

August 31, 2017

Dr. Bill Wise, Superintendent
Southwestern City Schools
3805 Marlane Dr.
Grove City, Ohio 43123

Dear Dr. Wise:

Franklin County Public Health (FCPH) recognizes the importance of a healthy and safe school environment. We are committed to assisting all schools in our jurisdiction in inspecting, assessing, improving, and maintaining the environmental health of their facilities, as well as making recommendations for corrective action.

Pursuant to Ohio Revised Code 3707.26 (granting legal authority to local boards of health to perform school inspections), and per your school administration's request, Franklin County Public Health performed a consultative inspection/assessment of Buckeye Woods Elementary School on August 30, 2017 in regards to indoor air quality concerns expressed by your office.

Lawhon & Associates, Inc., an environmental consulting and engineering services firm, was contracted by your school district to provide an indoor air quality assessment on August 25, 2017. A copy of this report was reviewed by the health department. The report makes note of three classrooms that had significantly elevated airborne mold concentrations of *Aspergillus/Penicillium* (Mrs. Bennett's Office – outside Room 103, Room 103, and Room 207).

The inspection/assessment conducted by FCPH on August 30, 2017 focused on the above mentioned three rooms but did include a general walk through of the facility. At the time of the inspection/assessment a noticeable odor of some kind was detectable in the common hallway, especially in Rooms 205, 207 as well as the area above the drop ceiling in room 103. Upon further investigation, this department was unable to identify a source causing the odor. Also noted, several of the metal ceiling tracts which the air returns rested on were rusted, possibly indicating excessive moisture/condensation. Based on observations and findings during the inspection/assessment, the following is a list of recommendations:

- Remove any/all obstructions blocking the air supply lines/air returns in each classroom to insure system provided adequate ventilation to prevent reasonable complaints and to remove/dilute contaminants within the capacity of the system.

- Develop an HVAC maintenance plan and written protocol establishing a regular schedule for cleaning, changing filters, and inspection. Clean air intake/return covers regularly to reduce/prevent dust and dirt accumulation.
- Only rugs/carpets supplied by the school should be used in classrooms. The use of a HEPA (high efficiency particulate arrestance) filter vacuum is recommended for daily vacuuming/cleaning of rugs/carpets.
- Remove any/all foam, puzzle-piece floor mats, and/or any other possible slip, trip, and/or fall hazards from classrooms.
- Routinely monitor relative humidity levels in rooms and continue the use of dehumidifiers as needed.
- Routinely monitor and clean particulate accumulation on/in the individual HVAC units located in each classroom.
- Conduct further investigation into the cause of the odor in areas previously noted.
- Take all steps necessary to reduce/remove clutter, piles of accumulated materials, and cardboard storage containers. All storage containers should be routinely cleaned to prevent/reduce dust and dirt accumulation.

According to your office, Lawhon & Associates, Inc. is scheduled to perform additional indoor air quality sampling/monitoring. Following any and all recommendations should help in reducing potential allergy and asthma triggers, ultimately improving the indoor air quality in the building. Please send copies of future reports to FCPH.

Sincerely,

Jeff Gibbs, R.S.
Environmental Health Division Manager

JG/jf

Cc: Joe Mazzola, Health Commissioner
Nichole Lemin, Environmental Health Director
David Stewart, Deputy Superintendent
Jenniffer Kauffeld, Principal
Main File