

Yalonda Colbert, Principal | Tilo Bailey, Assistant Principal | James Clawson, Assistant Principal

515 N. Highland Ave
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www.pghschools.org
Parent Hotline: 412-529-HELP (4357)

June 2, 2023

Dear Pittsburgh Obama Parents/Guardians,

I hope this message finds you well. It has come to my attention that there are concerns about the adequacy of ventilation in the school when the air conditioning system became inoperable last Thursday. These concerns required immediate action.

Because most classrooms do not have windows or windows that can be opened, the proper flow of cool, fresh air throughout the building is limited. Due to no air conditioning, limited ventilation, and supply chain issues to support a timely repair, Pittsburgh Obama students and teachers must remain remote until the end of the school year. The last day for all students is Wednesday, June 14, 2023.

Again, the air conditioning system is still out of service and cannot be repaired due to supply chain issues. The PPS Facilities team attempted to use outside air to ventilate the building and found that there was still not adequate airflow to most classrooms.

Adequate ventilation plays a crucial role in ensuring good indoor air quality, which in turn supports the well-being and academic/teaching performance of everyone. Proper ventilation helps to reduce the concentration of airborne pollutants, including viruses, bacteria, allergens, and other irritants.

The District's facility team has been closely monitoring the situation and has begun working with AGX, Inc. Environmental Consultants and Smart-Building Works, LLC., an HVAC Technical Services Group to address this issue. Our efforts are focused on identifying and implementing immediate short-term solutions over the summer, while also exploring long-term measures to improve the overall ventilation system and restore the air conditioning.

We are taking several steps to mitigate the impact of poor ventilation:

1. **Increased Fresh Air Intake:** We have instructed the facilities team to maximize the fresh air intake to the extent possible within the current system's capabilities. This will help in improving air circulation and quality within the school.
2. **Regular Maintenance and Filter Replacement:** Our maintenance team is working diligently to ensure the ventilation system is well-maintained. This includes regular cleaning, inspection, and filter replacement to minimize any potential issues.
3. **Frequent Monitoring and Evaluation:** We have implemented a monitoring system to regularly assess the air quality in different areas of the school. This will help us identify any areas of concern and take immediate action accordingly.
4. **Classroom Measures:** Teachers have been advised to keep windows and doors open whenever feasible to encourage natural airflow. Additionally, portable air purifiers have been installed in classrooms to enhance air quality in the interim.



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We understand your concerns and the importance of transparency in matters affecting our students' health and safety. We are committed to keeping you informed about any developments or actions taken to address the ventilation issue.

We appreciate your patience and understanding as we work to ensure a healthy and safe learning environment for our students, teachers, and staff. We will provide additional communication regarding end of year activities. If you have any immediate questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to reach out to call the main office (412) 529-5980.

Thank you for your continued support.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Y. Colbert", written over a large blue flourish.

Yalonda Colbert
Principal