

Dear Leon County Schools Parent and Student:

Thank you for your confidence and trust in Leon County Schools. The health and safety of our community will always be our school district's number one priority. The purpose of this correspondence is to provide you with information on water quality in Leon County Schools. Although this matter has been covered to some extent by local media, we wanted to share additional background and evolving information on this issue as we feel it's important to you as a stakeholder in your school system. In addition to information contained in this correspondence, you may view a recent School Board conversation on this topic at <http://www.leonschools.net/wqdiscussion>.

During the summer of 2016, a group of researchers approached Leon County Schools with a proposal to test the water on our campuses for lead content. Although this testing was not mandated, LCS agreed to the testing and worked with this group. Water at sixteen school sites was evaluated. Our willingness in this effort was attributable to our genuine interest in and concern for student and staff safety.

As you may know, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) sets guidelines regarding the lead content in water. Tested water with 15 parts per billion of lead (ppb) require that "action" be taken to reduce this level of lead content. The initial tests of sixteen Leon County Elementary Schools (two per school) occurred over the summer. Of the schools tested, two schools exceeded the "action" level of 15 ppb. LCS immediately worked to mitigate the higher levels of lead at those locations. Afterwards, water from the two locations was retested and was found to be below the action line. Over the past month, LCS tested the remaining twenty-seven schools to sample water quality and to otherwise ascertain the general condition of water in all schools. The latest water analysis revealed almost undetectable levels of lead in the water in the schools tested. Levels ranged from 1- 6 parts per billion.

The Superintendent and School Board has initiated a Water Quality Assurance Program to ensure that our school district is taking all reasonable measures to ensure the safety of our students, faculty, staff and community. The School Board was very definitive in stating its expectations for staff as it relates to communication with the Board and the community. The urgency of ensuring student and staff safety was echoed by each board member and procedures to mitigate water quality issues including flushing lines and installing filters were strongly encouraged. Although latter tests revealed that lead in water in LCS is well below the EPA action guideline, it is the goal of LCS to further reduce the amount of lead ppb in water as low as feasibly possible.

The Water Quality Assurance Program will include the following strategies:

1. Engagement of a renowned water quality specialist, who is highly respected in the profession, to provide expert guidance toward the district's effort to decrease lead content in water;
2. Employment of continued monitoring, mitigation, and preventative measures to ensure that situations which contribute to increased lead in water are reduced;
3. Engagement of a plumbing engineer to identify existing or potential problem areas of the Leon County Schools plumbing system and assist with the mitigation of issues;
4. Using the 3Ts (Testing, Training, and Telling) for Reducing Lead Guidelines, train and otherwise educate school employees and parents on methods incorporated by staff to reduce ppb of lead in water (such as flushing and water run-off);
5. Regularly update the school and school community on the condition of the water by LCS school site via the Water Quality website: <http://www.leonschools.net/waterquality>.

The safety of our students and employees will always be the top priority of LCS. We appreciate your understanding, cooperation, and patience.

Respectfully,

Superintendent and School Board
Leon County Schools