



## UNIVERSAL VARE CHARTER SCHOOL

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### *Stem and Arts Academy*

April 28, 2023

Dear Universal Vare Charter School Community,

We write to provide an important environmental update regarding the Universal Vare school building. This week, the District began conducting a routine three-year reinspection at Universal Vare, as required under the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA). During this reinspection, confirmed asbestos fiber release episodes (“FRE”) were identified. A FRE is any uncontrolled or unintentional disturbance of asbestos containing material (ACM) resulting in a visible emission, and which must be addressed prior to re-occupancy. Because abatement to this area could not be completed overnight, Universal Vare in discussions with the District decided to move to virtual instruction on Friday, April 28, 2023.

Given the scope of the work the Universal Vare building will remain temporarily closed due to the confirmed asbestos fiber release episodes that were identified. Portions of the building are still being assessed and the complete scope of asbestos abatement needs will be determined over the next few days. While the work is ongoing, the District and Universal Vare continue to work together to complete the necessary assessments to reopen Universal Vare, **as quickly as possible in order to return students to their classrooms.**

It is important to note that the identification of ACMs, even if damaged, does not always necessitate an emergency response. However, the plaster damage identified above the ceiling tiles on the second floor, including the IMC space, requires the building to be closed. The three-year inspection is continuing while the building is closed to identify any additional areas of asbestos damage.

We do recognize that our students are currently in the process of completing the Pennsylvania System of School Assessments (PSSAs), with the Math and Science assessments remaining. To avoid disruption to the testing schedule for our scholars, scholars will be shuttled to the Universal Audenried building (3301 Tasker Street, 19145) to complete their assessments over the next two weeks. Scholars will be instructed virtually on the days they are not testing. Additional information will be provided.

We will provide an update early next week on the status of the Universal Vare building. We appreciate your cooperation, and we will continue to engage with you as information becomes available.

Sincerely,

Dr. Penny Nixon

Superintendent/CEO

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Principal: • Karen Howell-Toomer •

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