
From: Robine, Cathy G <Cathy.Robine@beaufort.k12.sc.us>
Sent: Friday, September 27, 2019 12:00 PM
To: Mary Smith
Subject: Re: River Ridge Mobiles Health Concerns

Ms. Smith thank you for bringing this concern forward. It is definitely something that needs immediate attention .

Cathy G. Robine
Beaufort County Board of Education
District 8
610-888-5296

From: Mary Smith <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Friday, September 27, 2019 11:37:51 AM
To: Email Frank Rodriguez <Frank.Rodriguez@beaufort.k12.sc.us>
Cc: Gwozdz, Christina S <Christina.Gwozdz@beaufort.k12.sc.us>; Robine, Cathy G <Cathy.Robine@beaufort.k12.sc.us>; Smith, William C <William.Smith2@beaufort.k12.sc.us>; Campbell, Earl <earl.campbell@beaufort.k12.sc.us>; Campbell, Melvin P <Melvin.Campbell@beaufort.k12.sc.us>; Dowling, John R <John.Dowling@beaufort.k12.sc.us>; Fidrych, Patricia <Patricia.Fidrych@beaufort.k12.sc.us>; Geier, Richard P <Richard.Geier@beaufort.k12.sc.us>; Orischak, Josephine A <Josephine.Orischak@beaufort.k12.sc.us>; Striebinger, David R <David.Striebinger@beaufort.k12.sc.us>; Wisnefski, Rachel K <Rachel.Wisnefski@beaufort.k12.sc.us>
Subject: River Ridge Mobiles Health Concerns

WARNING: This email originated from outside of Beaufort County School District's email system. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dr. Rodriguez & Board Members:

I am writing with great concern for the health of the many students that are located in the large mobile classroom unit at River Ridge Academy. Last year and during the summer others expressed their concern to the district regarding the awful smell in those classrooms. It was hoped, rather expected, that the problem would be remedied. Children were getting headaches, congestion and sore throats in that building. Children's backpacks were permeated with the smell as well as

the contents of their bags, papers and clothing. The fact that our students were legally required to sit in these classrooms all day long exacerbated the concerns.

Mr. Summers told another parent late summer that the problem was corrected, but there was no air quality report to confirm the results. That is, in itself, beyond inexcusable. Why would you put children and teachers back in those rooms before scientifically confirming that the air quality is safe? Who deemed that the air was safe for these children and teachers? Where is the documentation? Since the health of so many children and teachers are at risk, I took it upon myself to purchase my own air quality monitor and test the air last night during open house. I am revolted by the results and shocked by what appears to be a cavalier attitude toward the health of our children.

The monitor I purchased does not read levels of formaldehyde (HCHO) in excess of 1.999. As you can see in the attached image, the levels reached the max (1.999) which is the monitor's top reading. We have no idea how much higher the HCHO reading would have registered if the unit had the ability to read the correct number. We do, however, know that clearly it is at least 200 times above the acceptable limit.

The monitor also does not read TVOC (Total Volatile Organic Compounds) above 9.999. Again, the monitor maxed out leaving us unaware how much above that number the air really contains. It is clear in my research that once these substances are at a level to cause a noticeable smell you are well beyond the safe and acceptable limits for exposure.

According to all reputable resources, including OSHA, the maximum acceptable level for formaldehyde exposure is 0.010. As stated the levels in this classroom are over 200 times greater than acceptable levels. I fear what the actual levels are using a monitor that can read beyond the maximum numbers of my unit, but one thing is certain, having children being exposed to this 8 hours a day for 180 days is making our children ill AND putting the district at a huge liability.

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not inexpensive units. They will cost near \$1000 dollars per classroom, but we are discussing over 150 children's lives that are potentially affected. The dollar amount should have no bearing. These children deserve to go to school without having to risk their long term health to do so. I feel certain as a district that you would not want this environmental debacle to happen on your watch especially knowing the extreme liability the district would have by being aware of this problem and then choosing to ignore it. We have all seen the cancer clusters that can develop years after a group is exposed to dangerous substances. WHO signed off on the safety of these classrooms? We need full disclosure as but more importantly an expedient correction of a toxic situation. Airborne substances that are so strong they are actually permeating children's clothing? This is beyond unacceptable.

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I am including a list of companies that build units specifically for these airborne contaminants. Again, they are not cheap, but the lives of our children are worth far more.

I am hoping this can be remedied by providing the district and board this information so that immediate action can be taken. If action is not taken promptly to ensure the health of these students I will be forced to reach out to local media to help inform the other parents about what their children are being exposed to on a daily basis as well as letting the general public know the liability the district has placed on itself by not addressing this clear and obvious problem. It doesn't take more than a second of walking into those portable classrooms to know there is a problem, clearly one that has been being ignored at the sake of our children's health and well-being. I truly hope to see swift and immediate action to remedy this problem and provide these children an environment that is not dangerous to their health.

Sincerely,

A Concerned Parent

Air Purifiers:

Grainger

Austin Air Healthmate

AirPura

AirDoctor

Enviroklenz



From: Robine, Cathy G <Cathy.Robine@beaufort.k12.sc.us>
Sent: Friday, September 27, 2019 12:26 PM
To: Wisniewski, Rachel K; Rodriguez, Francisco
Cc: Oetting, Robert S; BOEOnly
Subject: Re: River Ridge Mobiles Health Concerns

I agree this needs immediate attention.

