March 19, 2019

Dear Parents and Guardians,

On January 31, 2019, Nova Environmental, Inc. performed extensive diagnostic testing of the indoor air quality at Sunset Lake Elementary School. The test was conducted after staff members expressed concern that an employee illness could be linked to a former employee's illness in the same workspace, and that problems with the indoor air quality could have caused the sickness. While there were no obvious signs of poor indoor air quality, the District requested a thorough investigation out of an abundance of caution and respect for staff concerns.

Nova Environmental is an Ann Arbor firm with more than thirty years of experience in providing environmental testing, consultation and training services to a wide range of clients throughout the State of Michigan. They are experts in their field.

The investigation consisted of a visual inspection of the classroom along with air sampling to determine airborne concentrations of mold and fungal spores as well as the presence of various chemical contaminants, including volatile organic compounds and other chemicals. The visual inspection did not identify any obvious problem areas, and air sampling did not detect any harmful levels of contaminants.

In the spirit of transparency, a complete copy of the environmental report is attached for your review. Even if you are unfamiliar with how to read and interpret the detailed sampling results, we hope you will find value in the narrative portions of the report. To further address any concerns you may have, we invite you to speak with our environmental consultant, Mr. Kary Amin, directly. Mr. Amin will be present at Sunset Lake Elementary on Monday, March 25th from 7:30 a.m. until 6:00 p.m. During this time, he will be available to meet with concerned staff, and we are happy to extend that opportunity to you as well.

If you have any questions or would like to speak with the environmental expert, please call 269-321-1005 to schedule an appointment. If you have any questions regarding the air quality inspection or the attached results, please email Stephen Goss at SGoss@vicksburgschools.org.

We want to allay any fears that the air quality is unhealthy and ensure our community and staff that Vicksburg Community Schools will do anything possible to provide a safe learning environment. It is essential for us to rule out any unsafe conditions and to address them immediately.

Vicksburg Community Schools often states that school safety is a top priority. This commitment to school safety extends to safe air, safe water, and safe food. In September of last year, we investigated all drinking water in VCS and were relieved to find no harmful levels of PFAS compounds. All samples taken from water supply sources for our campuses came back with no detectable levels for any of the tested compounds. As part of the district’s safety protocols, VCS periodically checks the water and air quality of its buildings.

While we are pleased to report that the air quality test also reported safe levels, we are saddened that one of our own VCS family members has become so ill. If unexplained illness or suspicion of poor air
quality, unsafe water or other conditions occur, we follow our safety protocols and inform our employees and community if any environmental threats arise. We don’t want any of our students or employees to become ill and carefully watch for conditions we have control over to keep them healthy.

As a reminder, the results of water testing for PFAS can be found at this link: https://www.michigan.gov/pfasresponse/0,9038,7-365-86510_87918-474941--,00.html. Our schools with wells were tested separately, while schools connected to a municipal water supply, including Sunset Lake Elementary School, were covered by the municipality’s test, in this case, the Village of Vicksburg. There were no detectable levels of harmful compounds in any of the water tests.

We appreciate your assistance in sharing this information and welcome any questions you may have about our safety procedures.

Sincerely,

Keevin O’Neill, Superintendent
Stephen Goss, Assistant Superintendent