

Northport-East Northport Union Free School District School-Community Subcommittee to Board of Education



- ✓ Reconnecting and Revisiting NMS Environmental Concerns
- ✓ Soil Testing and Reviewing District Assessments regarding Northport Middle School-

February 12, 2020

Summary of Progress

*November 2019
To
February 2020*

Subcommittee Team

We are Committed to:

- ✓ Solving the charge of the BOE
- ✓ Working together as a Team
- ✓ Listening, following the facts, and making decisions by consensus
- ✓ Being consistent with Core Values
- ✓ Working in a timely, thorough, and comprehensive manner.

Vicky Buscareno	Trustee Parent (Ocean)
Joseph DeFranco	District Resident NCDOH, Environmental Health Program Manager. (RET)
Lauren Handler	Parent Ocean Avenue
Bob Howard	Asst. Superintendent for Business Parent (Pulaski, Parent)
Louise Ko	Parent Northport Middle School Parent
Paul Lageragen	Parent Environmental Specialist
Larry Licopoli	Trustee Parent 2 NPT Grads, Grandparent
Tom Loughran	Trustee (5 th Avenue)
Kristen Painter	Parent Norwood Parent
Nicole Repetti	Parent Environmental Specialist
Damien Taylor	Parent Dickinson
Jeannette Conroy Teri	Teacher NMS, Parent
Stacey Weisberg	Teacher, President United Teachers of Northport

Ad-hoc Team

P.W. Grosser Environmental Consultants

P.W. Grosser Consultant Team

Jennifer Lewis , PG

Senior Program
Manager

Heather Moran-Botta, SMS

Program Manager

Paul K Boyce, PE, PG

President & CEO

Contents

- ▶ Core Values and Beliefs
- ▶ Ground Rules
- ▶ Concerns and Issues
- ▶ Categorizing Concerns and Issues
- ▶ Inquiry Based Actions
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 - ▶ November 21
 - ▶ December 12

Mission & Values

Who are we as a school district?

- ▶ **Our Vision:** Excellence in all areas without exception
- ▶ **Our Mission is to** ---Educate, inspire and empower all students to pursue their aspirations and contribute as responsible members of society.

What are the Core Values and Beliefs that hold us together?

- Students are our first priority.
- Everyone can learn and grow.
- Students, families, staff and community are essential partners.
- We collaborate in a spirit of trust to make thoughtful and informed decisions.
- We value creativity and innovation.
- We challenge and support the whole child.
- We embrace the uniqueness of every student.
- We treat everyone with dignity, empathy and respect.
- We provide a safe, secure and supportive environment.
- We use district resources effectively and responsibly.

Board Approved as recommended by the district school community strategic planning team

---Ground Rules---

-We are all EQUAL: Working and Communicating as Peers -

- **We will work together on a first name basis-**

-Be Reflective and Open

- *I will work as a team member and not dominate discussion*
- *I will clearly state my personal positions and interests, but I am also committed to working toward the common good in understanding and accepting other points of view*
- *I will present my own points of view only and not those of others*
- *I understand that if I miss a meeting, I will agree with the consensus decisions of the team*
- *I understand that the work of the subcommittee is a work in progress*
- *I understand if my actions are not consistent with the ground rules I have accepted, the subcommittee team may ask me to withdraw my participation*
- **Decisions will be made by 100% consensus by finding the highest common ground**
 - *"I support this decision"*
 - *"I can live with this decision"*
 - *"I will support this decision in public and private and through my actions"*

Concerns and Issues

- Perception/ confusion that building wasn't safe. Division in Community.
- Discovery of initial issues was done or perceived in secrecy.
- Warehouse-original contents & handling. Perceived secrecy around how warehouse cleanup was disclosed, processed, handled and reported.
- Access to information is a problem. Need for consumable digestible information so that lay people can understand.

- No background-Historical study of what has been done before initial work started
- Long Standing Concerns
 - Water intrusion/moisture in building.
 - HVAC system.
 - Bus air emissions
 - Cesspools/leaching pools.
 - Heavy metal.

Questions on quality of data & results reported.

- Bench markers – for data – being able to make comparisons to what?
- No comprehensive summary of results.
 - Same consultants doing all work (interpretation, lab, execution of test).
 - Standards vs. guidance.
 - Fuel tanks.
 - Bus depot – maintenance of buses.
 - VOCS
 - Chlordane

Concerns and Issues continued

Air quality

Mold

Building Sites (?)

Bus

Gas tanks

Fuel

Outside container

Location of warehouse (?)

Information

Portables – mold, test

Misuse of pesticides

Tracking Illnesses

Nurse visits – compare NMS absences
to:

ENMS

Other Middle Schools

Elementary

HS

- Review other schools
- Norwood tested?
- State level approval guidelines
 - were they met?
- Locate source & remediation issues
- TCE levels
- Canister testing with sub slab vapor testing

The Team Brainstormed Concerns---Continued

Testing Plan Issues/needs

- Heavy metal cesspools!
- We need better understanding of protocol – who controls what?
- Who does the testing?
 - New set of eyes needed
- What is the Budget?
- New set of eyes
- Cannister testing with sub slab vapor testing

Other External/Internal ?

- VA Medical Center
- Brownfield Site (?)
- Surrounding Buildings
- Landfill plumes underneath
- What is true, what re the facts?
 - Gas spills
 - 3 reported
 - Tank failure
 - Testing done where? Where was it done?
 - Deeper soil testing?