Cathy G. Robine
Beaufort County Board of Education
District 8
610-888-5296

From: Wisniewski, Rachel K <Rachel.Wisniewski@beaufort.k12.sc.us>
Sent: Friday, September 27, 2019 11:49:51 AM
To: Rodriguez, Francisco <Francisco.Rodriguez@beaufort.k12.sc.us>
Cc: Oetting, Robert S <Robert.Oetting@beaufort.k12.sc.us>; BOEOnly <BOEOnly@beaufort.k12.sc.us>
Subject: Fwd: River Ridge Mobiles Health Concerns

All:

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Apologies for brevity. Sent from my BCSD iPhone. Rachel K. Wisniewski, PhD

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Date: September 27, 2019 at 11:37:51 AM EDT

To: frank.rodriguez@beaufort.k12.sc.us
Cc: Christina.gwozdz@beaufort.k12.sc.us,
Cathy.robine@beaufort.k12.sc.us, William.smith2@beaufort.k12.sc.us,
Earl.campbell@beaufort.k12.sc.us, Melvin.campbell@beaufort.k12.sc.us,
John.dowling@beaufort.k12.sc.us, Patricia.fidrych@beaufort.k12.sc.us,
Richard.geier@beaufort.k12.sc.us, joann.orischak@beaufort.k12.sc.us,
david.striebinger@beaufort.k12.sc.us, rachel.wisniewski@beaufort.k12.sc.us
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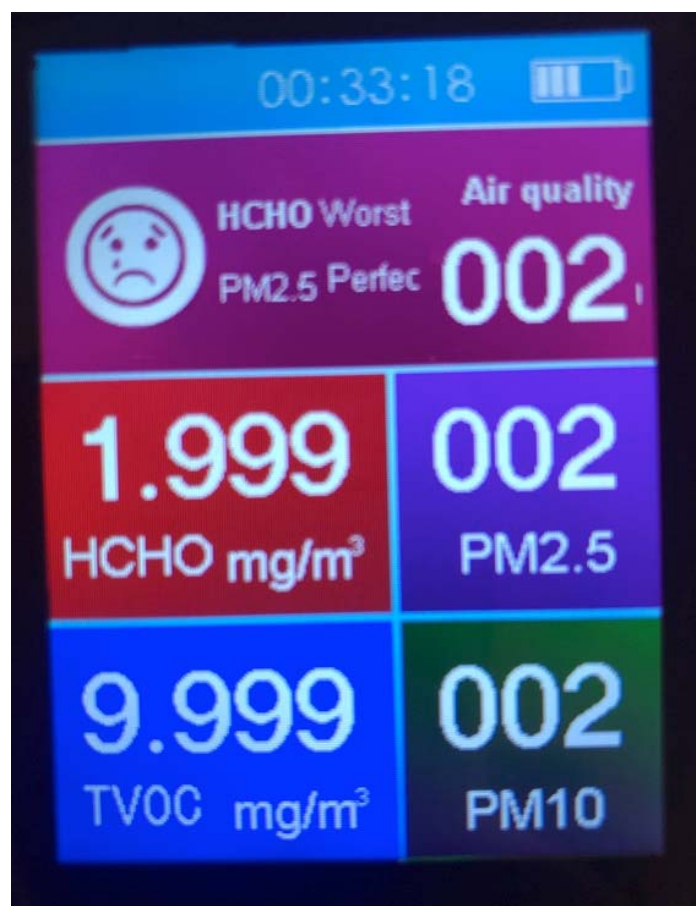
Grainger

Austin Air Healthmate

AirPura

AirDoctor

Enviroklenz



From: Wisniewski, Rachel K <Rachel.Wisniewski@beaufort.k12.sc.us>
Sent: Friday, September 27, 2019 1:07 PM
To: Rodriguez, Francisco
Subject: Re: River Ridge Mobiles Health Concerns

Ms. Smith,

I am looking into this and Requested immediate attention be brought to this matter. I will let you know what I find out. Thank you so much for bringing this to my attention.

Apologies for brevity. Sent from my BCSD iPhone. Rachel K. Wisniewski, PhD

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On Sep 27, 2019, at 12:28 PM, Rodriguez, Francisco <Francisco.Rodriguez@beaufort.k12.sc.us> wrote:

Dear Board Members,
We are jumping on this right away. Will update you with what we find.
Regards,
Frank

Sent from my iPhone

On Sep 27, 2019, at 11:49 AM, Wisniewski, Rachel K <Rachel.Wisniewski@beaufort.k12.sc.us> wrote:

All:

This is extremely concerning. I'd like to request this be added to Tuesday's agenda or a special called meeting before then. The allegations of toxic air in the mobiles certainly constitutes an emergency. I look forward to hearing feedback from District staff regarding the past, present and future plans for this issue.

