
November 6, 2018

Dear Dwight Families,

Thank you to the many parents who last Tuesday attended the information evening about the facilities challenges at Dwight. We know some of you could not attend, so we will attempt to provide a quick glimpse into the many steps the district has taken to address issues and concerns. I apologize for the length of this letter, but I felt the Dwight community and staff would want detailed information. Work has continued since last week and the Air Quality Report and Room 10 wall sampling is provided for your information. Please note the headings on the left of this report which assist to help parents and staff find a particular area of interest if you do not need all of the information provided.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Dwight was built in 1962 and sits on 31.13 acres of wooded acreage. Parent and staff concerns were focused on three unrelated issues.

1. What is the odor in Room 10? Staff are still investigating the source and working to eradicate the odor.
2. Is there mold in the building? The environmental assessment and air quality assessment did not find any unsafe levels of mold in the building.
3. Can the septic system odor be eliminated? Staff have made numerous repairs, and work is continuing to resolve this issue. A part that had been on order was replaced on Friday and additional work on the septic line is continuing.

The initial concern from Dwight Elementary was an odor in Room 10. The following steps were followed in order to determine the source of the odor.

1. Maintenance adjusted the temperature on the wall air conditioning unit because the setting was too low, causing extreme condensation throughout the room.
2. The air conditioning unit was checked.
3. The roof was checked for any leaks which could cause water to pool, stagnate, and produce an odor.
4. Outside the classroom, the courtyard was checked for any evidence of water intrusion. A repair was made on a rain water down pipe near the classroom.

5. All ceiling tiles were removed and replaced as a mitigation step, although no substance or moisture was evident.
6. With the tiles removed, the staff checked for anything that might cause an odor, such as animal decay. There was no evidence of any substance.
7. The Director of Health was contacted for guidance.
8. A painting contractor was hired to work on the room over the weekend and painted over the burlap-style walls from the 1960's. The odor did improve by Monday morning, but was not completely gone.
9. The Director of Health agreed that a professional company should evaluate the room, so the district hired Woodard and Curran.
10. Once Woodard and Curran were hired, the principal asked that several other rooms be checked.
11. The first environmental assessment did not find any concerning substance, other than some small mold splatters near a sink area in Room 8, customarily found near sinks or wet areas. The company cut into many walls to look at the cavity of the building and conducted a roof assessment to determine if there was any water intrusion.
12. Some mold was found behind a wall trim board under an air conditioning unit in Room 17. A picture was sent to Woodard and Curran for guidance on spot cleaning. Staff followed the appropriate disinfectant directions.
13. The community and staff remained concerned, so Woodard and Curran were hired to conduct an air quality sampling.

AIR QUALITY ASSESSMENT RESULTS

The full report for air quality sampling is provided in the link below. The numbers represented within the mold count and the types of mold present are in accordance with expected ranges and types of mold found outside and inside.

Please click here for reports:

- [November 6, 2018 Air Sampling Report](#)
- [October 16, 2018 Environmental Assessment Report](#)

OTHER DATA AND INFORMATION

FPS also researched student and teacher absenteeism.

1. Teacher Absenteeism- the data showed that teacher absences are within the normal range for all 11 elementary schools to date.
2. Student Absenteeism- the data showed that student absences were within the normal range for all 11 elementary schools over the past few years.

- 2018-2019 Student Absenteeism to date was within the expected range. The results show that 96-97% of Students are in attendance on a daily basis.

Sherman	97.33%
Mill Hill	97.30%
McKinley	97.02%
Osborn Hill	96.94%
NSS	96.84%
Jennings	96.84%
Stratfield	96.82%
Dwight	96.78%
Riverfield	96.75%
Burr	96.68%
Holland Hill	96.42%

- In response to a question from staff and community meetings, the teacher absences were cross-referenced by room number. The data showed no increase in rate of absence from particular classrooms.
- The floors at Dwight Elementary had surface moisture for several days in the beginning of the year. It was believed that the high humidity caused the “sweating” of the building. This was unprecedented for FPS, and several school buildings had similar issues.

FPS researched the humidity over the past few years to determine if the pattern was indeed higher than historical. The humidity was higher.

September	2016 Temperature	2016 Humidity	2018 Temperature	2018 Humidity
23	75	70	63	60
24	72	34	63	75
25	64	50	66	92
26	64	56	81	82
27	72	67	72	61
28	66	66	64	79
29	66	66	70	83

NEXT STEPS

A. Odor in Room 10

1. *November 2, 2018*
Samples were taken of the existing interior fibrous wall board and the glue daubs behind an old chalkboard.
2. *November 5, 2018*
Results showed that no hazardous materials were detected with the fibrous board wall.
The glue daubs showed a small amount (2%) of Chrysotile. Please click [here](#) for the report from EMSL Analytical.
3. *November 10, 2018*
Safe removal of the glue daubs, located behind the chalkboard, will be conducted this weekend.
4. *Before Thanksgiving Break*
Fibrous wall will be removed and replaced with a standard dry wall and painted. After the break, the room will be assessed again for an odor. It is believed that the fiber is causing the odor. Again, not hazardous mold or other material, but odorous.

B. Septic System Odor

1. *October 29, 2018*
The septic tank ventilation pipe fan actuator was replaced.
2. *November 3, 2018*
Performed another smoke test to check all plumbing systems for leakage and discovered an additional leak in the pipe chase between the girls and boys restroom.
3. *November 5, 2018 and November 6, 2018*
Part of the wall was removed and another smoke test performed. The leak is behind a wall chase, which must be removed in order to detect the exact location. Repairs will be made as soon as possible.
4. *November 8, 2018*
Pump out four of eighteen roof top plumbing vent stacks that are filled with debris. FPS completed the same process in 2017-2018.

5. *July 15, 2019*

Pump out and perform an annual inspection of the septic tank. If septic odor continues the engineer of record, Nowakowski, O’Bymachow, and Kane Associates, and the Town of Fairfield Health Department will determine next steps. The long-term plan is to eliminate the septic system and run a new underground sewer line to the closest Town of Fairfield sewage disposal.

C. Dwight Renovation Project

Long Range Facilities Plan Summary by Year

2023-2024 Dwight Elementary Renovation Funding: \$5,681,640

Includes mechanical means of fresh air and air conditioning.

Fairfield Public Schools is committed to addressing and responding to parent and staff concerns. We are grateful for the expert assistance which has guided our work, and we will continue to update the Dwight community as new information is received.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Toni Jones". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Toni Jones, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

c: Tom Cullen

TJ:mb