



Southwest Middle School

IF YOU WANT TO HANG WITH THE EAGLES, YOU HAVE TO LEARN HOW TO FLY!

6030 Ogeechee Road • Savannah, Georgia 31419

912.395.3540 • FAX 912.201.5831

Craig Daughtry, Principal

Wednesday, November 7, 2018

To our Southwest Middle School families:

We write to keep you informed of our continued efforts to maintain the safest learning environment for our students and staff. In August, you may have heard news reports concerning the presence of mercury in rubberized gymnasium flooring at four Beaufort County schools. In an abundance of precaution, our Division of Operations launched a review of our school and utilized a reputable and experienced environmental engineering firm to conduct testing of our own rubberized gymnasium floors.

GEL Engineering LLC (GEL) initiated testing on September 10 and 11, 2018. The results were shared with the District on October 19, 2018. Low concentrations of mercury were detected in the rubberized flooring coating system at our school.

While the low concentrations detected were associated with the bulk material of the rubberized flooring, the District felt it was also important to test the air quality in the gymnasium for potential airborne elements. No mercury was detected by GEL in the air samples collected. In GEL's professional view, the gymnasium remains safe for continued use as long as our measures to address temperature levels and airflow are in place – to which remains a daily operational occurrence.

Based on the professional guidance we have received and considered, we are following GEL's recommendations to ensure student and staff safety during this time.

Moreover, the District has decided that the best long-term solution to address concerns over mercury is the removal and replacement of the gymnasium floor. The removal and replacement process is targeted to begin during the month of November and will be scheduled in a manner that will provide the least disruption to our school operations.

In the interest of transparency, we have provided a link to the GEL Engineering LLC's Report on Mercury Testing on our school website.

Please know that the safety of our students and staff is our utmost concern. We appreciate your understating and patience as we work to ensure the safest learning environment for all.

Sincerely,

Craig Daughtry, Principal



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