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Earl.campbell@beaufort.k12.sc.us, Melvin.campbell@beaufort.k12.sc.us,
John.dowling@beaufort.k12.sc.us, Patricia.fidrych@beaufort.k12.sc.us,
Richard.geier@beaufort.k12.sc.us, joann.orischak@beaufort.k12.sc.us,
david.striebinger@beaufort.k12.sc.us, rachel.wisniewski@beaufort.k12.sc.us
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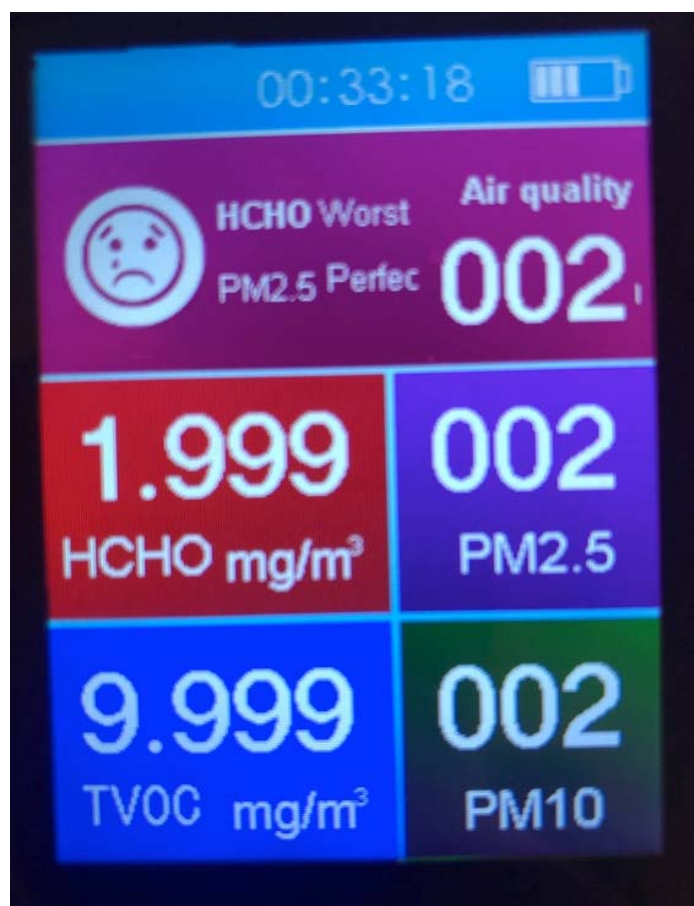
Grainger

Austin Air Healthmate

AirPura

AirDoctor

Enviroklenz



From: Staton, Jennifer A <Jennifer.Staton@beaufort.k12.sc.us>
Sent: Friday, September 27, 2019 1:19 PM
To: Oetting, Robert S; Summers, TimothyT
Subject: RE: River Ridge Mobiles Health Concerns

You're going to have to contact the IAQ consultant. I can't test for formaldehyde and VOCs.

Jennifer Staton, MS, CSP
Risk Manager
Beaufort County School District
843-322-2355 | Fax: 843-322-2389

From: Oetting, Robert S
Sent: Friday, September 27, 2019 12:32 PM
To: Summers, Timothy T <Timothy.Summers@beaufort.k12.sc.us>; Staton, Jennifer A <Jennifer.Staton@beaufort.k12.sc.us>
Subject: Fwd: River Ridge Mobiles Health Concerns

See below. Please investigate today.

Jennifer - we need to line up testing.

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: "Wisniewski, Rachel K" <Rachel.Wisniewski@beaufort.k12.sc.us>
Date: September 27, 2019 at 11:49:51 AM EDT
To: "Rodriguez, Francisco" <Francisco.Rodriguez@beaufort.k12.sc.us>
Cc: "Oetting, Robert S" <Robert.Oetting@beaufort.k12.sc.us>, BOEOnly <BOEOnly@beaufort.k12.sc.us>
Subject: Fwd: River Ridge Mobiles Health Concerns

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John.dowling@beaufort.k12.sc.us, Patricia.fidrych@beaufort.k12.sc.us,
Richard.geier@beaufort.k12.sc.us, joann.orischak@beaufort.k12.sc.us,
david.striebinger@beaufort.k12.sc.us, rachel.wisniewski@beaufort.k12.sc.us
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From: Langford, Craig C <Craig.Langford@terracon.com>
Sent: Friday, September 27, 2019 4:34 PM
To: Oetting, Robert S
Subject: RE: River Ridge Mobiles Health Concerns

Robert,

I have the NTE to you by Monday.

Craig

Craig C. Langford, OHST

Senior Industrial Hygienist
(M) 843.442.6658

From: Oetting, Robert S <Robert.Oetting@beaufort.k12.sc.us>
Sent: Friday, September 27, 2019 4:31 PM
To: Langford, Craig C <Craig.Langford@terracon.com>
Cc: Rowland, Andy <Andy.Rowland@terracon.com>
Subject: RE: River Ridge Mobiles Health Concerns

Craig,

Please 1 day the 4 samples taken in the RRA mobile that is a concern. The other 6 samples for the other locations can be sent off for a 1 week turn around. By Monday, can you send me a NTE estimate for this project so that I can get it approved as emergency procurement?

Robert S. Oetting
Beaufort County School District

From: Langford, Craig C [<mailto:Craig.Langford@terracon.com>]
Sent: Friday, September 27, 2019 4:11 PM
To: Oetting, Robert S <Robert.Oetting@beaufort.k12.sc.us>
Cc: Rowland, Andy <Andy.Rowland@terracon.com>
Subject: RE: River Ridge Mobiles Health Concerns

Robert,

1 day analysis for formaldehyde is \$111.00 (4 day is \$81/1 week is \$66)
1 day for TVOC is \$92 (4 day is \$58/ 1 week is \$42).

If I get them shipped off Monday, I should have the results back by the EOB on Wednesday.

Craig

Craig C. Langford, OHST

Senior Industrial Hygienist
(M) 843.442.6658

From: Oetting, Robert S <Robert.Oetting@beaufort.k12.sc.us>
Sent: Friday, September 27, 2019 3:56 PM
To: Langford, Craig C <Craig.Langford@terracon.com>; Rowland, Andy <Andy.Rowland@terracon.com>
Subject: RE: River Ridge Mobiles Health Concerns

Are there any credible tests that can give faster results?

Robert S. Oetting
Beaufort County School District

From: Langford, Craig C [<mailto:Craig.Langford@terracon.com>]
Sent: Friday, September 27, 2019 3:23 PM
To: Oetting, Robert S <Robert.Oetting@beaufort.k12.sc.us>; Rowland, Andy <Andy.Rowland@terracon.com>
Subject: Re: River Ridge Mobiles Health Concerns

I'm checking now for delivery tomorrow. The analysis standard turn around time is 2 weeks. I'm checking on a 5 day turn around for analysis.

