

# Northport-East Northport Union Free School District

## School-Community Subcommittee to Board of Education “Reconnecting and Revisiting NMS Environmental Concerns”

Community Update February 14, 2020

The Subcommittee is pleased to provide the Northport-East Northport community with this update informing you of its progress working with the District’s environmental consultant, P.W. Grosser Consulting (PWGC). Periodic updates such as this are intended to serve as a bridge between the Subcommittee and the Community.

This Update can be accessed on the [District website](#). A Summary Power Point describes the work of the subcommittee from November to February detailing the study process leading to the recommendation advanced to the board and deliberated in Public session. Also included are the Voluntary Health Survey information, and how to submit questions to the Subcommittee and/or PWGC. Based on questions submitted, a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) section will be compiled and published on the webpage for your reference.

### 1. The Subcommittee’s Mission-Charge as an Advisory Subcommittee to the Board of Education (BOE):

- a. Solving the charge of the BOE as an advisory team regarding the environmental concerns at NMS.
  - i. Specifically tackle the critical issues that have surfaced and have been problematic regarding NMS.
  - ii. To advise the Board of its findings.
  - iii. Pose recommendations for action research or other needs.
  - iv. Work collaboratively with the PWGC, the environmental consulting firm that the Subcommittee recruited and was approved by the BOE. Please see link to their website; and
  - v. The Subcommittee is **not** independent, separate or apart from the BOE or the Administration.
- b. Working together as a Team.  
(see below)
- c. Listening, following the facts, and making decisions by consensus.
- d. Being consistent with District’s Core Values.
- e. Working in a timely, thorough, and comprehensive manner.



#### Mission:

Educate, inspire and empower all students to pursue their aspirations and contribute as responsible members of society.

#### Vision:

Excellence in all areas without exception.

#### Core values & beliefs:

- Students are our first priority.
- Everyone can learn and grow.
- Students, families, staff and community are essential partners.
- We collaborate in a spirit of trust to make thoughtful and informed decisions.
- We value creativity and innovation.
- We challenge and support the whole child.
- We embrace the uniqueness of every student.
- We treat everyone with dignity, empathy and respect.
- We provide a safe, secure and supportive environment.
- We use district resources effectively and responsibly.

2. [Comprehensive Testing Plan \(Approved by the Board of Education 1/9/2020\)](#)

- a. Status of soil Testing of leaching pool G-51 completed on Saturday, January 11, 2020: Testing by PWGC revealed elevated mercury levels in subsurface soils below the active and former leaching pools. However, no mercury vapors were found to be associated with this soil either outdoors or in the nearby classrooms connected to these leaching pools. The District awaits guidance from Suffolk County Department of Health on future remedial requirements.
- b. A second and major component of the Approved Testing Plan was completed between, January 16, and January 20. This testing included:



- (1) Indoor Air and Sub-slab soil vapor sampling utilizing Summa Canisters, during periods when the school was in session and was not in session.
- (2) Mold and other comprehensive Indoor Air Quality testing and assessments throughout the building.

- c. PWGC advised the Subcommittee that sample results will be compared to standards commonly used for schools and developed to assure safe occupancy by both student and staff.
- d. Now that Northport Middle School is unoccupied by students and education staff, PWGC's work can move forward without the constraints of a daily educational routine. PWGC will be able to complete its testing protocols, compile the data retrieved, and review their findings with the District, Subcommittee, and the community. Once recommended and approved by the BOE, PWGC will proceed with remediation in compliance and oversight of the appropriate regulatory agency.
- e. At the January 27, 2020 Meeting of the Board Subcommittee, it reached a unanimous decision, agreeing that PWGC, in accordance with professional and industry standards, will work without the demand of real-time reporting. Therefore, their findings can be analyzed, interpreted, and summarized to the extent that ties together all the testing components into one comprehensive report. It is critical to point out that the individual components of this study are of the most value to the study as a whole. The presentation of data in isolation without context would be misleading and confusing.

f. It is anticipated that the final report will be ready by late March or April.

### 3. Voluntary Occupant Health Survey

- a. As discussed, part of the historical review of the Northport Middle School Environmental Study involves collecting information from past and present school building occupants. The protocols for the Study follow industry standards that include completing a survey that is sent directly to PWGC. All information will be presented in aggregate form with no references to any personal identifiable data. Please see the district website link for [General Information and Instructions](#) (link here) detailing the procedures and how the information is used. Please Note the following:
  - i. Survey deadline is March 5, 2020
  - ii. Regarding confidentiality, PWGC implemented stringent procedures for insuring confidentiality, however, it cannot guarantee a breach of confidentiality based on what the respondent communicates or shares with others.
- b. The Survey Categories have been divided into the following four groups for organizational purposes and all surveys need to be submitted by March 5, 2020.
  - i. [Current NMS staff or faculty 2019-2020 school year](#). This category includes teachers, administrators, custodians, and other staff that began the 2019-2020 school year at NMS.
  - ii. [Former-retired NMS staff or faculty](#). This category includes anyone who previously worked in the school who are not included in the previous category.
  - iii. [Current students](#). This category includes current students in 6th, 7th, or 8th grades that began the 2019-2020 school year at NMS. The student's legal guardian must fill out and sign the forms and must accompany the student if requesting an interview with the PWGC Team.
  - iv. [Former students](#). This category includes former students that historically attended NMS regardless of whether it was a high school, Jr. High School, or middle school. The student's legal guardian must fill out and sign the forms and must accompany students under the age of 18 during the interview process.

### 4. Contacting the Subcommittee and PWGC with questions and concerns

- a. The Subcommittee has implemented a question and answer plan to provide thorough responses to questions from the community. Questions that are specific to the charge of the subcommittee can be addressed by:
  - i. Submitting an email to [NMSsubcommittee@northport.k12.ny.us](mailto:NMSsubcommittee@northport.k12.ny.us).

ii. Via US Mail:

N-EN Board Subcommittee  
158 Laurel Avenue  
Northport, New York 11768

Questions and answers will be published at [Frequently Asked Questions](#). Our goal is to respond to your questions in a timely and concise manner, consulting with PWGC as needed.

## Subcommittee Team

We are Committed to:

- ✓ Solving the charge of the BOE
- ✓ Working together as a Team
- ✓ Listening, following the facts, and making decisions by consensus
- ✓ Being consistent with Core Values
- ✓ Working in a timely, thorough, and comprehensive manner.

Vicky Buscareno	Trustee Parent (Ocean)
Joseph DeFranco	District Resident NCDOH, Environmental Health Program Manager. (RET)
Lauren Handler	Parent Ocean Avenue
Bob Howard	Asst. Superintendent for Business Parent (Pulaski, Parent)
Louise Ko	Parent Northport Middle School Parent
Paul Lageragen	Parent Environmental Specialist
Larry Licopoli	Trustee Parent 2 NPT Grads, Grandparent
Tom Loughran	Trustee (5 <sup>th</sup> Avenue)
Kristen Painter	Parent Norwood Parent
Nicole Repetti	Parent Environmental Specialist
Damien Taylor	Parent Dickinson
Jeannette Conroy Teri	Teacher NMS, Parent
Stacey Weisberg	Teacher, President United Teachers of Northport