

March 13, 2025

Subject: Lead Hazard Update: School Closures, Screening Clinics & Resources

Dear Milwaukee Public Schools Families and Staff,

The City of Milwaukee Health Department (MHD), in coordination with Milwaukee Public Schools (MPS), continues its work to assess and address lead hazards in school buildings. As of today, three additional MPS schools—Starms Early Childhood Center, Fernwood Montessori, and LaFollette School—are closing due to significant lead hazards identified during MHD inspections this week.

These closures are necessary to allow for comprehensive remediation and cleaning efforts to ensure a safe environment for students and staff. While we understand that these changes are disruptive, they are critical steps to protecting the health of students and staff in MPS buildings.

Current Status of Affected Schools

- **Trowbridge School of Great Lakes Studies:** Cleaning and remediation are complete and the school has passed clearance. Students are scheduled to return on Friday, March 14.
- **Starms Early Childhood, Fernwood Montessori, and LaFollette School:** Scheduled to close Monday, March 17. Following visual inspections this week, MHD identified significant lead hazards in each of the schools. Further updates will be provided as testing and remediation progress.
- **Kagel:** We are pleased to say MHD completed a clearance check at Kagel School, and the school has passed. This means that lead dust levels meet safety standards, and no further remediation is required at this time.
- **Golda Meir:** MHD is in the process of performing re-clearance checks and will have updates early next week.
- **Maryland Avenue Montessori:** The majority of tested areas passed clearance standards, with one area failing—a locked janitor's closet that is not accessible to students. MPS is conducting additional cleaning in this area, and MHD will reassess later this week. Another update will be provided once results are available.

MHD will continue to work closely with MPS to conduct inspections, oversee remediation efforts, and determine safe reopening timelines for each impacted school.

Lead Screening Clinic – Saturday, March 15

MHD, MPS, Children's Wisconsin, and Sixteenth Street Community Health Centers are hosting a free lead screening clinic for students attending impacted schools.

Bradley Tech High School (700 S. 4th St.)

Saturday, March 15

9:00 AM – 1:00 PM

- **Who should attend?** Families of students attending Golda Meir Lower Campus, Kagel, Maryland Avenue Montessori, Trowbridge, Starms Early Childhood Center, Fernwood Montessori, and LaFollette School are encouraged to have their children tested.
- **What to expect?** Quick and free lead testing, with childcare and activities provided by Milwaukee Recreation for siblings.

- **How to register?** Pre-registration forms are available via MPS in English and Spanish and can be completed in advance to save time.

What Families Can Do at Home to Reduce Lead Exposure

- Use wet wipes to clean surfaces like floors, windows, and furniture to remove lead dust.
- Remove shoes at the door to prevent tracking in dirt with lead dust.
- Wash hands and toys frequently, especially for very young children.
- Provide foods rich in iron, calcium, and vitamin C to help prevent lead absorption.
- Run tap water cold for three minutes before using it for drinking or cooking.
- Use a water filter certified to remove lead (NSF/ANSI 53).

Additional Resources & Information

Families and staff can find updates, information on upcoming screening clinics, and public health resources at www.milwaukee.gov/MPS-Lead and mpsmke.com/mpsleadreport.

Next Steps

We will continue to provide updates as more information becomes available. The health and safety of MPS students and staff remain the top priority for both MHD and MPS. We appreciate your patience and partnership as we work through these necessary safety measures.

Thank you for your support in creating safe learning environments for all MPS students.

Sincerely,

Home Environmental Health
City of Milwaukee Health Department

Office of School Administration
Milwaukee Public Schools