



**Western Foothills
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March 2, 2022

Dear Parents and Guardians,

We wanted to update you on the events this week that caused us to go to remote learning for March 1 and 2, 2022.

On February 28, 2022, at the close of school, several staff members reported they were not feeling well. Building administration recommended everyone leave the building as soon as possible. Later in the evening some staff continued to feel ill and were examined by medical personnel.

I was notified and Mexico Fire were called immediately to have them come and monitor the air. The fire department did a full building inspection with air monitors and found no elevated carbon monoxide levels. We placed air monitors in each of the rooms that the teachers were in who reported symptoms. These also did not find elevated carbon monoxide levels.

During the investigation it was decided to go remote the next day to ensure the safety of all students and staff. The plan was to do a thorough investigation of all systems, areas, and occurrences in the building and mitigate any issues found.

Tuesday morning the Mexico Fire Department came back and did another full building check and found no elevated carbon monoxide levels. Specialty Services came and inspected the boiler system and found no issues with the boiler and found no evidence of it backfiring. They also did a full building scan and found no elevated carbon monoxide levels. The roof drains and sewer pipes were inspected and found not to be blocked. We contacted Nine Dragons and they are investigating if there were any issues with their stack. At this time it is not believed to be an issue. We have continuously monitored the air and there have been no elevated carbon monoxide levels.

During the week of February vacation the building manager did some painting in the hallways. They also did some painting Monday morning. Paint odor was not reported. There is some information on certain paints that the vapor could possibly give off carbon monoxide. So this could be a possibility.

They used brushes and not a spray gun so exhaust from a power sprayer or a generator to power it would not be present. The painting has been completed. If they do paint again, we will ask them to not do so during school hours and to open windows when they are done.

We looked at other possible reasons for the disturbance, as well. On Friday the Rec Center had an event that used a fogging machine. Researching the chemical used, it gives off carbon dioxide and not carbon monoxide, thus this would not cause elevated carbon monoxide readings. However, it could possibly be the reason for the odd smell on Monday. One classroom did have a window open during the day. It is possible that if someone left their car in the parking area at the side of the building that it could have allowed carbon monoxide to enter the classrooms. We are recommending not allowing vehicles to idle for extended periods of time. We do not recommend telling anyone to keep windows closed.

Out of the abundance of caution it was decided to hold a second day of remote learning at the Annex. On day two we installed HEPA filters throughout the building. We will also open windows and mechanically ventilated any possible residual smells or chemicals that we may have missed while monitoring. We will continue to monitor the air quality. We will install carbon monoxide detectors in each room. During this investigation a concern was brought to us in regards to the fire alarm system. The building manager has confirmed that the system is up and running.

We can not seem to replicate or discover any elevated carbon monoxide levels. If there was an issue with carbon monoxide in this building it makes sense it would have shown up in November, December, January and not the last day of February. At this point this incident is looking to be transient in nature. This air quality issue seems to be addressed and precautions have been taken to detect if this happens again.

If there are any other questions or concerns please don't hesitate to contact me.

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