FROM:
Landrigan, Phil

TO:
Marx Terry

COPIED:

BCC:

DATE:
20020118 07:59:39

SUBJECT:
RE: wtc schools

Terry,

This is a fair and accurate summary of our discussion and recommendations.

Phil landrigan

-----Original Message-----
From: Marx Terry [mailto:TMarx@nycboe.net]
Sent: Thursday, January 17, 2002 4:32 PM
To: cdandrea@health.nyc.gov; kcarlino@health.nyc.gov; gerryk@dep.nyc.gov; krishr@dep.nyc.gov; thurston@env.med.nyu.edu; lisa@env.med.nyu.edu; eengler789@aol.com; Moline, Jacqueline; chrisproctoruft@aol.com; Landrigan, Phil; joel.forman@mountsinai.org; jleighto@health.nyc.gov; tmatte@nyam.org; markowitz@cbns.qc.edu; sbalk@montefiore.org; plk3@columbia.edu

Cc: andreou15@atc-enviro.com; parpounas15@atc-enviro.com; cohn15@atc-enviro.com; rbocchiz@nycboe.net; Hemida Mohamed; Orlan Bernard; dklasfeld@nycboe.net; Sacks Burt

Subject: wtc schools

THANK YOU ALL for agreeing to help review the BOE monitoring data for the schools near the World Trade Center. I am writing to briefly summarize and follow up on yesterday's meeting.

For those of you who could not make the meeting, as you probably know,
6 NYC BOE schools were closed after 9/11, and so far, only Stuyvesant High School has reopened. The others will open within the next few weeks pending final assurances of health and safey. I am sending, under separate cover, the monitoring data that was discussed yesterday, as well as a map which you may find helpful in knowing where the schools are located. The data include the BOE monitoring (by ATC Associates) of Stuyvesant High School since it re-opened on October 9, 2001, as well as the results from PS/IS 89, PS 234, and PS 150 since their cleanup.

Results on the High Schools of Leadership and Public Service and of Economics and Finance below the WTC will be hopefully be available early next week, and we will send to you as soon as possible.

As the data show, thousands of samples have been taken at the schools, both indoor and outdoor, many at the request of the parents'

associations and their respective environmental consultants. Monitoring done includes samples for asbestos, respirable particulates, PCBs, mercury, fiberglass, silica, dioxin, hydrocarbons, metals, lead, cyanide, fungus, and IAQ measures for CO2, CO, TVOCs, temperature, and

humidity. This is all public information which you can feel free to share with any colleagues that would like to help review this with you.

Yesterday's meeting, attended by Phil Landrigan, Joel Forman, George Thurston, Jackie Moline, as well as staff from DOH, DEP, BOE, UFT, and ATC Associates was very helpful. There was full consensus from the group yesterday that none of the measurements so far have revealed any values of concern, and that plans to reopen the schools could proceed pending final assurances of health and safety for the students and staff.

However, a number of issues were raised:

1) While the measures for dioxin have been indeed been very low, there were no standards known by the group yesterday to compare them to.
Ken Carlino from DOH kindly found and emailed this information today to everyone that met yesterday. I am enclosing it in the packets for those not present. As expected, the school results fall far below the Binghamton standards.

2) The monitoring for respirable particulate matter has been done by
the Dust-Trak monitor, in order to give 'quick and dirty' real-time measurements, because of the initial daily uncertainties after 9/11.

While the overall trends in these measurements have clearly shown improvement, this is not the most appropriate measuring technique.

Therefore, going forward, particulate matter should and will be monitored with 24 hour filter measurements.
3) The overall number of samples being tested was thought to be excessive, both in what is being looked for as well as the frequency of samples, especially 4 months after the event as the fires subside.

Given that the vast majority of samples have resulted in negative readings, this scope of monitoring need not continue for Stuyvesant nor the other schools once they have reopened. The proposed new monitoring protocols will be developed shortly and shared with all of you for review. In general, it was proposed that ongoing monitoring be continued for respirable particulates, asbestos and possibly VOCs.

4) The issue of outdoor play is of concern to some, particularly for
PS/IS 89, where the playground is right on the Westside Highway truck route carrying WTC debris to and from the barge located north of Stuyvesant H.S. Because the BOE cannot control the outdoor environment, particularly the wetting and covering of the trucks, for extra prudence, it was recommended that the BOE either bubble the playground or not use the outdoor playground for now. There is an indoor gym at this school. As our monitoring data continues to accumulate for the outdoor areas, this can be revisited. Because PS 234 and PS 150 are far enough from the truck routes, they will likely be okay for outdoor play pending final results of soil and bulk dust samples still being done in their play yards. Outdoor play areas do not exist at any of the 3 high schools.

5) Finally, completely unrelated to the WTC disaster, there is ongoing

construction at Independence Plaza where PS 150 is located. The BOE leases space for PS 150 at the site, and has been trying to work with the landlord to finish the work more quickly. Noise, dust and health/safety hazards have been noted by BOE, UFT and ATC staff as they have visited the site in recent days. It was felt that PS 150 is not currently safe for students or staff and should not be reopened until the construction hazards are resolved, but that this has nothing to do with the 9/11 WTC events.

For those of you who were at the meeting, please let me know if I misunderstood any of the above discussions.

Once the pending data and the new monitoring protocols become available, we will send these on to all of you for review.

If any of you would like a walk-through tour of the schools, we would be happy to set this up; just let me know.

Finally, if you are willing, we would like to have your support publically around the reopening of these schools. After you have received and reviewed all the data and plans, a letter of support from you (individually or collectively) to the school communities on behalf of the BOE would be very helpful. We will even draft the letter for you if needed!

Again, thank you very much for your time and help.

Terry Marx, MD
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NYC Board of Education
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