



PENNRIDGE SCHOOL DISTRICT

DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION OFFICE

**1200 North Fifth Street • Perkasie, Pennsylvania 18944
215-453-2710**

June 26, 2020

The Honorable Patrick McDonnell
Secretary, Department of Environmental Protection
DEP Southeast Regional Office
2 E. Main Street
Norristown, PA 19401

Dear Secretary McDonnell,

Due to the close proximity to schools in the district, the Penndel School Board and administration have been closely following the situation regarding the detection of naturally occurring asbestos at the Rockhill Quarry located at 2055 North Rockhill Road, Sellersville, PA 18960.

On behalf of the district, Mr. Harper, our Facilities Director, and I, have been participating in your monthly meetings with our local officials. We greatly appreciate you taking the time to hold these meetings to keep us apprised of the situation and answer questions as they arise.

After a sample taken from the quarry on November 9, 2018 tested positive for asbestos, residents became concerned about potential air contamination in their local residences and schools. We have an elementary school located within one mile of the quarry and a middle school and high school just over one mile away. There are additional reports and testing that call into question the ability to prevent asbestos exposure from mining activities through any methodology.

Having read the reports and communications from community members, Hanson Aggregates, DEP, REPA, local officials, Dr. Erskine- the geologist hired by the community, and most recently the letter from the Pennsylvania Department of Health, it is clear to me, the naturally occurring asbestos, if disturbed, can pose a serious health risk to the community.

The health and well-being of students, staff, and community members will always be the number one priority. This is not about whether or not people want a quarry operating in their community. That is not relevant to the district. This is about working together to prevent exposure to asbestos. According to the letter from Pennsylvania Department of Health Deputy Secretary of Health Preparedness and Community Protection Raphael M. Barishansky, to Rockhill Environmental Preservation Alliance on February 7, 2020, "NOA should be avoided and left alone."

From my perspective, based on all of the information available, permanently ceasing operations and working with the Department of Health to move forward with a reclamation plan that leaves the site in the safest condition for the community, without causing additional exposure, would be the most prudent path forward to ensure the safety and well-being of everyone impacted. Thank you for your time and attention to this matter.

Kind regards,

Megan Banis-Clemens
Penndel Board Director

Mission Statement

It is paramount that our students graduate with knowledge of their talents, passions and what is necessary for them to remain life-long learners and productive citizens. These objectives need to be accomplished in a community-oriented environment that is safe, welcoming, nurturing, student-centered and respectful of all. As such, the mission of the Penndel School District is as follows:

Penndel School District strives to provide all students with a well-rounded educational experience where they acquire the 21st century skills necessary for a successful future.
www.penndel.org