



Regional Office of Education
LASALLE, MARSHALL & PUTNAM

**Christopher B.
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*Regional
Superintendent*

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February 12, 2016

Superintendent Rolf Sivertsen
Midland C.U.S.D. #7
901 Hilltop Drive
Sparland, IL 61375

Dear Superintendent Sivertsen,

On February 2, 2016, Diana Rawlings, Public Health Administrator for the County Health Department, issued a letter to the district and to the Regional Office of Education. The Health Department letter provided the following recommendation to the district (letter is attached with this correspondence for your reference) : **“...the Health Department recommends that students are not in the Elementary School Building until remediation action has been completed and the building has been cleared by a Licensed Lead Risk Assessor of any risk of lead exposure.”**

The Midland School Board met on February 4, 2016 and agreed through Board resolution not to house students in the Lacon Elementary building through the 2015-2016 school year. The Board unanimously passed the following motion (5-0):

- 1. That students not be returned to Midland Elementary School for the remainder of the 2015-16 school year;*
- 2. That a construction fence with appropriate signage be rented and installed around Midland Elementary School to prevent children from accessing areas in the vicinity of the building's doors and windows;*
- 3. That children in grade 5 be transferred to Midland High School and housed there in a wing of the building dedicated to that purpose;*
- 4. That children in grades Pre-K through 4 be transferred to Midland Middle School and housed there in a wing of the building dedicated to that purpose;*
- 5. That the administration work with the School District's architect to modify a room at Midland High School to house children in grade Pre-K in compliance with the Health Life Safety Code; and*
- 6. That the administration solicit a proposal to lease portable classrooms to house students in grades pre-K through 5 for further consideration by the Board of Education.*

The Regional Office of Education observes the Board's motion (listed previously in this letter) as effectively ordering a "Temporary Closure" of the Lacon Elementary building. Section 180.420 of Illinois Administrative Code provides steps during a closure as well as for reentry to this building. The Regional Office recommends that the district post outside of the facility signage that states, "This Facility is Unsafe and its Occupancy has been Prohibited by the Board of Education and Regional Superintendent." Additionally, no person shall enter the facility except for the purpose of inspecting, repairing or demolishing it. As required through the Board's action, the Regional Office has been in communication with IDPH and may have additional reports to share with the Board based on IDPH involvement. In order to reoccupy the Lacon Elementary building, a report from IDPH indicating that the facility is not unsafe, unsanitary, or unfit for occupancy may be required along with similar recommendations from the Health Department and IDEAL, the district's environmental testing company. Based on IDPH review, the Regional Office may be required to issue a condemnation order. The district is able to take steps to remedy the hazards identified by IDEAL and the Health Department if the district plans to reoccupy the building for the 2016-2017 school year.

The Regional Office of Education agrees with the Board's decision and has worked since that meeting to assist with implementation of the Board's motion. The Regional Office has been in regular communication with district staff, the district architect, the local health department, and community members in working to create a safe environment for students and staff. I have visited the district building sites on February 8, 2016 (prior to students re-attending) and February 11, 2016 (once students were present—students returned February 10, 2016); I have found that both the renovated Middle School building and the High School building are safe to occupy students. A review and approval of crisis plans has occurred; additionally, the Regional Office of Education observed a fire drill at the Middle School building. District staff, board members, and community members are to be commended for the work completed in this relocation process. A safe learning environment has been established through collaborative efforts.

The Regional Office of Education is available to assist the district as needed. I thank you for your work conducted over the last two weeks to get students back into school.

Sincerely,



Christopher B. Dvorak
Regional Superintendent
LaSalle, Marshall, Putnam Counties

Enclosure: February 2, 2016 Health Department Letter



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

February 2, 2016

Rolf Sivertsen, Superintendent
Midland CUSD-7
901 Hilltop Drive
Sparland, IL 61375

Re: Midland Elementary School

Dear Mr. Sivertsen,

The Marshall County Health Department is in receipt of the Limited Lead Based Paint Inspection and Risk Assessment conducted on January 27, 2016 at Midland Elementary School, 206 N. High Street, Lacon IL 61540 by Ideal Environmental Engineering, Inc. In addition, Kurt Kuchle, Director of Health Protection, from our office did a walk-through of the facility on January 28, 2016.

While lead based paint is generally not a health hazard when it is in good repair, chipping paint and paint dust are a significant health hazard for children, especially those ages 6 and under. Based upon the results of the Risk Assessment, and in an effort to ensure the health and safety of our local children, the Health Department recommends that students are not in the Elementary School Building until remediation action has been completed and the building has been cleared by a Licensed Lead Risk Assessor of any risk of lead exposure.

If you have any questions, or if we can help in any way please contact me directly at 815-872-5091.

Sincerely,

Diana Rawlings, Public Health Administrator
Bureau, Putnam & Marshall County Health Departments
diana.rawlings@bchealthdepartment.org

CC: Chris Dvorak Regional Office of Education
Andrew Dorsey, Board of Health President

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