Craig C. Langford, OHST
(M) 843.442.6658
[Outlook for Android](#)

From: Oetting, Robert S <Robert.Oetting@beaufort.k12.sc.us>
Sent: Friday, September 27, 2019 3:18:08 PM
To: Langford, Craig C <Craig.Langford@terracon.com>; Rowland, Andy <Andy.Rowland@terracon.com>
Subject: RE: River Ridge Mobiles Health Concerns

How expensive? I think we would be OK with Saturday delivery if that is an option. This is a priority of the Board. We will be required to report to the Board on Tuesday night. If there is a way this can occur sooner than Tuesday, we would be interested.

Robert S. Oetting
Beaufort County School District

From: Langford, Craig C [<mailto:Craig.Langford@terracon.com>]
Sent: Friday, September 27, 2019 2:21 PM
To: Oetting, Robert S <Robert.Oetting@beaufort.k12.sc.us>; Rowland, Andy <Andy.Rowland@terracon.com>
Subject: Re: River Ridge Mobiles Health Concerns

Robert,

I have ordered the sampling supplies to come 1st thing Tuesday around 8 am. The media needs to be shipped in a cooler with ice packs, therefore Monday was out. Saturday delivery was very expensive. I will have the lab fees shortly and confirm those with you later today.

Craig

Craig C. Langford, OHST
(M) 843.442.6658
[Outlook for Android](#)

From: Oetting, Robert S <Robert.Oetting@beaufort.k12.sc.us>
Sent: Friday, September 27, 2019 1:43:43 PM
To: Langford, Craig C <Craig.Langford@terracon.com>; Rowland, Andy <Andy.Rowland@terracon.com>
Subject: FW: River Ridge Mobiles Health Concerns

Craig/Andy,

See below. How quickly can you come to Beaufort to test for the concerns below?

Robert S. Oetting
Beaufort County School District

From: Rodriguez, Francisco
Sent: Friday, September 27, 2019 12:19 PM
To: Oetting, Robert S <Robert.Oetting@beaufort.k12.sc.us>
Subject: Fwd: River Ridge Mobiles Health Concerns

Please look into this immediately.
Frank

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: "Wisniewski, Rachel K" <Rachel.Wisniewski@beaufort.k12.sc.us>
Date: September 27, 2019 at 11:49:51 AM EDT
To: "Rodriguez, Francisco" <Francisco.Rodriguez@beaufort.k12.sc.us>
Cc: "Oetting, Robert S" <Robert.Oetting@beaufort.k12.sc.us>, BOEOnly <BOEOnly@beaufort.k12.sc.us>
Subject: Fwd: River Ridge Mobiles Health Concerns

All:

This is extremely concerning. I'd like to request this be added to Tuesday's agenda or a special called meeting before then. The allegations of toxic air in the mobiles certainly constitutes an emergency. I look forward to hearing feedback from District staff regarding the past, present and future plans for this issue.

Apologies for brevity. Sent from my BCSD iPhone. Rachel K. Wisniewski, PhD

Disclaimer: This email message (including all attachments) is intended only for the person or entity to which it is addressed. It may contain confidential and/or privileged information and material that may be protected by HIPAA, the Electronic Communications Privacy Act, and other federal and state confidentiality laws. Communications sent to or from the sender are subject to the SC Freedom of Information Act. Any review, retransmission, dissemination or other use of, or taking of any action in reliance upon this information by persons or entities other than the intended recipient is strictly prohibited and punishable to the fullest extent of the law. If you are not the intended recipient, please contact the sender by return email and destroy all copies of the original message.

Begin forwarded message:

From: Mary Smith <[REDACTED]>
Date: September 27, 2019 at 11:37:51 AM EDT

To: frank.rodriguez@beaufort.k12.sc.us
Cc: Christina.gwozdz@beaufort.k12.sc.us,
Cathy.robine@beaufort.k12.sc.us, William.smith2@beaufort.k12.sc.us,
Earl.campbell@beaufort.k12.sc.us, Melvin.campbell@beaufort.k12.sc.us,
John.dowling@beaufort.k12.sc.us, Patricia.fidrych@beaufort.k12.sc.us,
Richard.geier@beaufort.k12.sc.us, joann.orischak@beaufort.k12.sc.us,
david.striebinger@beaufort.k12.sc.us, rachel.wisniewski@beaufort.k12.sc.us
Subject: River Ridge Mobiles Health Concerns

WARNING: This email originated from outside of Beaufort County School District's email system. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dr. Rodriguez & Board Members:

I am writing with great concern for the health of the many students that are located in the large mobile classroom unit at River Ridge Academy. Last year and during the summer others expressed their concern to the district regarding the awful smell in those classrooms. It was hoped, rather expected, that the problem would be remedied. Children were getting headaches, congestion and sore throats in that building. Children's backpacks were permeated with the smell as well as the contents of their bags, papers and clothing. The fact that our students were legally required to sit in these classrooms all day long exacerbated the concerns.

Mr. Summers told another parent late summer that the problem was corrected, but there was no air quality report to confirm the results. That is, in itself, beyond inexcusable. Why would you put children and teachers back in those rooms before scientifically confirming that the air quality is safe? Who deemed that the air was safe for these children and teachers? Where is the documentation? Since the health of so many children and teachers are at risk, I took it upon myself to purchase my own air quality monitor and test the air last night during open house. I am revolted by the results and shocked by what appears to be a cavalier attitude toward the health of our children.

