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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MAY 3, 2001

**D.C. PUBLIC SCHOOLS ISSUE STOP WORK ORDER ON ALL INTERIOR REPAIR
AND CONSTRUCTION WORK AT ALL DCPS SCHOOLS**

***All DCPS contractors, subcontractors and Facilities personnel ordered to participate in the
Asbestos Safety In-Service Session to be held Monday, May 7th***

Washington, D.C. – The District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS) today issued an immediate Stop Work Order for all interior repair and construction work at all schools. All contractors, subcontractors and DCPS Facilities personnel will be required to attend an emergency Asbestos Safety In-Service session to be held Monday, May 7, 2001, before they are allowed to resume interior repair or construction work in any D.C. public school. The in-service sessions will be held throughout the day at Hamilton School, 1401 Brentwood Parkway, N.E.

“We are taking this extraordinary measure to assure the health and safety of all DCPS students and staff,” said Louis J. Erste, DCPS Chief Operating Officer. “Incremental changes alone have not been enough to prevent asbestos releases during the past month. It’s time for drastic action.”

This decisive action followed the evacuation of Park View Elementary School (ES), 3560 Warder St., N.W., this morning after inspectors verified the presence of asbestos-contaminated debris in the boiler room. The Army Corps of Engineers performed air sample tests that indicate the air quality is clear and safe for students and staff to return to school. Park View ES will reopen for classes on Friday, May 4 at the regular time. Classes begin at 8:45 a.m.

Park View ES was inspected as part of a new procedure instituted following the temporary closure of Savoy ES, 2400 Shannon Pl., S.E., on Tuesday after a similar incident. Beginning Tuesday night, DCPS-Army Corps of Engineers asbestos teams fanned out across the District to inspect all 10 schools in the DCPS boiler replacement program.

- DCPS will receive test results tomorrow morning for the boiler rooms at H.D. Cooke ES, 2525 17th St., N.W., and Murch ES, 4810 36th St., N.W. Neither school was closed today because their boiler rooms do not open into areas accessible to students. However, as a precautionary measure, tests were conducted in the multipurpose room next door to Cooke’s boiler room.
- Asbestos test results were clear for C.W. Harris ES, 301 53rd St., S.E., Ketcham ES, 1919 15th St., S.E., Malcom X ES, 1351 Alabama Ave., S.E., and Mann ES, 4430 Newark St., N.W. Work has not yet begun at Hardy Middle School-Fillmore Arts Center, 1819 35th St., N.W., and Slowe ES, 1404 Jackson St., N.E., which are also on the list for boiler replacement

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The Asbestos Safety In-Service Session to be held on May 7th is the first in a series of system-wide in-service sessions that will be regularly scheduled. Monday's In-Service Session will include hundreds of DCPS and Army Corps of Engineers contractors and subcontractors and their employees, along with approximately 1,000 DCPS Facilities employees. All existing DCPS work permits have been cancelled and replacement permits will be issued only to those who participate in the In-Service Session.

D.C. Public Schools is working with the Army Corps of Engineers and the D.C. Department of Health to assure that no boiler replacement work begins until each contractor demonstrates it has management controls in place to assure compliance with all relevant federal and District laws and regulations.

For additional information, parents may call D.C. Public Schools at (202) 724-4222 or *Answers, Please!* at INFO-211 (463-6211).

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