

November 21, 2024

Dear Whittier Elementary School Parents and Families,

At DC Public Schools (DCPS), the health and safety of our school communities is paramount. I am writing to share indoor air quality (IAQ) results from an evaluation performed in several classrooms.

Background:

Following mold concerns last month, the Department of General Services (DGS) deployed Soil and Land Use Technology, Inc. (SaLUT), a Certified Industrial Hygienist (CIH), to conduct visual inspections, thermal imaging, and air sampling of classrooms 102B, 103, 107, 104, 115, and 204.

Inspection:

Visual inspections for mold are the primary way of detecting and evaluating mold growth and making informed decisions for remediation strategies. The inspection also assesses moisture sources, water damage, discoloration, musty odors, and any visible signs of mold growth. No active water intrusion or visible mold was observed in the majority of the classrooms, including Classroom 102B, Classroom 103, Classroom 107, Classroom 104, and Classroom 204. Observations of those classrooms are noted in the table below.

Table 1: Observations

Date	Room	Observations
October 30, 2024	Classroom 102B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No sign of active water intrusion. • No sign of moisture sources. • No sign of visible mold. • Missing ceiling tiles. • Ceiling tiles buckling.
October 30, 2024	Classroom 103	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No sign of active water intrusion. • No sign of moisture sources. • No sign of visible mold.
October 30, 2024	Classroom 107	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No sign of active water intrusion. • No sign of moisture sources. • No sign of visible mold.
October 30, 2024	Classroom 104	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No sign of active water intrusion. • No sign of moisture sources. • No sign of visible mold.
October 30, 2024	Classroom 204	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No sign of active water intrusion. • No sign of moisture sources. • No sign of visible mold.

Thermal Imaging:

Thermal imaging is a powerful tool for detecting hidden areas of water intrusion and preventing future mold growth. In Classroom 115, a forward-looking infrared (FLIR) thermal imagery camera detected evidence of an active water leak, which is being addressed by contracted services. No visible mold was found in this area, but the leak will be repaired to prevent future mold growth. Observations for classroom 115 are noted below.

Date	Room	Observations
October 30, 2024	Classroom 115	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thermal images indicated that there is an active water leak. Contract services is working to rectify this. • No sign of moisture sources. • No sign of visible mold.

Assessment Conclusion:

SalUT confirmed that the observations made during the assessments determined no mold growth and classroom 115 is safe for occupancy. DGS is working to complete the necessary leak repairs, including ensuring it is effective to prevent any future mold issues or concerns.

Building Walkthrough:

Additionally, earlier this month, members from DCPS' Facilities and Engagement teams joined DGS, Principal Johnson, Whittier Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) leaders, and local Ward 4 representatives on a walkthrough of the building. During the walkthrough, we addressed and discussed many of the work orders and general building conditions, including an overview of 24 work orders that had recently been closed out.

We are committed to addressing the findings raised during the walkthrough, and we will work to ensure proper work orders are entered. DCPS' Director of Work Order Management will continue to partner with DGS to confirm completion and close out of the necessary work.

Thank you for your continued support. If you have any questions, please contact DCPS' Manager of Community Affairs and Engagement, Sharona Robinson, at Sharona.Robinson@k12.dc.gov.

Sincerely,



Lisa D. Putman
Chief, Operations
DC Public Schools