



March 10, 2017

Carmen Fariña
Chancellor
New York City Department of Education
Tweed Courthouse
52 Chambers Street
New York, NY 10007

Dear Chancellor Fariña,

We write regarding information sharing about elevated lead levels in our local schools. According to a recent *Downtown Express* article, five out of six elementary schools and nine total schools in Lower Manhattan have tested positive for elevated levels of lead. We are troubled by the lack of information shared by the Department of Education (DOE) regarding these test results.

While the DOE has distributed backpack letters to students at affected schools, the letters contain inconsistent or unclear information. The letters state that “complete test results are posted on the DOE website,” but, as of today, complete results for any of the schools tested in Lower Manhattan are not posted on the DOE website. The letters also fail to outline specific remediation plans. Telling parents that complete information is available online when it is not is unacceptable. If the DOE has full test results and remediation plans available, that information should be made publicly available immediately. If it does not, DOE needs to explain the process it will undertake to publish such information.

We appreciate the DOE’s efforts to generally brief elected officials about citywide lead levels in schools last month. However, we are disappointed that DOE did not notify elected officials’ offices about specific elevated lead level results in local schools or make a public announcement. We are in regular contact with our parent community and, as you well know, meet often to discuss issues affecting the Lower Manhattan school community. Informing elected officials is an important component in community notification, including sharing the results of lead tests in local schools so we can have informed conversations with parents when they contact us.

We therefore request the following from DOE:

- 1) Provide our offices, as well as the appropriate community boards, with full lead test results for each of the schools in our districts. If test results are not complete for every

school, share the results with our offices and the community board when the backpack letters go out.


- 2) Post full test results for every school online on each individual school's website no later than the day the backpack letter is sent home.
- 3) Post specific, detailed lead remediation plans for each fixture with elevated lead levels, including DOE's plans to ensure an adequate drinking water supply at schools where many fixtures have been removed from service. Provide this information both in the backpack letter and online.
- 4) Make results of any future rounds of lead tests available online immediately and distribute to our offices, the community board, and the school community.
- 5) Upon request, meet with affected PTAs and the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene to answer any outstanding questions on lead policy or procedures.

We understand that this is a sensitive subject. As such, the DOE should be fully transparent with all available information and communicate with all affected stakeholders. Thank you for your prompt attention to this matter and we look forward to discussing this matter with you in greater detail soon.

Sincerely,



Daniel Squadron
State Senator



Jerrold Nadler
Congresssmember



Deborah Glick
Assemblymember



Yuh-Line Niou
Assemblymember



Margaret Chin
Councilmember