



Monday, April 28, 2025

Dear Westside Academy Families and Staff,

As you may be aware, Milwaukee Public Schools (MPS) is in the process of identifying school buildings in our district that require the removal of lead from certain areas.

As part of this ongoing process, we are writing to inform you that Westside Academy will need to relocate for the remainder of the school year beginning on Monday, May 5, 2025. Students and staff will relocate to [Andrew S. Douglas Middle School](#) to continue their learning and complete the 2024–25 school year.

MPS is taking this precautionary measure to address lead safety concerns and to efficiently make the needed changes to the building. While there is no immediate danger, a significant portion of the building requires lead cleanup, and this is the most efficient way to move forward. No children at Westside Academy have been identified as having elevated lead levels in their blood in connection with any lead at the school. The precautionary closure will allow for thorough stabilization and cleaning efforts to ensure a safe environment for students and staff to return in the fall.

Douglas Middle School is located at 3620 N. 18th St. It was refreshed in 2018 and is an excellent, lead-safe facility with a large gym and cafeteria and recently was equipped with new furniture and technology.

Teaching and Learning During Transition

MPS is working to make the transition to Douglas Middle School as smooth as possible for Westside students, families, and staff.

- Students will remain with the same teachers they have had all school year.
- School hours (7:25 a.m. – 2:10 p.m.) will remain the same.
- Student medications should be picked up from Westside Academy by Friday, May 2.
- Staff should remove all personal belongings from Westside Academy by Friday, May 2.
- If your student is already assigned a bus, they will be picked up from their assigned bus stop and taken to Douglas Middle School. A shuttle will be available outside Westside for the first two days of the transition in case students miss their regularly scheduled bus.
- If your child usually walks to Westside and you need transportation to Douglas for your child, please contact MPS Transportation at (414) 475-8922.
- If you would like to have your child attend virtual school instead, please contact your principal.

The Westside Academy building is expected to reopen on Tuesday, September 2, the first day of the 2025–26 school year. In the weeks ahead, MPS will survey the school for lead hazards and fully address them.

Start. Stay. Succeed.
Comienza. Quédate. Triunfa.



Recommendations for MPS Families

Families are encouraged to follow up with their child's healthcare provider or visit a pop-up clinic for routine lead screening if they have not done so already. For updates, clinic locations, and public health resources, visit milwaukee.gov/MPS-Lead or mpsmke.com/mpsleadreport. Additional resources are available at milwaukee.gov/HEH.

Families can take steps to reduce lead exposure at home:

- Use wet wipes to clean surfaces such as floors, windows, and furniture to remove lead dust.
- Remove shoes at the door to prevent tracking in dirt with lead dust.
- Wash toys frequently, especially for very young children.
- Provide foods rich in iron, calcium, and vitamin C.
- Run tap water until cold for three minutes before using it for drinking or cooking.
- Use a water filter certified to remove lead (NSF/ANSI 53).

To stay informed:

- Review the [MPS Lead Report](#) and access FAQs, general updates, and more.
- Visit the MHD Home Environmental Health webpage (milwaukee.gov/HEH) for up-to-date reports, safety guidance, and resources.

We understand that closing the Westside Academy building, even as a precaution, is disruptive and might be concerning to you. We will soon share information about a town hall meeting so you can have your questions answered. Thank you for your patience as we take every necessary step to ensure student and staff safety while maintaining a stable and supportive learning environment. We will provide families and staff with regular updates.

Thank you for your continued support of Milwaukee Public Schools.

Michael Harris
Interim Chief of School Administration