

March 20, 2024

Dear Bennett Woods Families,

Okemos Public Schools remain dedicated to the health and safety of our students and staff, as well as to clear and transparent communication. This week, Bennett Woods Elementary’s water was tested for lead and other contaminants in 10 areas as part of our district wide testing plan.

The test results from Room 107 faucet showed levels of lead at 219 parts-per-billion (ppb). It has been a practice in this room for several years for students to drink or use water from the filtered water station around the corner. Room 101 also had elevated levels of lead at 20 ppb. The test results from Room 102 showed levels of lead at 32 ppb, but after flushing the water for a few minutes, lead was undetectable. Decreasing levels after flushing generally shows that the water had been sitting in the fixture without running.

For the past week, students have not been drinking water from the classroom sinks, but they are used to wash hands. Handwashing is safe in these sinks, according to the Ingham County Health Department, when hands are fully dried with a towel.

Our district limit for action is 5 ppb – 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, also sampled the wash sink in the cafeteria, 4 additional classrooms, a filtered bottle filler, and the main office health bathroom, and those results show that lead was undetected or below 5 ppb.

Bennett Woods Elementary Water Testing Results			
Cafeteria: wash sink	Not detected	Room 102 - 1st draw: Ivers	32 ppb
Main office health room	Not detected	Room 102 - 2nd draw	4 ppb
Bottle filler near Room 211	Not detected	Room 102 - 3rd draw	Not detected
Room 101: Langford	20 ppb	Room 104: Matina	2 ppb
Room 107: Hussain	219 ppb	Room 118: Steinhaus	Not detected
Room 119 - 1st draw: Kilpatrick	Not detected	Room 206: Miller	2 ppb
Room 119 - 2nd draw	Not detected		

John J. Hood

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

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.

The district will follow ERG's recommendations to clean faucet aerators and run water for 10 minutes each school day to flush the pipes. Faucet fixtures more than a decade old may have brass fittings that leach lead into the water, particularly when the water has been sitting.

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, scheduled to be released in late April, which will include a Drinking Water Management Plan template, guidance for filters, and training.

Our commitment to health and safety includes:

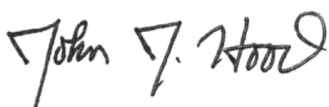
- implementing Michigan's Clean Water Drinking Act, known as the "Filter First Legislation" ahead of the state's 2025-26 deadline,
- a continued commitment to providing filtered water stations in each school,
- implementing an annual water testing schedule district-wide, starting with our structures 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](#).

If you would like for your student to be tested for lead exposure, you can contact our partners at the Ingham County Health Department or your pediatrician's office. The blood test is accurate only 28 days after exposure to lead, according to the ICHD. If you have additional questions, contact the ICHD Lead Testing Team at 517-887-4479.

We understand concerns from our families and staff, not only those currently at Bennett Woods, but also alumni of the school, and others in our district. If you have health-related questions, our health team is ready to assist you at 517-706-5008.

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,



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John J. Hood, Superintendent, Okemos Public Schools

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