Building Bridges for today's students to cross into tomorrow's world with equity, innovation and optimism

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Grace P. Chan, Ed.D.
Assistant Superintendent for Finance & Operations

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Dear Parents/Guardians/Staff:

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.

Every three years, the District is required to test the lead levels in our water. Recently, NYS lowered the acceptable levels from 15 parts per billion (ppb) to 5 ppb. If lead is found at any water outlet at levels above 5 parts per billion (ppb), equal to 5 micrograms per liter (µg/L), the NYSDOH requires that the school take action to reduce the exposure to lead. The District must remove these outlets from service, and/or label them as "Do Not Use", to indicate that the outlet is not to be used for drinking. After these outlets are remediated, they are re-tested by Rockland Count BOCES Health & Safety Department to ensure the levels comply.

NYS requires completion of initial testing from January 1, 2023, to December 31, 2025. The District worked with Rockland County BOCES Health & Safety Department to conduct these tests. We have completed the testing of 101 outlets, 9 outlets tested above 5ppb were found.

Results:

The water outlets that exceeded the 5ppb standard are identified as 9 outlets listed below.

1) Nyack Middle School
Sample: 2023-NY-MS-9 Kitchen Double Sink Faucet – 14.6 ppb
2) Valley Cottage Elementary
Sample: 2023-NY-VC-2 Kitchen Faucet Triple Sink Left – 6.11 ppb
3) Nyack High School
Sample: 2023-NY-HS-2 1st Floor Kitchen Triple Sink – 6.25 ppb
4) Liberty Elementary
Sample: 2023-NY-LE-1 Kitchen Faucet Triple Sink #1 – 7.49 ppb
5) Liberty Elementary
Sample: 2023-NY-LE-3 Kitchen Faucet Island Sink – 7.13 ppb
6) Administration Building & Mountainside BOCES rental
Sample: 2023-NY-ADM-1 Kitchen Faucet Room #4 – 5.8 ppb
7) Old High School BOCES Riverview
Sample: 2023-NY-BRC-1 Fountain Outside of Room 12 – 6.03 ppb

8) Old High School BOCES Riverview
Sample: 2023-NY-BRC-8 Cafeteria Room 113 Sink – 12.4 ppb
9) BOCES Mountainside
Sample: 2023-NY-ADM-5 HTS-7/308 Sink – 33.1 ppb

Immediate Actions:
Based on the most recent finding and recommendation by Rockland County BOCES Health & Safety Department all 9 outlets were taken offline to allow for further evaluation and remediation by installing filters. As of today, filters have been installed in 4 of the 9 specifically, Valley Cottage, Nyack High School, Liberty Elementary (island sink), and Administration Building. Tomorrow, January 9, 2024, the remaining filters will be installed in the Middle School, Old High School BOCES Riverview, Liberty Elementary (triple sink), and BOCES Mountainside. Despite the filter installation, the 9 outlets will remain unused until Rockland County BOCES Health & Safety Department retests the 9 outlets.

After these installations, the District will continue to work with Rockland County BOCES Health & Safety Department and the Rockland County Department of Health to ensure that our testing and remediation processes comply with the current guidance. Rockland County Department of Health has been informed of these results and remediation, and they will be reported to the New York State Department of Health as well.

In the meantime, we will continue to be proactive relative to the health and safety of our school community and we will continue to comply with all applicable regulatory requirements.

For comprehensive information relating to lead-in-water testing, please refer to the following informative resources.

3Ts for Reducing Lead in Drinking Water in Schools

New York State Department of Health Testing in School Drinking Water Program Guidance Manual

Veolia Water Quality Report

Respectfully,

Grace Chan, Ed.D.
Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations