmission between any of the suspect cases,” Reedy said. “Most likely, because there isn’t one. Throughout this month we’ve concentrated on making decisions based on the best information available to us, while keeping the safety of our community’s children in mind. I am confident that excluding un- or under-vaccinated children from schools where suspect cases existed was the reasonable and prudent thing to do to protect and ensure the health of our community. Healthcare providers have done an excellent job of sorting out difficult diagnoses of rash illnesses. We’re pleased that additional transmission of the measles virus does not appear to have occurred.”

The Washtenaw County Public Health Department will continue to investigate the measles outbreak as additional testing information becomes available from the CDC late next week. Students excluded from attending Angell Elementary have been authorized to return on October 25, a timeframe in which the threat of measles transmission has passed. Angell is the last remaining school where children have been excluded from attending based on their immunization status. Suspect cases at Perry Child Development Center (Ypsilanti Public School District) and Bach Elementary (Ann Arbor Public School District) have been investigated and cleared.

“By being vigilant and enforcing vaccination requirements for children attending its schools, the Ann Arbor Public School District has done an outstanding job of keeping its children protected from a disease that still sometimes appears, despite our best efforts to eradicate it,” Reedy concluded.

For more information about the Ann Arbor Public School system, visit:

http://www.aaps.k12.mi.us/aaps.home/aaps_home

or contact:

Liz Margolis, Director of Communications, Ann Arbor Public Schools, at: (734) 994-2236.

For a County Health Department fact sheet with more information about measles, visit:

http://www.ewashtenaw.org/government/departments/public_health/phcontent/cd_fact_sheets/measles.pdf

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