

May 12th, 2016

Dear Families and Staff,

As a follow up to the letter the New York City Department of Education (DOE) sent on March 23, 2016, outlining the number of proactive, ongoing measures the DOE has been taking to ensure that the water in New York City schools is safe for students and staff, I want to share some additional information about the water testing for lead at **JAMES MONROE HS CAMPUS ANNEX – BRONX**.

New York City's water is of the highest quality, meeting or exceeding all federal and State standards. The City regulates its own watershed that surrounds — and protects — our reservoirs, the water is tested over 500,000 times each year at various points throughout the system, and its treated to protect against potential lead leaching. Beyond these extensive measures, the DOE works with City agencies, including the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH) and the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), to ensure our students have access to safe drinking water in schools.

DEP has invested more than \$10 billion over the last decade to maintain and improve our water supply infrastructure. Between 2008 and 2010, DEP worked with DOE and other city agencies to identify and remove lead service lines to schools and other municipal buildings.

Beginning in 2002, the DOE partnered with DOHMH and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to test the water in DOE school buildings. Every NYC public school built before the 1986 ban on lead in construction has been tested. The vast majority are confirmed negative.

For those buildings that had even one outlet with results above recommended levels, we have been implementing a protocol, approved by DOHMH and based on EPA guidance, involving a combination of weekly flushing, equipment replacement and more, to ensure the safety of students and faculty. Flushing has been shown to be highly effective in removing lead from water because (a) flushing builds up the protective coating on plumbing pipes and (b) flushing moves old water out of the system and brings in fresh water.

The DOE is undertaking yet another round of testing this month.

The water at **JAMES MONROE HS CAMPUS ANNEX – BRONX** was initially tested for lead on **May 10th, 2016**, and there were **2 elevated samples** out of **82 samples tested**. This information is also available on the DOE's searchable database at <http://schools.nyc.gov/AboutUs/schools/watersafety.htm>.

As a result of the **2 elevated samples**, **JAMES MONROE HS CAMPUS ANNEX – BRONX** is on the Health Department-approved protocol in order to ensure our water remains safe for students and faculty. This protocol is proven to be highly effective in removing lead from water. For the limited number of elevated samples, the vast majority are only found on "first-draw," involving stagnant water that has been sitting in pipes for prolonged periods of time. That stagnant water is removed through our regular flushing protocol. We also take the highly-protective step of removing all equipment connected to one of the elevated samples.

In accordance with EPA guidelines, the flushing protocol includes the following:

- Flushing takes place following weekends and holidays (prior to student and staff arrival)
- Cold water taps used to obtain water for drinking or cooking purposes will be flushed
- The furthest outlet or faucet from each branch line will be flushed first for 10 minutes
- All other outlets on that branch line will be flushed until the water gets cold, or for a maximum of one minute
- Drinking fountains with refrigeration units will be flushed for one minute
- Custodial Engineers will document all flushing exercises and maintain a record in the school's Safety Log

Additionally, per above, all plumbing and fixtures that tested positive have been removed from service and are being replaced. Retests will be performed once the new plumbing and fixture are replaced. We will share the retest results with you once they become available and keep you apprised of all the measures being implemented at the school to eradicate the elevated levels.

In the interim, please be reassured that the water at **JAMES MONROE HS CAMPUS ANNEX – BRONX** is safe to drink. We understand that you take your child's safety seriously and we share that commitment to safety with you.

Thank you and please reach out should you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Keisha Warner-LoSasso
Principal