



February 2, 2020

Dear Hopkinson School Community,

As was previously communicated, the Office of Environmental Management & Services discovered several imminent hazards related to damaged asbestos-containing materials at the school, including in Room S1, the cafeteria, and the counselor's office. All areas were immediately closed off to students and staff. Testing in the cafeteria and counselor's office indicated the areas were safe for re-occupancy by students and staff. Work in Room S1 has been completed, but the room remains closed until testing is complete and indicates students and staff can re-occupy the space.

However, yesterday evening, Saturday, Feb. 1, the Philadelphia Federation of Teachers (PFT) raised a concern about work conducted last summer to replace ceiling tile in several areas throughout the school and the *possibility* that asbestos-containing material above those tiles may have been disturbed in the process.

With the safety of students and staff in mind, the District will be conducting testing in the building starting on Monday, February 3. Two independent testing companies will work with the District to establish testing areas to monitor for the presence of asbestos. The PFT will be invited to work with us on the process and all results will be reviewed with them.

**In order to ensure testing can take place and results confirm the school is safe for students and staff, Hopkinson will be closed tomorrow, Monday, Feb. 3 and Tuesday, Feb. 4. Our goal is for students and staff to return to either Hopkinson or an alternate location on Wednesday, Feb. 5. Grab-and-go breakfast and lunch meals will both be available for pickup on Monday and Tuesday from 7:30-9:30 a.m. at the Little School House.**

We realize that the issue of the work completed this summer is a serious matter that needs investigation by the District. Please know the protocol that allowed such activity to occur has been changed. Environmental conditions above any ceiling tiles will now be fully assessed before any tile replacement work begins.

We apologize for the inconvenience the temporary closure may cause. We feel it is necessary to take this action to ensure the health and safety of both students and staff. We will update you tomorrow and on Tuesday regarding our progress to either reopen Hopkinson or to activate a temporary relocation plan so teaching and learning can resume. If you have any additional questions or concerns, please email [environmental@philasd.org](mailto:environmental@philasd.org). Thank you for your flexibility during this time.

Sincerely,  
Superintendent William Hite

