



COMMUNITY ACTION *Helping People. Changing Lives.*

July 9th, 2024

Dear Parent/Guardians:

Sieda Head Start would like to provide an update on our efforts to reduce potential exposure to lead from school/center drinking water by taking steps that include testing for lead in drinking water in our Head Start sites, and sharing those sampling results with the public. As discussed at the Region 7 Head Start level, as well as at the Office of Head Start, in Washington D.C, our program has a voluntary program in-place to reduce potential exposure to lead in drinking water.

Lead is a toxic metal. When children and others are exposed to lead it can have adverse health effects. "Exposure" to lead in drinking water means that children or staff consume water that contains lead through drinking or food preparation. There is no safe level of lead exposure, which is why we are working to identify potential sources of exposure, and are communicating actions that can be taken to both reduce lead, and protect children and staff. The state required program lead remediation level in drinking water samples is 15 parts per billion or higher.

The sampling program and our next steps, if applicable, are as follows:

- In July and/or early August 2024, before the start of the 2024-2025 school year, our Health Coordinator, Nurse Katie M. Fisher-Walz, will be testing fixtures throughout our Head Start sites. Tested fixtures will include, but are not limited to, hallway and classroom drinking water fountains, bathroom sinks, and kitchen faucets where food is prepared.
- In response to the sampling results, we will direct our services to address any potential lead levels above the 15 parts per billion or higher sampling range. If high lead levels are noted, fixtures will be removed and/or turned off to service until permanent measures can be/are put into place to address this potential health barrier.

Sieda Head Start values the health and safety of all of our students and their families, our Sieda Head Start staff, and all community members, including outside/contracted agencies that provide services to our students. We believe in open and honest communication and transparency, which is why we are notifying you of this important health testing.

Please feel free to reach out to me, Sieda's Health Coordinator, if you have any questions regarding this important community health matter.

Sincerely,

Katie M. Fisher-Walz; RN, BSN

Sieda Health Coordinator-Child Development

Sieda Medical Director, Corporate Compliance, & Quality Assurance Officer-Behavioral Health