

BALTIMORE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Verletta White ♦ Interim Superintendent ♦ 6901 North Charles Street ♦ Towson, MD ♦ 21204

September 21, 2018

Dear BCPS Family,

In Baltimore County Public Schools (BCPS), we take the health of our students and staff extremely seriously. Without being required to do so, BCPS has tested school drinking fountains for lead since 2016. What has changed is that the state has established new regulations regarding lead testing for drinking water in schools. House Bill 270 was signed into law on May 4, 2017, and COMAR 26.16.07, *Lead in Drinking Water – Public and Nonpublic Schools*, became effective on April 9, 2018.

As required by the new regulations, BCPS will be testing water from all potential drinking water sources in all schools during the 2018-2019 school year. Baltimore County public schools built prior to 1990 have had bottled water for drinking since 2016. Schools built during 1990 or later will be provided with bottled drinking water until results meet the state's new action level of 20 parts per billion.

Before samples are collected, water must sit in the pipes for eight to 18 hours. Therefore, water samples will be collected on Saturday mornings beginning Saturday, September 22, 2018. Water samples will be analyzed by an independent lab certified by the Maryland Department of the Environment. All schools will send the results to parents, guardians, and staff. The results will also be made available on the BCPS Web site and school Web sites, including immediate actions and next steps, if necessary.

If any drinking water source has lead results above the state's action level, the fixture will be turned off and replaced. The new fixture will not be available for students or staff to use until follow-up tests show that results meet the state's action level. The federal Safe Drinking Water Act only regulates lead testing in schools that use public water supplies. Nine of our schools have well systems, and those systems have tested for lead as required. After this initial testing year, drinking water sources in schools will be tested every three years.

In Baltimore County, the most common cause of lead poisoning in children is lead paint found in homes built before 1978. Please remember to keep children away from lead paint and dust and be mindful of products containing lead, including candy, toys, makeup, and jewelry.

For questions about testing drinking water in our schools, please contact David Glassman, BCPS supervisor of Environmental Services, at 443-809-6310 or dglassman2@bcps.org. For more information about lead exposure, please contact the Baltimore County Department of Health at 410-887-3725.

Visit the Lead Test Results Web page at www.bcps.org under BCPS Highlights, for results as they become available.

Sincerely,



Verletta White
Interim Superintendent
Baltimore County Public Schools



Gregory Branch, M.D., MBA, CPE, FACP
Director, Health and Human Services
Baltimore County Department of Health