Categories of Concerns

NMS Overall Facilities

- History of Site: Location of Bus Depot, Fuel Tanks, Outside Containers, Warehouse, Portables -
- Air Quality Issues- Mold, Pesticides, Chlordane, TCE Levels, Vapors, Smells, Pesticides, VOC's, heavy Metals.

External Environment Issues

- Grounds: Cesspool Wells, leeching pools, Ground Water, gas spills, tank failures, VA, Brownsfield, Water Intrusion, plumes, Bus Emissions,

Categories of Concerns

Data Display & Analysis:

- Testing Plan was limited:
 - Did not account for Historical Issues, complaints and medical concerns
 - Some follow up conflicts with DOH,
 - Confusion as to testing benchmarks and application to children. Standard v Guidance?
 - Remediation Questions
 - Limited Comparative Data
 - Type of Testing was questioned
- Timelines & History

Overall Communications Narrative

- Discovering initial issues were late in coming to the public's attention.
- Uncertainty as to the Warehouse cleanup
- District website is not clear, no narrative, hard to “digest”.
- Difficult to understand,
- No narrative to explain results, read, did not connect the dots, no narrative, hard to follow
- Confusion as to what is true and false
- Community is somewhat divided

Committee Inquiry Based Actions to Date

- ▶ Brainstormed all known concerns and issues past and present
- ▶ Reviewed all website documents and other document sources from previous years from a timeline perspective
- ▶ Conducted walk through of target area in School
- ▶ Reviewed and Studied Phase 1 EDR reports
- ▶ Convened with JC Broderick on Testing Plan, Scope of their work, and findings
- ▶ Discussed trust and transparency concerns

Analysis & Conclusions

▶ ANALYSIS

- ▶ The Testing Plan from 2017 to present addressed current concerns and did not factor Historical Data or Prior Testing Data.
- ▶ The district website and overall narrative was difficult to follow and did not clearly explain the sum and substance of the results and the context of the testing.

▶ THE SUBCOMMITTEE CONCLUDES THAT:

- ▶ Current and Historical conditions and factors be part of Comprehensive Testing Plan as per the initial study questions presented to the Board of Education on November 21,
- ▶ An all-inclusive Environmental Firm (Geologists, Chemists, Forensic Review, Toxicologists, Laboratory) would best serve, collaborate, and guide the subcommittee to a speedy, but comprehensive report to the board of education regarding the question of any environmental conditions that may impact the occupants of the school -children and staff.

Study Questions
presented
11/21/2019

Are there any current or historical environmental conditions that may impact the occupants of the school?

Are there any assessments that can be used now to assess the current air quality of the school/target areas?

Recommendations
Board Approved
November 21, 2019

That the Board of Education authorizes that the District request the Suffolk County DOH perform a follow-up inspection to their May 30, 2017 site visit and subsequent inspection report, as memorialized in the June 14, 2017 correspondence from the NYSDOH.

That the Board of Education authorizes follow up retesting of indoor air quality to follow the same protocols as the August 31, 2018 assessment, and air quality testing in additional rooms as per the recommendation of the Subcommittee and in accordance with NYSDOH protocols

December 12, 2019

**Recommendations
to
Board of Education**

That the BOE retain an Environmental Firm who has the capacity to facilitate appropriate environmental testing in response to Historical and Present Conditions that may adversely affect the occupants of the school

That this firm should immediately implement the Board approved recommendations and that such testing, as proposed by the firm, include but not be limited to Summa Air Cannister Testing, Sub Slab Testing and Soil Testing Parameters

The Subcommittee and Firm shall update the BOE on an as needed basis. Final Report shall be prepared for and submitted to the BOE.

Current and Next Steps

- ▶ Interviews for Environmental Firms on 12/10
- ▶ Board Interview and Appointment: TBD
- ▶ Debriefing Protocol with community
- ▶ Upon approval, firm will begin framing the initial Testing Plan and recommend soil testing parameters in January
- ▶ New Firm to meet with community
- ▶ Subcommittee will reconvene on each Monday, beginning January 6 or 13.

December 12, 2019

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The Subcommittee and Firm shall update the BOE on a as needed basis until such time as a Final Report shall be prepared for and submitted to the BOE.

December 12, 2019

Resolution Adopted
by
Board of Education

Whereas the BOE established a school-community Subcommittee for the purpose of advising the Board on matter pertaining to the Environmental Concerns of NMS including Soil Testing and reviewing existing testing assessments and documents, and

Whereas the BOE has approved at its November 21, 2019 meeting the study questions on whether any current for historical conditions may impact the occupants of the school, and whether there are assessments that can be used now to assess the air quality of the school in target areas, and

Whereas the BOE has approved at its November 21, 2019 meeting the authorizing of follow up testing of indoor air quality and additional air quality testing, and

Whereas the BOE heard the Subcommittee Report detailing recommendations and reasons thereof,

HEREBY BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE BOARD OF EDUCATION retain the ***P.W. Grosser Consulting, Strategic Environmental Engineering Solutions, (PWGC)***, effective immediately, for the purposes of facilitating an environmental testing plan that addresses Historical and Present conditions that may adversely affect the occupants of NMS, and

PWGC will immediately implement, as previously authorized by the Board, follow up retesting of indoor air quality air quality testing in additional rooms as per the recommendation of the Subcommittee and in accordance with NYSDOH protocols, and

PWGC will implement an initial Testing plan that shall include but is not limited to Summa Air Cannister Testing, Sub Slab Testing and other Soil Testing Parameters, and

The Subcommittee and/or **PWGC** shall update the BOE, as needed, on the progress of the foregoing until such time as a Final Report shall be prepared for and submitted to the Board of Education.

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