

SENATOR RUBÉN DÍAZ  
32ND DISTRICT

LEGISLATIVE OFFICE BUILDING  
ROOM 606  
ALBANY, NEW YORK 12247  
(518) 455-2511  
FAX (518) 426-6945

DISTRICT OFFICE  
900 ROGERS PLACE  
BRONX, NEW YORK 10459  
(718) 991-3161  
FAX (718) 991-0309



THE SENATE  
STATE OF NEW YORK

RANKING MINORITY MEMBER  
AGING COMMITTEE

COMMITTEES:  
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INVESTIGATIONS &  
GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS  
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TRANSPORTATION

## OPEN LETTER TO NYS DEC COMMISSIONER BASIL SEGGOS

February 15, 2017

Commissioner Basil Seggos  
New York State Department of Environmental Conservation  
625 Broadway, 14th Floor  
Albany, NY 12233-1010

Dear Commissioner Seggos:

This is a most urgent request for the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation to review and intervene in the situation involving toxic levels of lead in the water supply of certain New York City Department of Education schools.

My office continues to receive complaints from frightened parents because there are school buildings in the New York City Department of Education that have been found to have dangerously elevated levels of lead in their schools water system. A copy of one such letter is included.

**Instances of elevated lead levels in school water supply is being made known on an *ad hoc* basis which gives no assurance to parents of school aged children.**

As has been the case in Flint Michigan, until sources of elevated lead in water supplies has been found and eliminated, alternatives such as bottled water, water coolers and filters are needed as a immediate relief.

New York State must focus on water testing, lead testing for children, and long-term solutions, including follow-up care for affected residents.

It is essential for your agency to investigate the method that leads to detectible presence and discovery of elevated lead in school water supply, is it leaching for unused, older pipes? If there a common mechanism for how it is being released into the water supply, how can parents and school officials prepare for this?

While we can all hope that New York City Department of Education will cooperate with your agency's intervention, the time has passed for letting New York City Department of Education take care of this problem entirely on its own.

Please help now!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Reverend", written in a cursive style.

Senator Reverend Ruben Diaz





Department of  
Education

Janet F. Rivera, Chancellor

February 8, 2017

Dear Families and Staff:

This is a follow up to my December 19 letter outlining the additional measures the New York City Department of Education (DOE) is taking to ensure that the water in New York City schools is safe for students and staff.

On January 28, 2017, every potential source of water for drinking or preparing food at Fiorello Laguardia HS - Manhattan (Fiorello H. LaGuardia High School of Music & Art and Performing Arts, 100 Amsterdam Avenue Manhattan, NY 10023) was tested for lead. The laboratory results showed elevated levels of lead in 20 of the 267 samples of water taken and tested from outlets in the building. A more detailed letter related to the testing for lead at Fiorello Laguardia HS - Manhattan is attached and complete test results are posted on the DOE website.

In any building where lead test results show even one water outlet above the action level of 15 parts per billion, the DOE will implement its standard response protocol, which includes removing any drinking or cooking water fixture outlet from service, flushing all or part of the system to eliminate water sitting in pipes overnight, replacing equipment and re-testing after the equipment is replaced.

Each affected drinking or cooking water fixture at Fiorello Laguardia HS - Manhattan will remain out of service until it is remediated and future testing shows that the water does not have an elevated level of lead. The custodial staff will also continue to flush the Fiorello Laguardia HS - Manhattan water systems on Monday mornings before school starts in order to eliminate water that has been stagnant in pipes over the weekend and to ensure safe drinking water is available for students and staff.

Please visit <http://schools.nyc.gov/AboutUs/schools/watersafety.htm> to learn more about the robust protocol we use to ensure the safety of drinking water in each and every school, as well as to look up water test results for their child's school.

We will keep you updated on the remediation work at Fiorello Laguardia HS - Manhattan, and thank you for your patience and support.