



VALLEY STREAM CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT
VALLEY STREAM, NEW YORK

Learning, Achieving, Succeeding!

April 9, 2019

NORTH HIGH SCHOOL FAQ

Over the past several weeks, a number of questions have arisen regarding North High School. Below, please find answers to some of the more common inquiries.

Q: Is North High School appropriately cleaned and maintained?

A: The short answer is yes, North High School is appropriately cleaned and maintained. However, the district has experienced an inordinate amount of staff turnover within our facilities department over the last year. This turnover is compounded by the long delays imposed by the Nassau County Civil Service Department's procedures for hiring of new staff members. To ensure North is appropriately cleaned and maintained, the District has attempted to fill all custodial vacancies with a substitute cleaner and/or overtime for existing employees. Additionally, our Director of Facilities inspects North on a daily basis. At this time, we have two custodial openings, which we anticipate filling within the next two months.

Q: What is being done to alleviate traffic concerns at North High School?

A: As with many schools in our region, all of our buildings experience traffic during morning drop-off times. In an effort to evaluate the traffic at North specifically, the District consulted with the Nassau County Police Department for suggestions on how to ease traffic flow. They have shared with us that the traffic we experience is "typical" for a Nassau County high school.

Q: Are students not allowed to wear coats and backpacks due to lack of space?

A: Students are required to put away jackets and backpacks due to security measures, not because of a lack of space. This is a consistent practice at ALL of our schools throughout the District.

Q: Do our buildings have enough science labs?

A: Yes. However, not every science class that we offer students is lab-based. Thus, it is not necessary for every science class to take place in a lab.

Q: Are science labs equipped with eyewash stations?

A: Science labs have eyewash stations that meet OSHA requirements. When it was brought to our attention that eyewash stations were not being refilled, the District immediately remedied the situation.

Q: Are the water fountains safe?

A: Yes! The water in every fountain throughout the District was tested several years ago, as part of new state regulations. Every water fountain in our District was tested and cleared. All testing results are posted on the Health and Safety page of the District's website, www.vschsd.org/resources/health_and_safety.

Q: Why are there stained ceiling tiles and buckets of standing water in some areas of the school?

A: Following the voter-approved 2016 bond referendum, North High School has undergone a number of major construction projects. Unfortunately, the roofing project lasted longer than expected, and while under construction, several areas throughout North were subjected to leaks. The roofing project has now been completed, so these issues are in the process of being remediated. There were also steam leaks which have also been remediated. Please be assured that District maintenance staff attempted to change ceiling

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tiles and clean up leaks as they occurred. This necessitated the use of buckets and pails to contain the leaks until the source could be determined and fixed.

Q: Is the air quality at North acceptable?

A: Construction at North often caused complaints of mold issues and air quality concerns. Along with a District investigation, our Nassau BOCES Health and Safety Liaison investigated the complaints by viewing all conditions and meeting with the Principal and appropriate building staff. Out of an abundance of caution, the District also consulted with an Industrial Hygienist regarding possible concerns over asbestos and mold. The District was responsive and acted on all complaints immediately, as we always seek to provide a healthy, safe learning environment for all.

Q: Is there a lack of student desks/lockers?

A: No. The District on occasion moves furniture from building to building, but there is no known shortage of student desks at North. The Board of Education has allocated monies to begin replacing traditional desks with more modern furniture designed to enhance the educational process. Each student is assigned a locker.

Q: Is the temperature at North High School controlled appropriately?

A: Yes. Unfortunately, however, during the winter months, North suffered mechanical issues with

its heating system. At various points, some rooms had to be closed or might have been cooler than the ideal temperature. However, the HVAC system has been fixed and we are confident that the school will not experience the same issues next winter.

Q: Is North High School overcrowded?

A: No. In the fall of 2017, the Board of Education, in response to resident concerns, hired the architectural firm BBS to determine if North was overcrowded. The report found that the school is not overcrowded. The report states, "The building is operating at approximately 88% of its full capacity based on current utilization."