Department of Education
Carmen Fariña, Chancellor

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Dear Families and Staff:

This is a follow up to my December 19 letter outlining the additional measures the New York City Department of Education (DOE) is taking to ensure that the water in New York City schools is safe for students and staff.

On **January 25, 2017**, every potential source of water for drinking or preparing food at **I.S. 51 - Staten Island** (I.S. 051 Edwin Markham, 20 Houston Street Staten Island, NY 10302) was tested for lead. The laboratory results showed elevated levels of lead in **10 of the 99 samples** of water taken and tested from outlets in the building. A more detailed letter related to the testing for lead at I.S. 51 - Staten Island is attached and complete test results are posted on the DOE website.

In any building where lead test results show even one water outlet above the action level of 15 parts per billion, the DOE will implement its standard response protocol, which includes removing any drinking or cooking water fixture outlet from service, flushing all or part of the system to eliminate water sitting in pipes overnight, replacing equipment and re-testing after the equipment is replaced.

Each affected drinking or cooking water fixture at I.S. 51 - Staten Island will remain out of service until it is remediated and future testing shows that the water does not have an elevated level of lead. The custodial staff will also continue to flush the I.S. 51 - Staten Island water systems on Monday mornings before school starts in order to eliminate water that has been stagnant in pipes over the weekend and to ensure safe drinking water is available for students and staff.

Please visit http://schools.nyc.gov/AboutUs/schools/watersafety.htm to learn more about the robust protocol we use to ensure the safety of drinking water in each and every school, as well as to look up water test results for their child's school.

We will keep you updated on the remediation work at I.S. 51 - Staten Island, and thank you for your patience and support.

Sincerely yours,

Elizabeth A. Rose

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A NOTICE TO PARENTS, GUARDIANS, AND STAFF
I.S. 51 - Staten Island
I.S. 051 Edwin Markham
20 Houston Street Staten Island, NY 10302
LEAD TESTING OF SCHOOL DRINKING WATER
February 15, 2017

Safe and healthy school environments can foster healthy and successful children. To protect public health, the Public Health Law and New York State Health Department (NYSDOH) regulations require that all public schools and boards of cooperative educational services (BOCES) test lead levels in water from every outlet that is being used, or could potentially be used, for drinking or cooking. If lead is found at any water outlet at levels above 15 parts per billion (ppb), which is equal to 15 micrograms per liter (µg/L), the NYSDOH requires that the school take action to reduce the exposure to lead.

What is first draw testing of school drinking water for lead?
The "on-again, off-again" nature of water use at most schools can raise lead levels in school drinking water. Water that remains in pipes overnight, over a weekend, or over vacation periods stays in contact with lead pipes or lead solder and, as a result, could contain higher levels of lead. This is why schools are required to collect a sample after the water has been sitting in the plumbing system for a certain period of time. This "first draw" sample is likely to show higher levels of lead for that outlet than what you would see if you sampled after using the water continuously. However, even if the first draw sample does not reflect what you would see with continuous usage, it is still important because it can identify outlets that have elevated lead levels.

What are the results of the first draw testing?

Samples Collected on 01/25/2017				
Floor	**Function / Space**	**Room**	**Fixture Type**	**Sample Results**
01	CLASSROOM	000108	COLD WATER FAUCET 1	32.6 ppb
02	ADULT BATHROOM	000240	COLD WATER FAUCET 1	31.3 ppb
02	ADULT BATHROOM	000242	COLD WATER FAUCET 2	83.5 ppb
02	HALLWAY	000232	BUBBLER 1	109 ppb
BS	BOYS LOCKER ROOM	000B59	COLD WATER FAUCET 6	20.4 ppb
BS	CLASSROOM	000B12	COLD WATER FAUCET 1	21 ppb
BS	GIRLS BATHROOM	000B22	COLD WATER FAUCET 1	16.4 ppb
BS	KITCHEN	KITCHE	COLD WATER FAUCET 1	34.2 ppb
BS	KITCHEN	KITCHE	COLD WATER FAUCET 2	38.3 ppb
BS	KITCHEN	KITCHE	COLD WATER FAUCET 4	39.2 ppb

What is being done in response to the results?
Outlets that tested with lead levels above the action level (15 ppb) at I.S. 51 - Staten Island have been taken out of service and will be replaced. Each of the affected fixtures will remain out of service until remediation work is completed and future testing provides results below the action level.

