

March 20, 2024

Dear Chippewa Families,

Okemos Public Schools remain dedicated to the health and safety of our students and staff, so after finding elevated levels of lead in the auditorium bathrooms at Chippewa Middle School, the district wanted additional spaces assessed for lead and other contaminants.

Last week, the Environmental Resources Group, our environmental testing partners, sampled water from 14 additional spaces including the main office, cafeteria, bottle fillers, bathrooms near the auditorium, four classrooms, restrooms, and the kitchen in the Senior Center.

Testing showed elevated levels of lead in the Band Room at 81 parts-per-billion (ppb), the B-wing science lab at 9 ppb, and the bathroom in the Operations Department offices at 10 ppb.

At Chippewa, the water fountains without filters have been turned off since students returned to school after Covid in March 2021, and students had been instructed to get their drinking water only from filtered bottle fillers throughout the building.

Our district limit for action is 5 ppb – although the goal will always be no detectable lead. The results can be found in the chart below and on our Environmental Testing [website](#).

Concerns about discolored water in the auditorium and gymnasium areas at Chippewa led to the previous testing in February. All four test results from the auditorium's bathroom sinks had elevated levels of lead in the report the district received on Friday, but in three bathroom faucets in the men's and women's restrooms outside of the gym, lead was undetected.

The district will follow ERG's recommendations to clean faucet aerators and run water for 10 minutes each school day to flush the pipes. Buildings constructed before 1987 have a greater likelihood of lead-based solder in pipes.

Chippewa Middle School Water Testing Results	
March 13 Testing Results	March 14 Testing Results

**John J. Hood**

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Cafeteria Kitchen Sink	Not detected	F 106 bathroom 1st draw: Operations Department	10 ppb
Bottle filler near A 117	Not detected	F 106 bathroom 2nd draw	3 ppb
Bottle filler near A106	Not detected	C 105: Aho	Not detected
Bottle filler near Senior Center	Not detected	Main office workroom 1st draw	Not detected
C 101: Foods Lab	Not detected	Main office workroom 2nd draw	Not detected
C 106: Capozzo	Not detected	Main office workroom 3rd draw	Not detected
Senior Center Kitchen	Not detected		
F 101: Band room	81 ppb		
Restroom near F 106	3 ppb		
Bottle filler near B 103	Not detected		
B 116: B-wing Science Lab	9 ppb		

We have been asking our staff to direct students to drink water only from filtered bottle filling stations throughout the building until further testing is completed. These bottle fillers filter out lead and other contaminants. Signs are posted showing where students should fill their water bottles, and where they should not drink out of faucets.

ERG finished testing all of the schools in the district this week. We prioritized the youngest students and the oldest buildings to be tested first. Structures constructed before 1987 have a greater likelihood of lead-based solder in pipes.

If you would like for your student to be tested for lead exposure, you can contact our partners at the Ingham County Health Department or your pediatrician's office. The blood test is accurate only 28 days after exposure to lead, according to the ICHD. If you have additional questions, contact the ICHD Lead Testing Team at 517-887-4479.

We understand concerns from our families and staff, not only those currently at Chippewa, but also alumni of the school, and others in our district. If you have health-related questions, our health team is ready to assist you at 517-706-5008.

The Okemos Public Schools will continue to take all necessary steps to maintain a safe and healthy learning environment that prioritizes the well-being of our students, staff and community. If you have additional questions please contact our Operations Department at 517-706-5039.

Sincerely,

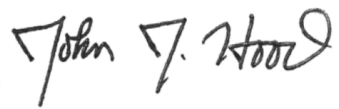
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A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John J. Hood". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "J" and "H".

John J. Hood, Superintendent, Okemos Public Schools

**John J. Hood**

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