



# HARTLAND CONSOLIDATED SCHOOLS

*Chuck Hughes, Superintendent*

9525 E. Highland Road  
Howell, Michigan 48843

Telephone (810) 626-2100  
Fax (810) 626-2101

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## SPECIAL UPDATE

**Safety Information:** I wanted to address the community today on issues being brought to me regarding the school environment. A parent seems to feel that the district is not providing a safe environment for children and staff. Today, this person posted information regarding Village Elementary that seems to have scared some people, for no reason. Unfortunately, this person failed to reach out to me and ask questions about the pictures taken and posted. This requires me to respond to the social media postings and other issues brought up by the same person to ensure the community understands the facts and can make their own determination about these concerns. The fact is that we are and will continue to follow all health and safety requirements to ensure that the district remains a safe school environment. When we are informed of a concern, we act! This I can guarantee you.

**Metal Drums at Village:** I understand that a community member took and posted pictures of Village Elementary and the old bus building and warehouse. These pictures and comments were posted on social media causing some to be upset. It is the district's understanding that the pictures were sent to the Michigan Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE) department indicating an environmental concern. Once we learned of this, we reached out to EGLE. The staff responded to us immediately stating that **"you can mention that you consulted EGLE and have not violated any laws, and the contents of the drums are investigation derived waste (IDW)/and that drumming is standard operating procedure."** What these drums contain is the waste created when the monitoring wells were put in place to monitor the ground where fuel tanks from the old bus fueling station was located. The building to the left in the picture below will eventually be demolished. We were waiting for that time to get rid of the drums. The waste is sand and water. To ensure that the district has an unbiased third-party opinion, we quickly called an environmental company to come to this location and inspect the drums and surrounding area as there may also be a picture of a drum behind the warehouse floating around social media. The drums with the sand and water were determined to be just that and not hazardous. We have been given permission to dispose of them. The drum behind the warehouse is an empty drum that held the glue used to put in the 51 Building playground padding. One of our maintenance people was going to take the drum but forgot about it. There is some glue residue in the drum, which the environmental company confirmed as not being a hazard. I have asked Mr. Reck, Village Elementary Principal, to share the EGLE response above with anyone asking about the social media posts that may have needlessly upset some people.



**Water Testing:** An individual has reached out to review the district's water testing program. I can assure the community that we follow all Health Department water testing regulations. The district tests multiple times a year. A question put to me recently was, how often do you test your home water Mr. Hughes? I stated, when I built my home? This means that the district tests much more often than one would test their home water source. Please note that Creekside Elementary, the MS and the HS are on a municipal water supply that requires the township to regularly test, not the district.

**Herbicides/Pesticides:** I shared information (March 20, 2024 Weekly Update) that resulted from a concern last year that an outside company applied herbicide while students were in school. The outside company was found to be in violation of application guidelines. The district was not found to have done anything wrong in this case. A recommendation to create more informative postings was made, which we will follow moving forward.

**Radon Testing:** I attended a radon meeting at Creekside on Tuesday evening. There were two SWAT radon mitigation staff in attendance along with the organizer and six other people. I assured the group that I have a proposal for testing that I will share with the Board of Education at an upcoming committee meeting.

**Asbestos:** A community member recently requested the districts asbestos records for our buildings (the MS, Creekside, and the High School were built after the asbestos laws were put into place requiring regular inspections and these building are not known to contain any asbestos). Once again, there are no safety issues with asbestos that is not disturbed. The inspections ensure that a third-party environmental company is helping us to address anything out of the ordinary and to regularly review for known asbestos locations for any disturbances.

**Note:** Our maintenance team has been trained and knows where all the asbestos is in our buildings. Recently, I was told of a maintenance member who was asked by a staff member if he knew where the asbestos was in the building. He assured this person that he absolutely knows where asbestos is in the building. This is a responsibility of each maintenance person for their assigned building.

It is unfortunate that someone chooses not to reach out to ask questions before posting scary information on social media, I am sorry if this caused you any anxiety. Insinuating that the district is not taking care of the environment is certainly callous when one does not take the time to ask questions ahead of disseminating information. I know no other way to counter misinformation than to simply share the facts.