



March 20, 2024

Dear Hiawatha Families,

Okemos Public Schools remain dedicated to the health and safety of our students and staff, as well as to clear and transparent communication with the community. This week, Hiawatha Elementary's water was tested for lead and other contaminants as part of our district wide testing plan.

Most of the six samples were undetectable for lead, and none of the samples tested at levels higher than the district's action level of 5 parts per billion – although the goal will always be no detectable lead. The results can be found in the chart below and on our Environmental Testing [website](#).

The Environmental Resources Group, our environmental testing partners, sampled water from four classrooms, a bottle filler, and the cafeteria kitchen sink.

Hiawatha Elementary Water Testing Results			
Kitchen small sink	Not detected	Room 120: Davis	Not detected
Bottle filler	Not detected	Room 320: Garvey	4 ppb
Room 30: Shubel	Not detected	Room 420: Parsons	2 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.

Okemos is working to implement Michigan's Clean Water Drinking Act, known as the "Filter First Legislation," ahead of the state's 2025-26 deadline. The state is finalizing guidance on the legislation, which will include a Drinking Water Management Plan template, guidance for filters, and training.

John J. Hood

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Together...educating with excellence, inspiring each learner for life."

Our commitment to health and safety includes:

- implementing Michigan's Clean Water Drinking Act, known as the "Filter First Legislation" ahead of the state's 2025-26 deadline,
- a continued commitment to providing filtered water stations in each school,
- implementing an annual water testing schedule district-wide, starting with our structures built before 1987 when lead solder was still used to connect copper pipes,
- increased frequency of water testing at any of our buildings undergoing construction, with a focus on those built prior to 1987,
- email of building test results to families,
- building a portal to report testing results on the district [website](#).

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,

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

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