

March 27, 2025

**Subject:** Lead Safety Progress Update for Fernwood Montessori School

Dear Fernwood Families and Staff,

Milwaukee Public Schools (MPS) and the City of Milwaukee Health Department (MHD) are continuing efforts to remediate lead hazards at Fernwood Montessori School. To ensure the safety of students and staff, **the school will remain closed after spring break**. We understand that this closure is disruptive, and we appreciate your patience as we work to remediate all lead hazards and conduct necessary safety evaluations.

MPS continues to clean and remediate affected areas, and families should continue following lead-safe precautions at home. At this time, we do not have a confirmed reopening date for Fernwood. The school will only reopen once it is safe to do so, and MHD has verified that all safety standards have been met.

#### **Next Steps and What Families Should Know**

Fernwood students should continue attending Andrew S. Douglas Middle School (3620 N. 18th St.) until further notice.

In terms of progress at Fernwood, wall repairs and stabilization work are nearly complete. Once painting is complete, the entire building will undergo a deep cleaning.

As a final step, MHD will reinspect the school. If all safety standards are met, the school will be cleared for reopening, and MPS will coordinate with school leadership to plan the transition back to Fernwood. An **MPS virtual town hall will be held on Thursday, April 10 at 6 p.m.** to provide updates and answer questions. More details on how to join will be shared soon.

#### **What Families Can Continue Doing at Home to Reduce Lead Exposure**

- Clean surfaces with wet wipes to remove lead dust.
- Remove shoes at the door to prevent tracking in lead dust.
- Wash hands and toys frequently, especially for young children.
- Provide foods rich in iron, calcium, and vitamin C to help prevent lead absorption.
- Run tap water cold for three minutes before use and use a certified water filter (NSF/ANSI 53).

#### **Polling Places and Voter Safety**

Fernwood Montessori serves as one of many polling locations for the upcoming April 1 election. The City of Milwaukee Election Commission (MEC) is working in close coordination with MHD and MPS to ensure safe voting conditions.

Voting will take place in newer areas of the building, away from affected spaces. All remediation and cleaning work will be paused on Election Day, and MHD-approved precautionary measures will be in place to protect voters and election workers.

MHD has reviewed the current conditions and precautionary steps in place and believes it is safe to vote at these locations. We encourage all residents to make informed decisions and exercise their right to vote.

**Health and Safety Resources**

Families are encouraged to have MPS students and children under age 6 tested for lead exposure through their primary care provider.

Families can find updates, information on screening clinics, and public health resources on MHD's website at [www.milwaukee.gov/MPS-Lead](http://www.milwaukee.gov/MPS-Lead) and [mpsmke.com/mpsleadreport](http://mpsmke.com/mpsleadreport). For additional resources, visit [www.milwaukee.gov/HEH](http://www.milwaukee.gov/HEH).

Both MPS and MHD are dedicated to ensuring the health and safety of Fernwood students and staff. We appreciate your patience as we continue our efforts and will provide further updates next week.

Sincerely,

**Home Environmental Health**  
City of Milwaukee Health Department

**Office of School Administration**  
Milwaukee Public Schools