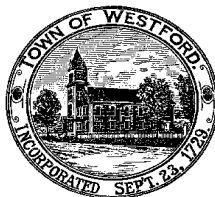


EVERETT V. OLSEN, Jr., M.B.A.
Superintendent of Schools

DIANE PELLETIER, M.Ed.
Director of Pupil Services



KATHLEEN AUTH
Director of School Finance

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March 30, 2011

Dear Parent/Guardian

About two weeks ago, 70 students at Blanchard Middle Schools exhibited symptoms of a stomach virus. When a situation such as this develops the protocol is for our school nurse to notify the staff of the Westford Health Department. In turn, the Health Department conducts an investigation to try and establish a link or possible cause of a cluster illness. During this investigation a food inspection was conducted at the school to verify the health of the food handlers, the type and origin of the food being served, as well as the commodities used in the school. After consultation with the Massachusetts Department of Public Health and local physicians, there was no verification that the illness students exhibited was a result of any food item served, but rather appeared to be a virus affecting the general population at the time.

During the school inspection the Health Department was informed that some of the food had been stored in our warehouse facility at 35 Town Farm Road. When the warehouse facility was inspected, they found food code violations. The Health Department suggested that we have an independent certified food safety inspector thoroughly inspect both food and non-food items stored at the warehouse. The School Department complied and hired a certified inspector who inspected every carton and food item, both visually and with a black light and prepared a report given to the Board of Health. With regard to the government food commodities stored in the commercial walk-in freezer, the inspection report indicated that the commodities were frozen and did not show any evidence of being compromised. However it was important for us to address BOH-identified code violations.

On Monday evening, March 28th Patti Donahue, Director of Food Services, and I met with the Board of Health prior to Town Meeting. We indicated to the Board that we would willingly comply with any direction they provided to us with regard to the storage of food and dry goods in order to maintain the health and safety of students and the confidence of parents. As Superintendent of Schools I take this obligation very seriously. It was decided that all products and food should be discarded and once again we willingly complied. A remediation plan has been put in place and from this point forward, all foam and plastic serving items will be stored at the Millennium School and all government commodities will be shipped directly to each school.

For many years I've had an honest and open dialogue with students, staff, parents and all residents. If you have any questions regarding this situation please do not hesitate to call me to either meet in person or speak via telephone.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Everett V. Olsen, Jr.", written in a cursive style.

Everett V. Olsen, Jr.
Superintendent of Schools