The monitor I purchased does not read levels of formaldehyde (HCHO) in excess of 1.999. As you can see in the attached image, the levels reached the max (1.999) which is the monitor's top reading. We have no idea how much higher the HCHO reading would have registered if the unit had the ability to read the correct number. We do, however, know that clearly it is at least 200 times above the acceptable limit.

The monitor also does not read TVOC (Total Volatile Organic Compounds) above 9.999. Again, the monitor maxed out leaving us unaware how much above that number the air really contains. It is clear in my research that once these substances are at a level to cause a noticeable smell you are well beyond the safe and acceptable limits for exposure.

According to all reputable resources, including OSHA, the maximum acceptable level for formaldehyde exposure is 0.010. As stated the levels in this classroom are over 200 times greater than acceptable levels. I fear what the actual levels are using a monitor that can read beyond the maximum numbers of my unit, but one thing is certain, having children being exposed to this 8 hours a day for 180 days is making our children ill AND putting the district at a huge liability.

By sending this email I have proof the district and board has been made aware of the problem. Choosing to continue to put the health of the children and teachers at risk would be nothing short of gross negligence on your part. There are many air purifiers on the market that do not produce ozone and are meant for removing formaldehyde and VOCs. They are not inexpensive units. They will cost near \$1000 dollars per classroom, but we are discussing over 150 children's lives that are potentially affected. The dollar amount should have no bearing. These children deserve to go to school without having to risk their long term health to do so. I feel certain as a district that you would not want this environmental debacle to happen on your watch especially knowing the extreme liability the district would have by being aware of this problem and then choosing to ignore it. We have all seen the cancer clusters that can develop

years after a group is exposed to dangerous substances. WHO signed off on the safety of these classrooms? We need full disclosure as but more importantly an expedient correction of a toxic situation. Airborne substances that are so strong they are actually permeating children's clothing? This is beyond unacceptable.

I realize and accept that this problem likely can't be totally eliminated since clearly you tried to remediate the smell this summer and that did not work. It can, however, be improved through the immediate purchase and use of air purifying units being added to each of the classrooms including the hallway since teachers often have their doors open. The selection of these purifiers should be made by a knowledgeable person in this area and professionals that can install them correctly and maintain them with clean filters when necessary.

I am including a list of companies that build units specifically for these airborne contaminants. Again, they are not cheap, but the lives of our children are worth far more.

I am hoping this can be remedied by providing the district and board this information so that immediate action can be taken. If action is not taken promptly to ensure the health of these students I will be forced to reach out to local media to help inform the other parents about what their children are being exposed to on a daily basis as well as letting the general public know the liability the district has placed on itself by not addressing this clear and obvious problem. It doesn't take more than a second of walking into those portable classrooms to know there is a problem, clearly one that has been being ignored at the sake of our children's health and well-being. I truly hope to see swift and immediate action to remedy this problem and provide these children an environment that is not dangerous to their health.

Sincerely,

A Concerned Parent

Air Purifiers:

Grainger

Austin Air Healthmate

AirPura

AirDoctor

Enviroklenz



Terracon provides environmental, facilities, geotechnical, and materials consulting engineering services delivered with responsiveness, resourcefulness, and reliability.

Private and confidential as detailed here (<http://www.terracon.com/disclaimer>). If you cannot access the hyperlink, please e-mail sender.

From: Oetting, Robert S <Robert.Oetting@beaufort.k12.sc.us>
Sent: Friday, September 27, 2019 5:39 PM
To: Rodriguez, Francisco
Subject: RE: River Ridge Mobiles Health Concerns

Dr. Rodriguez,

Here is where I am:

I am letting you know what we have done today to address the possible issue with formaldehyde in the mobiles at RRA.

1. Our indoor air quality consultant, Terracon, was contacted to find out the hazards associated with formaldehyde in mobiles.
2. Formaldehyde tests have been ordered for all mobiles purchased in the last two years.
3. An investigation (and I know you have as well) of the mobiles for the presence of an odor.
4. Quickly researched public health data on the presence and hazards of formaldehyde.
5. Researched school health records to symptoms that match the hazards associated with formaldehyde.
6. Contacted the mobile manufacturer to find out if what formaldehyde standards have been met.
7. Investigated the test results of the equipment used by the concern parent.
8. We have contacted the concern parent to visit with them at the school to review their concerns and let them know our game plan.

At this time, I am unable to substantiate a concern related to the use of the mobiles. Formaldehyde tests to be completed on Monday will provide valuable information. Test will be sent off to a lab to analyzed with results returning by late Wednesday. We have put everything on a fast track for completion and this is unfortunately the quickest these test are capable of being completed.

Here is a summary of our findings and research:

- There is a slight odor in the mobiles. Our indoor air quality consultant is not concerned with this smell. He will be on site Monday to verify.
- We are unable to find data stating that formaldehyde discharge in mobiles is a current issue. There have been issues with formaldehyde release in the past, however present tests have found that this is no longer being found in mobiles as a concern. Example research material from the National Institutes of Health is attached.
- Our indoor air quality consultant had not heard of recent issues with formaldehyde in mobiles. They stated that this was an issue 10-15 years ago, but were unaware of recent issues.
- Exposure to formaldehyde is found to cause headaches, nose bleeds, and scratchy eyes.
- Researched the presence of headaches, nose bleeds, scratchy eyes within the school and found no statistically significant difference between students in the mobiles and in the main building.
- The indoor air quality consultant stated that they were familiar with the testing equipment used by

Robert S. Oetting
Beaufort County School District

From: Rodriguez, Francisco
Sent: Friday, September 27, 2019 12:28 PM
To: BOEOnly <BOEOnly@beaufort.k12.sc.us>
Cc: Oetting, Robert S <Robert.Oetting@beaufort.k12.sc.us>
Subject: Re: River Ridge Mobiles Health Concerns

Dear Board Members,
We are jumping on this right away. Will update you with what we find.
Regards,
Frank

Sent from my iPhone

On Sep 27, 2019, at 11:49 AM, Wisniewski, Rachel K <Rachel.Wisniewski@beaufort.k12.sc.us> wrote:

All:

This is extremely concerning. I'd like to request this be added to Tuesday's agenda or a special called meeting before then. The allegations of toxic air in the mobiles certainly constitutes an emergency. I look forward to hearing feedback from District staff regarding the past, present and future plans for this issue.

