



RENSELAER CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT
25 Van Rensselaer Drive, Rensselaer, New York 12144

New York State Department of Health
Attn: Commissioner Howard A. Zucker
Corning Tower
Empire State Plaza
Albany, NY 12237

December 18, 2019

Dear Commissioner Zucker,

The S.A Dunn C&D Landfill is located directly adjacent to the Rensselaer City School District and in close proximity to the homes of our students and families. Earlier this year, Rensselaer City School District Board of Education, Superintendent of Schools Mr. Joseph Kardash, Chairman Mr. Michael Stammel, and Mayor Mr. Rich Mooney formally requested that the Department of Environmental Conservation begin baseline ambient air monitoring. Upon receipt of the letter, the DEC acknowledged the elevated risk of having the S.A Dunn C&D Landfill adjacent to the Rensselaer City School District, and agreed to monitor the ambient air outside the school buildings.

Currently, the Department of Environment Conservation has four temporary outdoor hydrogen sulfide monitors in strategic locations on our property. After a recent erosion at the landfill, hydrogen sulfide levels peaked, creating an extremely negative impact on our school campus. The characterized “rotten egg” smell was abound throughout the building, disrupting students, faculty and staff. Reports were made directly to the S.A. Dunn C&D Landfill hotline, which also notifies the DEC. Both agencies quickly arrived to test the air quality outside as well as the inside of the buildings. Unfortunately, as with most gases, it was nearly impossible to obtain an accurate reading of air quality with the elapsed time.

While we now have a permanent ambient air monitoring device, as well as a particulate monitor at the District, only the outside air quality is being measured and monitored. We respectfully request that the Department of Health partner with Rensselaer City School District and the Department of Environmental Conservation to ensure the indoor air is held to the same measure of significance as the exterior. The indoor air quality falls directly under the purview of your agencies responsibility – to protect public health and well-being. The responsibility of the Rensselaer City School District Board of Education and Administration, is to ensure the health,

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safety and well-being of all of the students and staff. With known instances of hydrogen sulfide in our school building, we need to measure the frequency and levels of this gas to understand and protect the safety of our students and staff. We, on the local level, collectively implore you to use every resource you have at your disposal, to assist in assuring, with certainty, that the air quality inside of this school is healthy and safe.

This is an opportunity, and a responsibility, for our state level government agencies to work together. It is time for all pertinent agencies to collectively and collaboratively use the resources available to ensure the health and safety of our students and staff. We, as the stakeholders of the school, are asking for your help in a timely fashion.

Thank you for your cooperation and support.


**Rensselaer City School
Board of Education Members**



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