What are the health effects of lead?
Lead is a metal that can harm children and adults when it gets into their bodies. Lead is a known neurotoxin, particularly harmful to the developing brain and nervous system of children under 6 years old. Lead can harm a young child's growth, behavior, and ability to learn. Lead exposure during pregnancy may contribute to low birth weight and

developmental delays in infants. There are many sources of lead exposure in the environment, and it is important to reduce all lead exposures as much as possible. Water testing helps identify and correct possible sources of lead that contribute to exposure from drinking water.

What are the other sources of lead exposure?
Lead is a metal that has been used for centuries for many purposes, resulting in widespread distribution in the environment. Major sources of lead exposure include lead-based paint in older housing, and lead that built up over decades in soil and dust due to historical use of lead in gasoline, paint, and manufacturing. Lead can also be found in a number of consumer products, including certain types of pottery, pewter, brass fixtures, foods, plumbing materials, and cosmetics. Lead seldom occurs naturally in water supplies but drinking water could become a possible source of lead exposure if the building's plumbing contains lead. The primary source of lead exposure for most children with elevated blood-lead levels is lead-based paint.

Should your child be tested for lead?
The risk to an individual child from past exposure to elevated lead in drinking water depends on many factors; for example, a child's age, weight, amount of water consumed, and the amount of lead in the water. Children may also be exposed to other significant sources of lead including paint, soil and dust. Since blood lead testing is the only way to determine a child's blood lead level, parents should discuss their child's health history with their child's physician to determine if blood lead testing is appropriate. Pregnant women or women of childbearing age should also consider discussing this matter with their physician.

Do elevated lead levels in school drinking water pose a serious risk to students and staff?
The risk to students and staff is low for many reasons. The elevated lead levels identified by the recent round of water testing are not likely to represent the levels seen throughout the day. The recent testing was conducted on water that had remained in pipes overnight. The lead concentration drops sharply after the first use of the day as stagnant water is cleared from the pipes and new, fresh water is brought in from the water main – which is virtually lead-free. In addition, for most students and staff, the amount of water consumed from a school water source during a school day is likely to be small when compared to total daily water consumption. Many of the elevated water samples came from fixtures that are not typically used for drinking, including bathrooms, slop sinks, and laboratories. Given all of these factors it is unlikely that these elevations represent conditions that would pose a health risk, however, if a person drinks sufficiently large quantities of water at those high levels over long periods of time, the risk increases. Nonetheless, if you are concerned about exposure to lead, talk to your doctor about having you or your child tested for lead poisoning.

Who is at risk for lead poisoning?
Children under 3 years of age are the most susceptible and vulnerable to the health effects of lead. Lead also poses a risk to the developing fetus. Exposure to lead may interfere with a child's growth and development.

What do we know about rates of lead poisoning in NYC children?
Rates of lead poisoning among NYC children have been falling. In 2015, 5,371 New York City children younger than 6 years of age were identified with blood lead levels of 5 mcg/dL or greater. This represents an 18% decline from 2014 when there were 6,550 children with blood lead levels of 5 mcg/dL or greater, and an 86% decline since 2005 when there were 37,344 children with blood lead levels of 5mcg/dL or greater.

Additional Resources

For more information regarding the testing program or sampling results go to:
http://schools.nyc.gov/AboutUs/schools/watersafety.htm

For information about lead in school drinking water, go to:
http://www.health.ny.gov/environmental/water/drinking/lead/lead_testing_of_school_drinking_water.htm

http://www.p12.nysed.gov/facplan/LeadTestinginSchoolDrinkingWater.html

For information about NYS Department of Health Lead Poisoning Prevention, go to:
http://www.health.ny.gov/environmental/lead/

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For more information on blood lead testing and ways to reduce your child's risk of exposure to lead, see "What Your Child's Blood Lead Test Means":
http://www.health.ny.gov/publications/2526/ (available in ten languages).