Apologies for brevity. Sent from my BCSD iPhone. Rachel K. Wisniewski, PhD

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Begin forwarded message:

From: Mary Smith <[REDACTED]>
Date: September 27, 2019 at 11:37:51 AM EDT
To: frank.rodriguez@beaufort.k12.sc.us
Cc: Christina.gwozdz@beaufort.k12.sc.us,
Cathy.robine@beaufort.k12.sc.us, William.smith2@beaufort.k12.sc.us,
Earl.campbell@beaufort.k12.sc.us, Melvin.campbell@beaufort.k12.sc.us,
John.dowling@beaufort.k12.sc.us, Patricia.fidrych@beaufort.k12.sc.us,
Richard.geier@beaufort.k12.sc.us, joann.orischak@beaufort.k12.sc.us,
david.striebinger@beaufort.k12.sc.us, rachel.wisniewski@beaufort.k12.sc.us
Subject: River Ridge Mobiles Health Concerns

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Dr. Rodriguez & Board Members:

I am writing with great concern for the health of the many students that are located in the large mobile classroom unit at River Ridge Academy. Last year and during the summer others expressed their concern to

the district regarding the awful smell in those classrooms. It was hoped, rather expected, that the problem would be remedied. Children were getting headaches, congestion and sore throats in that building. Children's backpacks were permeated with the smell as well as the contents of their bags, papers and clothing. The fact that our students were legally required to sit in these classrooms all day long exacerbated the concerns.

Mr. Summers told another parent late summer that the problem was corrected, but there was no air quality report to confirm the results. That is, in itself, beyond inexcusable. Why would you put children and teachers back in those rooms before scientifically confirming that the air quality is safe? Who deemed that the air was safe for these children and teachers? Where is the documentation? Since the health of so many children and teachers are at risk, I took it upon myself to purchase my own air quality monitor and test the air last night during open house. I am revolted by the results and shocked by what appears to be a cavalier attitude toward the health of our children.

The monitor I purchased does not read levels of formaldehyde (HCHO) in excess of 1.999. As you can see in the attached image, the levels reached the max (1.999) which is the monitor's top reading. We have no idea how much higher the HCHO reading would have registered if the unit had the ability to read the correct number. We do, however, know that clearly it is at least 200 times above the acceptable limit.

The monitor also does not read TVOC (Total Volatile Organic Compounds) above 9.999. Again, the monitor maxed out leaving us unaware how much above that number the air really contains. It is clear in my research that once these substances are at a level to cause a noticeable smell you are well beyond the safe and acceptable limits for exposure.

According to all reputable resources, including OSHA, the maximum acceptable level for formaldehyde exposure is 0.010. As stated the levels in this classroom are over 200 times greater than acceptable levels. I fear what the actual levels are using a monitor that can read beyond the maximum numbers of my unit, but one thing is certain, having children being exposed to this 8 hours a day for 180 days is making our children ill AND putting the district at a huge liability.

By sending this email I have proof the district and board has been made aware of the problem. Choosing to continue to put the health of the children and teachers at risk would be nothing short of gross negligence on your part. There are many air purifiers on the market that do not produce ozone and are meant for removing formaldehyde and VOCs. They are not inexpensive units. They will cost near \$1000 dollars per classroom, but we are discussing over 150 children's lives that are potentially affected. The dollar amount should have no bearing. These children deserve to go to school without having to risk their long term health to do so. I feel certain as a district that you would not want this environmental debacle to happen on your watch especially knowing the extreme liability the district would have by being aware of this problem and then choosing to ignore it. We have all seen the cancer clusters that can develop years after a group is exposed to dangerous substances. WHO signed off on the safety of these classrooms? We need full disclosure as but more importantly an expedient correction of a toxic situation. Airborne substances that are so strong they are actually permeating children's clothing? This is beyond unacceptable.

I realize and accept that this problem likely can't be totally eliminated since clearly you tried to remediate the smell this summer and that did not work. It can, however, be improved through the immediate purchase and use of air purifying units being added to each of the classrooms including the hallway since teachers often have their doors open. The selection of these purifiers should be made by a knowledgeable person in this area and professionals that can install them correctly and maintain them with clean filters when necessary.

I am including a list of companies that build units specifically for these airborne contaminants. Again, they are not cheap, but the lives of our children are worth far more.

I am hoping this can be remedied by providing the district and board this information so that immediate action can be taken. If action is not taken promptly to ensure the health of these students I will be forced to reach out to local media to help inform the other parents about what their children are being exposed to on a daily basis as well as letting the general public know the liability the district has placed on itself by not addressing this clear and obvious problem. It doesn't take more than a second of walking into those portable classrooms to know there is a problem, clearly one that has been being ignored at the sake of our children's health and well-being. I truly hope to see swift and immediate action to remedy this problem and provide these children an environment that is not dangerous to their health.

