



Dennis M. Walcott
Chancellor

Kathleen Grimm
Deputy Chancellor

December 7, 2012

Dear Parents and Staff:

At the December 3rd meeting which the Chancellor held at the request of parents, many of you voiced concerns about the condition of the auditorium space. The Chancellor agreed to the parents' request that further testing be conducted. Those tests were completed over the last few days and, as promised, we have included copies of those results.

The results of those tests and the plan of action to address the issues that were identified are included. To summarize, none of the testing indicated that the drinking water in the school was directly impacted by the storm and the tests also indicated that the auditorium is safe for occupancy.

Moisture and Mold Investigation (Attachment 1) – The Department of Education and School Construction Authority hired Louis Berger and Associates, a qualified environmental firm, to assess moisture content in the materials within the auditorium. The findings indicate that several sections of wooden molding have moisture levels that appear higher than normal. As a result of the moisture content in the wood surfaces, the consultant has recommended having dehumidifiers placed throughout the auditorium to accelerate the drying process. All areas of wall surface, seating, vinyl tile and cement flooring were found to be in excellent condition. It is important to note that no mold was observed in those areas.

In the stage area, which was most severely damaged by the storm, there are several wood surfaces that show high levels of moisture and, in two small areas (less than one square foot each), light mold growth was detected. This area has been isolated from the auditorium by a sheetrock partition. The consultant recommends the removal of that wood paneling.

Plan of Action – Beginning this evening, dehumidifiers will be placed throughout the auditorium and will run around the clock until additional testing is conducted and the moisture level is reduced. Also this weekend, all wood surfaces in the stage area will be removed and the area will be thoroughly cleaned.

Wall probes and investigation (Attachment 2) – The School Construction Authority and the architecture firm RKT&B Architects completed exploratory probes in six areas of the auditorium walls. This activity was overseen by our environmental consultant, Louis Berger and Associates. The results indicated that there is no evidence of mold within the wall construction.

Asbestos Investigation – The insulation containing asbestos in the crawl space under the auditorium needs to be removed and the pipes reinsulated.

Plan of Action – The School Construction Authority and Kiss Construction started work on Wednesday December 5, 2012 to seal off the affected area. No work will be done while the students and staff are present in the building. Asbestos removal will begin Friday, December 7, 2012 at 4pm and continue through the weekend. An air quality test will be conducted in the area of the abatement, and results will be hand delivered to Principal Grill before 7 am Monday morning. This project will take two weekends (12/7 – 12/9 and 12/14 – 12/16). All removed asbestos will be taken off site by Kiss Construction. SAI Environmental will be monitoring the asbestos work.

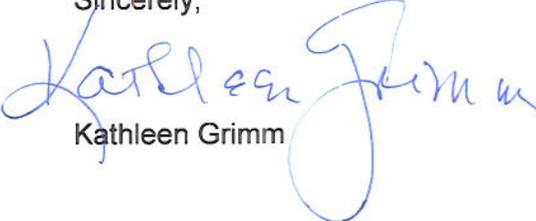
Drinking Water tests (Attachment 3) – The Division of School Facilities and the environmental firm, Precision Environmental, performed water sampling tests from the fourteen operable drinking fountains and the kitchen sink. The results indicated that two fountains – located in rooms 112 and 114 – showed slightly elevated levels of copper and turbidity (cloudiness.) This is not unusual for safe drinking water that had not been operable for a few weeks. There was no evidence of biocontaminants.

Plan of Action – We are following the consultant's recommendations that we check the main water system piping for proper grounding, and that we continue to flush the system on a more frequent basis (two hours/day.) We will take the additional precaution to shut down the two fountains while we flush the system. The quality of water in the operable drinking fountains and kitchen sink meets consumption standards set by the New York State Department of Health and the United States Environmental Protection Agency.

We hope this information will help alleviate any concerns that you may have and reassure you that the conditions in PS 114Q are safe for children and staff. The Department of Education and School Construction Authority will continue to work with the parents and school community and keep you apprised as our remedial efforts proceed.

We will work with Principal Grill to schedule a meeting with the school community in the coming weeks once we have concluded the next steps.

Sincerely,


Kathleen Grimm

cc: Stephen P. Grill, Principal