

**CHATHAM CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT  
50 WOODBRIDGE AVENUE  
CHATHAM, NY 12037**

**OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT**

July 18, 2016

Dear Parent or Guardian,

After analyzing the results of our water testing from April and consulting with the Columbia County Department of Health, our safety officer from Questar III, and our school architect, the Chatham Central School District is now taking action to remediate the elevated levels of lead and copper found in certain water outlets within our schools.

This spring I wrote you to share that our test results showed several areas with lead levels at or above the EPA limit, which is 20 parts per billion, and a small number of areas that also showed levels of copper above the EPA limit, which is 1.3 parts per million for copper.

Most of the areas impacted are not typically used for consumption (such as bathroom or science laboratory sinks). Some of the areas showing elevated levels, however, are from drinking fountains or faucets that are used for drinking water or food preparation.

Based on our extensive review of the test results over the past several weeks, it appears that fixtures (mostly faucets), rather than plumbing, are responsible for any elevated levels of lead or copper. The water sources that showed elevated levels are widely scattered, and there are instances of faucets with elevated levels right next to faucets with very low levels. Also, the highest levels were in faucets that are seldom or never used.

Our plan is to remediate all water sources at or above fifteen parts per billion (.015) for lead, and 1.3 parts per million for copper. While the EPA and current NYS Educational Department guidelines recognize the standard for lead to be 20 parts per billion, we have chosen to use the more stringent standard of 15 parts per billion used by municipal water systems.

In order to ensure that the elevated levels are in fact being caused by these fixtures, we are replacing 15 fixtures throughout the District and retesting the water. In addition, we will immediately replace affected water fixtures that are sources for food preparation or student drinking water, and retest them as well. We are hopeful that we will have the test results back by September. Based on the results of this second round of testing, we will do the remainder of the remediation work. We expect that this will only involve replacing additional fixtures, but there is a possibility that more extensive work may be necessary.

In June, as we received results, we took immediate short term steps to address any results that exceeded the EPA standard, such as shutting off some fixtures, flushing others, providing alternate

drinking water, and/or posting signage. All of these safety precautions will remain in effect until we have tests confirming that each issue has been resolved.

You may recall that we set aside some funds in our 2016-2017 budget for this work should it be necessary. We are hopeful that we will be eligible for reimbursement of some of this cost as NYS very recently passed legislation aimed at helping schools address lead in their water, although it is not clear yet if we may be eligible or how much financial aid we may receive.

A summary of the initial results from our water testing in April, along with the complete laboratory report, is now available on [www.chathamcentralschools.com](http://www.chathamcentralschools.com).

Sincerely,

*Cheryl A. Nuciforo*

Cheryl A. Nuciforo, Ed.D.  
Superintendent