

DEWEY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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VINCE VINCENT

SUPERINTENDENT

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Parents, Guardians, or To Whom It May Concern,

Dewey Schools has had a rash of student health issues this school year in our High School and Middle School dating back to early Fall. My intention is to be able to share information with you, in as transparent of a manner that I can, without infringing on the rights of our students. As we became aware of the issues, we worked hard to communicate with the affected families as to what information they were being provided from the medical community. Within those conversations, we have not received any information that would lead us to believe that our school buildings nor our campus is an unsafe environment. We also have no information to lead us to believe that we're dealing with anything contagious. So independent of any medical information, we contacted our county health department, the Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality, and the Oklahoma Office of the State Epidemiologist. Although very informative, it didn't provide us a path to follow since we weren't receiving any medical information suggesting an environmental or contagious issue. So we did take some action in an attempt to rule out possible effects that could be leading to the health issues. We had water samples tested as well as mold testing in specific areas that might have been of concern. Neither test showed any health concerns.

Although I cannot speak about the medical information we received on specific students, we have had affected students that have been diagnosed with Conversion Disorder. This disorder is of psychological nature and we understand that symptoms are in response to stress and anxiety. As we have progressed through the school year, I am aware that many students, families, and community members are fearful of what is occurring within our school system and this may be contributing to more anxiety. My hope is that as parents and as a community, you understand the the school district is, has, and will continue to gather information from affected families and if any new medical information becomes available, we'll certainly act on it appropriately. But let me reiterate, we have no reason to believe that our students are in an unsafe environment nor are they subjected to anything contagious. I firmly believe that we'll get through this together as a community by speaking with our children and reassuring them they are safe. I would also encourage parents/guardians to communicate effectively with their children with compassion and openness.

As always, please don't hesitate to contact our offices if you have any further questions.

Vince Vincent
Superintendent