



Nora Rupert, School Board Member, District 7

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The School Board of Broward County, Florida

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Dr. Howard Hepburn
Superintendent of Schools

August 30, 2024

Dear Superintendent Hepburn,

I am writing to express my deep concern regarding the recent increase in school evacuations due to gas and carbon monoxide leaks in our district. As a member of Board, I feel it is incumbent upon me to request urgent action regarding this situation.

The safety of our students, teachers, and staff is paramount, and these recurring incidents pose a significant risk to their well-being. Not only do these evacuations disrupt the learning environment, but they also expose our school community to potential health hazards.

I would like to request the following:

1. A comprehensive safety audit of all school buildings in the district, focusing on gas lines, cooking/heating systems, and carbon monoxide detectors.
2. A detailed report on the causes of recent gas and carbon monoxide leaks, including any patterns or common factors identified.
3. An action plan to address and prevent future incidents, including necessary repairs, upgrades, or replacements of faulty equipment.
4. A review and potential update of our emergency response procedures for gas and carbon monoxide leaks.
5. A communication strategy to keep parents, staff, and the community informed about the steps being taken to ensure school safety.

Additionally, to better understand our current processes and identify areas for improvement, I would appreciate answers to the following questions:

6. Which specific departments within our district are responsible for: a) Maintaining gas lines, cooking/heating systems, and carbon monoxide detectors in our schools? b) Conducting regular inspections of these systems? c) Collecting and analyzing data related to gas leaks and carbon monoxide incidents?

7. How often are these maintenance and inspection activities scheduled, and are there logs or reports available for review?
8. Is there a clear chain of communication between these departments and school administrators regarding potential safety issues?
9. Were any of these deficiencies or potential issues with gas lines, cooking/heating systems, or carbon monoxide detectors identified in any of our previous Annual Comprehensive Reports? If so, what actions were taken in response to those findings?

I believe these measures and information are crucial to maintaining a safe learning environment for our students and a secure workplace for our staff. I would appreciate a response outlining the steps you plan to take to address this pressing issue, as well as answers to the questions posed above.

Thank you for your prompt attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Nora Rupert

School Board Member, District 7

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