



November 30, 2023

Dear Okemos Community:

The Okemos Public Schools remain dedicated to the health and safety of our community, as well as clear and transparent communication. In that spirit, we are writing to update our community regarding recent water testing at OPM and district plans to implement Michigan's Clean Water Drinking Act, known as the "Filter First Legislation," ahead of the state's 2025-26 deadline.

In response to observations of discolored water in a couple of classrooms at Central Montessori, the district conducted water testing. As a result of that testing we discovered one sample, not related to the original concern, which required action due to lead levels above the 5 parts per-billion-level. Additional testing of more than a dozen areas revealed two other faucets with lead measurements above the 5 ppb. (All hallway drinking fountains tested undetectable.) The district is following all actions recommended by the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE) and our testing company, Environmental Resources Group (ERG).

The water service line for Central Montessori is copper, and like many buildings built prior to 1987, it has lead solder joining the plumbing pipes. East Lansing-Meridian Water & Sewer Authority (ELMWSA) believes the recent construction in the building caused some lead solder to be released into the water supply.

We understand concerns from our families and staff, not only those currently at OPM, 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.

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.

John J. Hood
Superintendent