

LONGWOOD CENTRAL SCHOOLS

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A Message from the Longwood Board of Education

When schools were constructed in the early 1970s, mercury was used to cure the surface of rubberized synthetic gymnasium floors. After decades of wear and tear, schools across the country began to cover the existing flooring with wood. Recently, environmental studies have found that as these floors age, mercury vapors can escape into the air.

These same rubberized synthetic floors were installed in the Longwood Middle School gymnasium when it was constructed in 1972. Wood flooring was placed over the deteriorating flooring in 1998. The middle school is the only building in the district that has this type of flooring.

After learning that mercury had been detected in neighboring districts, the Longwood Board of Education proactively arranged for an environmental consultant to conduct air sampling of the middle school gymnasium.

Results of the screening determined low levels of mercury present in the gym floor, three times under the limits permissible by the New York State Education Department.

After a comprehensive analysis of the middle school flooring by our consultants, the Board of Education agrees that the current levels are, in no way whatsoever, a health or safety risk for any of our students or staff. However, the Board of Education takes this report very seriously, and a management plan will be developed to monitor the flooring until the next steps have been decided.

During the first week of October, professional athletic flooring contractors with extensive experience in dealing with this type of material will provide the Board with several management options to remedy this issue.

We will continue to keep the community updated as information becomes available. The full report of the investigation is available at the District Clerk's office, upon request.