



May 10, 2016

Dear Secretary Brown:

In response to your letter, the Louisiana Department of Education Recovery School District ("RSD") is taking all actions necessary to comply with the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality's ("LDEQ") regulations on asbestos-containing materials in schools and state buildings, and is further taking all actions necessary to protect the environment and human health. The RSD acted immediately upon receiving notice on April 26, 2016 from the LDEQ of a potential issue at Einstein Charter School ("ECS"), responding that same day, and beginning an investigation immediately. Additionally, several meetings were held which included representatives of the RSD, the LDEQ, contractors, and the Architect.

The RSD authorized a refurbishment project in April of 2015 at Einstein Charter School, with significant work starting after students dismissed in May 2015. Reports from Spring 2015 indicate asbestos containing material ("ACM") in pipe insulation and some ceiling tiles. Subsequently, in July 2015, pipe insulation was properly abated with notice being given to LDEQ as required by law. During and following this abatement, air monitoring and sampling was performed by accredited personnel. The air samples collected and analyzed indicated fiber concentrations below the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act ("AHERA") clearance re-occupancy level (report attached). As such, students were permitted to re-enter the building in August.

Last week, upon receipt of the anonymous tip from your office that during that same time period (late May -June 2015) ceiling tiles may have been improperly disposed of, the RSD confirmed that the ceiling tiles were removed after students had been dismissed for the summer. Subsequent to the time frame that the ceiling tiles may have been removed, air samples were analyzed per the previous paragraphs. These air samples did not show hazardous levels of asbestos. As such, we knew the building was safe for students to return in Fall 2015.

Regardless, the RSD took immediate steps to further independently test the ECS facility. That testing began this past Saturday, and preliminary verbal results have just become available. These preliminary verbal results indicate, as your letter states, that a total of 40 samples were taken. The expert conducting the testing verbally reported that of 15 of those samples, 13 of them tested positive. However, there are two issues of note. First, only one of the 13 samples tested positively for the type of asbestos found in the ceiling tiles in question. This particular sample was found above the drop ceiling area on top of a pipe in the mechanical space. Second, these findings are preliminary, and provide no indication of whether the positive tests indicate concentrations above the Asbestos Hazard Emergency

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Response Act ("AHERA") clearance re-occupancy level.

Further, it is important to note that the presence of asbestos on high, flat surfaces, which is where all sampling was conducted this weekend, does not reflect actual airborne, friable asbestos in the environment. There is no reliable information in the professional literature that correlates surface asbestos contamination to airborne, friable asbestos fiber concentrations. In an effort to determine air quality conditions, the RSD arranged for and is proceeding with air monitoring beginning today, May 9, 2016. The results from the air testing are expected to be available on or about May 11, 2016 and will immediately be made available to the LDEQ. The RSD takes its responsibility to protect the environment and human health, very seriously, which is why it has proceeded with arranging for the air monitoring immediately upon receipt of the initial verbal results.

In order to ensure that no students or staff are exposed to the one area in which asbestos corresponding to the type found in ceiling tiles was present, the RSD, in partnership with the ECS, has already chosen to close the school for today and tomorrow until the test results are finalized. The RSD is also committed to working on a complete remediation plan in partnership with DEQ.

We are committed to continuing this effort to ensure the safety of our students, and will keep your office apprised of all significant developments, as they occur.

Sincerely,



Patrick Dobard
Superintendent
Recovery School District