

Coleytown Middle School
Q & A from September 17, 2018, BOE Meeting

- 1. Is mold at Coleytown Middle School a priority for the BOE?** Providing a safe environment for students and staff is a top priority for the BOE. The District has taken every measure recommended by the Westport/Weston Health District, the Connecticut Department of Health, our consulting industrial hygienist, and the District Medical Advisor.
- 2. What types of mold are we testing for? Why do results only speak to eight different species? How do we know there isn't mold in spaces we can't see? It is my understanding that Stachybotrys (black mold) was found in crawl spaces. Is this accurate?** The details of our testing methodology and associated results will be provided by Mr. Brown, Certified Industrial Hygienist/President of Hygenix, at the community meeting on Thursday night.
- 3. What is the reason nine people got sick in one day?** At this time we do not have definitive reasons why many people became ill on Monday, September 17. However, we continue to explore that it is possible other air quality factors may have impacted the school, including a lingering impact of the mechanical failure that resulted in an odor generated by a broken rubber belt in the assembly related to the dehumidification system outside the school.
- 4. Have staff been told not to share concerns?**
No, to the contrary, teachers and staff members have been encouraged to report all findings of water intrusion, excessive moisture, and visible mold. They have also been directed to report any types of upper respiratory allergies, including:

 - a. Sneezing
 - b. Runny or stuffy nose
 - c. Cough and postnasal drip
 - d. Itchy eyes, nose, and throat
 - e. Watery eyes
 - f. Dry, scaly skin

The Superintendent has met several times with the staff to encourage them to bring forth any concerns and reached out the leadership of the WEA (teachers' association) to encourage teachers to share any concerns.
- 5. Has the BOE considered the harmful impact of running a diesel generator 24/7?** The generator is positioned a safe distance from the building and is vented into the open air. It functions similarly to a furnace on cold winter days. In fact,

heating oil is diesel fuel. Heating oil is diesel fuel that is dyed red to indicate that it is taxed differently than diesel fuel used for transportation.

- 6. Has the BOE considered the possible impact of the cleaning materials used to remediate the mold?** Yes, all cleaning materials used to remediate mold at Coleytown Middle School conform with regulations regarding environmentally approved cleaning products approved for use in Connecticut public schools.
- 7. How do we determine what rooms are tested?** Areas are tested where visible mold has been detected, areas of water intrusion, specific areas with notable reports of allergic reactions, and randomly selected room/areas throughout the school.
- 8. Are rooms tested before and after they are cleaned?** Initially some areas were only tested after they were cleaned. However, shortly thereafter areas of visible mold have received testing prior to cleaning and again after cleaning. Testing prior and after cleaning is the process currently being followed.
- 9. Are there industry standards for air quality?** According to the Connecticut Department of Public Health there are no standards for indoor air quality (IAQ) in environments such as schools (not including asbestos, lead, and radon). DPH also states, "there are no health-based standards for indoor levels of mold because there is great variability in both people's reaction to mold and in mold species themselves."
- 10. Is the whole school being tested or only areas that visible mold has been found?** Testing has occurred in all areas where visible mold has been detected, areas of water intrusion, specific areas with notable reports of allergic reactions, and randomly selected room/areas throughout the school. However, the current round of testing includes 58 separate areas to be very inclusive and representative of the various areas of the school.
- 11. Is CMS safe for students and staff to remain in the building?** Based on comprehensive inspections and the most recent tests for airborne mold, there is no presenting evidence that mold would prevent the safe use of the school at this time. However, given the recent events, in an abundance of caution, further in-depth air sampling will be conducted as part of an extensive review of the air quality, including a system of continuous air sampling that checks for other indicators of air quality beyond mold.

12. Have staff members been told not to attend Thursday night's meeting? No.

The staff has been informed by Dr. Palmer that they are welcome to attend any meeting related to the mold issue at CMS. They have also been encouraged to share any concerns and report any medical condition.