Sincerely,

A Concerned Parent

Air Purifiers:

Grainger

Austin Air Healthmate

AirPura

AirDoctor

Enviroklenz



From: Mary Smith [REDACTED]
Sent: Saturday, September 28, 2019 11:09 AM
To: Oetting, Robert S
Cc: Rodriguez, Francisco; Ryman, Brian R
Subject: Re: River Ridge Mobiles Health Concerns

Mr. Oetting,

Thank you for reaching out and for your concern regarding this matter. While I appreciate the offer to meet with you I will have to respectfully decline. I am not an expert in this matter. Rather a parent with some common sense that when children are showing these symptoms and coming home smelling strongly like the environment they are being schooled in there is a problem. Through just basic research into the things that can cause this in mobiles it led me to purchase the particular monitor I chose. There may be other issues and the issues may be far more severe than indicated by this monitor.

I firmly feel that the use of the monitor I have will do nothing to help determine the severity of the matter. I believe a true, professional air quality test with higher limits to their readings is necessary to determine the extent of this issue. I have no training or education in the remediation of such substances but I know there are people that do and trust the district has the resources to bring in professionals to ensure the health of our children and teachers.

I appreciate the expediency with which you are trying to move with this. I do also understand that this will not be an overnight fix. These children have been dealing with this environment for over an entire year already. My expectation is just to see swift and earnest action being taken to fully identify and remediate this problem.

Thank you again for your quick attention to this matter

On Sat, Sep 28, 2019 at 7:30 AM Oetting, Robert S <Robert.Oetting@beaufort.k12.sc.us> wrote:

Ms. Smith,

We are extremely interested in retesting portions of the mobiles with the meter that you purchased. I have a theory on a possible cause and I would like to test it out. We have attempted to purchase a similar meter but it has to be mail ordered. We are trying to resolve any issues prior to Monday. If you are available, please let us know.

You can reach the River Ridge Academy principal, Brian Ryan at 843-694-1003.

Robert S. Oetting

Beaufort County School District

From: Oetting, Robert S
Sent: Friday, September 27, 2019 4:19 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: Rodriguez, Francisco <Francisco.Rodriguez@beaufort.k12.sc.us>; Ryman, Brian R <Brian.Ryman@beaufort.k12.sc.us>
Subject: FW: River Ridge Mobiles Health Concerns

Ms. Smith,

I was immediately concerned by the findings of your email. My team has been working this afternoon on a plan to address your concerns. We would like to meet you at the school to walk the mobile and to discuss your concern. We have developed thoughts on the best way to address and we would like the opportunity to review that with you. We will meet you on site at your earliest convenience. Mr. Ryman can meet you at the school this weekend if that is available to you. What is a number that we can contact you to coordinate?

Robert S. Oetting

Beaufort County School District

From: Mary Smith <[REDACTED]>
Date: September 27, 2019 at 11:37:51 AM EDT
To: frank.rodriguez@beaufort.k12.sc.us
Cc: Christina.gwozdz@beaufort.k12.sc.us,
Cathy.robine@beaufort.k12.sc.us, William.smith2@beaufort.k12.sc.us,
Earl.campbell@beaufort.k12.sc.us, Melvin.campbell@beaufort.k12.sc.us,
John.dowling@beaufort.k12.sc.us, Patricia.fidrych@beaufort.k12.sc.us,
Richard.geier@beaufort.k12.sc.us, joann.orischak@beaufort.k12.sc.us,
david.striebinger@beaufort.k12.sc.us, rachel.wisnefski@beaufort.k12.sc.us
Subject: River Ridge Mobiles Health Concerns

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help inform the other parents about what their children are being exposed to on a daily basis as well as letting the general public know the liability the district has placed on itself by not addressing this clear and obvious problem. It doesn't take more than a second of walking into those portable classrooms to know there is a problem, clearly one that has been being ignored at the sake of our children's health and well-being. I truly hope to see swift and immediate action to remedy this problem and provide these children an environment that is not dangerous to their health.

Sincerely,

A Concerned Parent

Air Purifiers:

Grainger

Austin Air Healthmate

AirPura

AirDoctor

Enviroklenz



From: Rodriguez, Francisco <Francisco.Rodriguez@beaufort.k12.sc.us>
Sent: Sunday, September 29, 2019 4:44 PM
To: Striebinger, David R
Cc: Fidrych, Patricia; BOEOnly; Oetting, Robert S
Subject: Re: River Ridge Mobiles Health Concerns
Attachments: image001.jpg

Yes, we even asked her to meet us at the school yesterday and to bring the sensor she used. She declined the invitation and did not provide a phone number as we had requested. She did thank us for taking immediate action. Not sure that is her real name. At any rate we are taking appropriate action to check on the air-quality.

Principal Ryman is communicating with parents and teachers.

Will update when we know more.

Frank

Sent from my iPhone

On Sep 29, 2019, at 4:24 PM, Striebinger, David R <David.Striebinger@beaufort.k12.sc.us> wrote:

anyone get back to Mary Smith?

david striebinger
Beaufort County Board of Education
District 2 representative

From: Fidrych, Patricia <Patricia.Fidrych@beaufort.k12.sc.us>
Sent: Sunday, September 29, 2019 4:15 PM
To: Rodriguez, Francisco <Francisco.Rodriguez@beaufort.k12.sc.us>; BOEOnly <BOEOnly@beaufort.k12.sc.us>
Cc: Oetting, Robert S <Robert.Oetting@beaufort.k12.sc.us>
Subject: Re: River Ridge Mobiles Health Concerns

Frank,
Thank you. Sounds like a good and appropriate plan.
Sincerely,
Tricia

Get [Outlook for iOS](#)

From: Rodriguez, Francisco <Francisco.Rodriguez@beaufort.k12.sc.us>
Sent: Sunday, September 29, 2019 3:48:50 PM
To: BOEOnly <BOEOnly@beaufort.k12.sc.us>
Cc: Oetting, Robert S <Robert.Oetting@beaufort.k12.sc.us>
Subject: RE: River Ridge Mobiles Health Concerns

Good evening Board Members,
We are thoroughly looking into this matter and will have professionals on campus tomorrow morning to begin taking professional-grade air-quality tests. We will not know the answers for a few days. As a result we will displace the classes from the mobile unit and move them into the building. They will

remain there until the results of the tests return. I will keep you informed when the results from the air-quality tests are returned to us.

