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Contact:

Eliza Cole

Community Health Center, Inc.

860-262-2546 or eliza@chc1.com



COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTER, INC. OPENS SCHOOL-BASED HEALTH CENTER AT VINAL TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOL IN MIDDLETOWN

**Middletown Mayor Dan Drew, Senator Len Suzio and Representative Matt Lesser
among dignitaries who celebrated by cutting ribbon**

New Britain, Conn. (April 24, 2012) – Community Health Center, Inc. (CHC) opened this morning a school-based health center at Vinal Technical High School to bring on-site medical care to more than 600 high school students. The center, located at 60 Daniels Street, is the fifth that CHC has opened in Middletown and is the newest on the growing list of school-based health service locations throughout the state. This is CHC's first health center in a technical school.

At a ribbon cutting ceremony this morning, Senator Len Suzio, Representative Mark Lesser, and Middletown Mayor Dan Drew all remarked about the importance of this new partnership between Community Health Center, Inc. and Vinal Technical School, stating that having school-based services available to students is critical to their success. Rep. Lesser presented a proclamation which was issued by the CT General Assembly on behalf of Senator Suzio, Senator Paul Doyle, and Representative Joseph Serra, recognizing the innovative relationship that will improve health outcomes and build healthy communities.

Mayor Dan Drew remarked on the union of two of Middletown's most vibrant organizations "Vinal Tech's mission is focused on advancing society, and that is also what Community Health Center does on a daily basis. The joining of these two organizations will benefit both the students and the community. On behalf of the citizens of Middletown, I congratulate you on your grand opening."

The school-based health center provides comprehensive primary care, including immunizations, complete physical examinations, medication management, intervention for acute chronic illnesses and long-term chronic care – with little interruption from the school day. Students without health insurance receive free services and are provided assistance in determining their eligibility for a public health insurance program, such as HUSKY. The center is currently staffed by a nurse practitioner and medical assistant.

"The school-based health center will offer our students an impressive array of services that we have not had the capacity to offer in the past," explained Richard Shellman, principal of Vinal Technical High School. "These services will help our students stay healthy and focused, and ultimately spend more time learning."

In addition to medical care, the center will provide access to regular mobile dental visits. During these visits, a dental hygienist will provide cleanings and oral health education and take X-rays. If follow-up is required, the student is referred to a dentist at Community Health Center of Middletown.

CHC has been working with local school boards since 1992 to develop school-based health services consistent with their requirements. Today, CHC operates a range of health services in schools across Connecticut; from full scope (medicine, dentistry, mental health) to single service, such as behavioral health, to a widely acclaimed mobile dental program nationally recognized for its efficient, effective outreach, enrollment, and clinical services.

“School-based health centers are a critical part of our work, because they allow us to reach more uninsured and underserved children and adolescents and provide them with the highest quality of care during their formative years,” said Mark Masselli, president and CEO of Community Health Center, Inc. “Having access to care allows students to adopt life-long healthy habits, experience improved health outcomes and possibly even improve their school performance.”

About Community Health Center, Inc.

Since 1972, Community Health Center, Inc. has been one of the leading healthcare providers in the state of Connecticut, building a world-class primary health care system committed to caring for uninsured and underserved populations. CHC is focused on improving health outcomes for its more than 130,000 patients, as well as building healthy communities. Currently, CHC delivers service in 201 locations statewide, offering primary care in medicine, dentistry and behavioral health services. For more information, visit chc1.com.

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