Regards,
Frank

From: Rodriguez, Francisco
Sent: Friday, September 27, 2019 12:28 PM
To: BOEOnly <BOEOnly@beaufort.k12.sc.us>
Cc: Oetting, Robert S <Robert.Oetting@beaufort.k12.sc.us>
Subject: Re: River Ridge Mobiles Health Concerns

Dear Board Members,
We are jumping on this right away. Will update you with what we find.
Regards,
Frank

Sent from my iPhone

On Sep 27, 2019, at 11:49 AM, Wisniewski, Rachel K <Rachel.Wisniewski@beaufort.k12.sc.us> wrote:

All:

This is extremely concerning. I'd like to request this be added to Tuesday's agenda or a special called meeting before then. The allegations of toxic air in the mobiles certainly constitutes an emergency. I look forward to hearing feedback from District staff regarding the past, present and future plans for this issue.

Apologies for brevity. Sent from my BCSD iPhone. Rachel K. Wisniewski, PhD

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Begin forwarded message:

From: Mary Smith <[REDACTED]>
Date: September 27, 2019 at 11:37:51 AM EDT
To: frank.rodriguez@beaufort.k12.sc.us
Cc: Christina.gwozd@beaufort.k12.sc.us,
Cathy.robine@beaufort.k12.sc.us, William.smith2@beaufort.k12.sc.us,
Earl.campbell@beaufort.k12.sc.us, Melvin.campbell@beaufort.k12.sc.us,
John.dowling@beaufort.k12.sc.us, Patricia.fidrych@beaufort.k12.sc.us,
Richard.geier@beaufort.k12.sc.us, joann.orischak@beaufort.k12.sc.us,
david.striebinger@beaufort.k12.sc.us, rachel.wisniewski@beaufort.k12.sc.us

Subject: River Ridge Mobiles Health Concerns

WARNING: This email originated from outside of Beaufort County School District's email system. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dr. Rodriguez & Board Members:

I am writing with great concern for the health of the many students that are located in the large mobile classroom unit at River Ridge Academy. Last year and during the summer others expressed their concern to the district regarding the awful smell in those classrooms. It was hoped, rather expected, that the problem would be remedied. Children were getting headaches, congestion and sore throats in that building. Children's backpacks were permeated with the smell as well as the contents of their bags, papers and clothing. The fact that our students were legally required to sit in these classrooms all day long exacerbated the concerns.

Mr. Summers told another parent late summer that the problem was corrected, but there was no air quality report to confirm the results. That is, in itself, beyond inexcusable. Why would you put children and teachers back in those rooms before scientifically confirming that the air quality is safe? Who deemed that the air was safe for these children and teachers? Where is the documentation? Since the health of so many children and teachers are at risk, I took it upon myself to purchase my own air quality monitor and test the air last night during open house. I am revolted by the results and shocked by what appears to be a cavalier attitude toward the health of our children.

The monitor I purchased does not read levels of formaldehyde (HCHO) in excess of 1.999. As you can see in the attached image, the levels reached the max (1.999) which is the monitor's top reading. We have no idea how much higher the HCHO reading would have registered if the unit had the ability to read the correct number. We do, however, know that clearly it is at least 200 times above the acceptable limit.

The monitor also does not read TVOC (Total Volatile Organic Compounds) above 9.999. Again, the monitor maxed out leaving us unaware how much above that number the air really contains. It is clear in my research that once these substances are at a level to cause a noticeable smell you are well beyond the safe and acceptable limits for exposure.

According to all reputable resources, including OSHA, the maximum acceptable level for formaldehyde exposure is 0.010. As stated the levels in this classroom are over 200 times greater than acceptable levels. I fear what the actual levels are using a monitor that can read beyond the maximum numbers of my unit, but one thing is certain, having children being exposed to this 8 hours a day for 180 days is making our children ill AND putting the district at a huge liability.

By sending this email I have proof the district and board has been made aware of the problem. Choosing to continue to put the health of the children and teachers at risk would be nothing short of gross negligence on your part. There are many air purifiers on the market that do not produce ozone and are meant for removing formaldehyde and VOCs. They are not inexpensive units. They will cost near \$1000 dollars per classroom, but we are

discussing over 150 children's lives that are potentially affected. The dollar amount should have no bearing. These children deserve to go to school without having to risk their long term health to do so. I feel certain as a district that you would not want this environmental debacle to happen on your watch especially knowing the extreme liability the district would have by being aware of this problem and then choosing to ignore it. We have all seen the cancer clusters that can develop years after a group is exposed to dangerous substances. WHO signed off on the safety of these classrooms? We need full disclosure as but more importantly an expedient correction of a toxic situation. Airborne substances that are so strong they are actually permeating children's clothing? This is beyond unacceptable.

I realize and accept that this problem likely can't be totally eliminated since clearly you tried to remediate the smell this summer and that did not work. It can, however, be improved through the immediate purchase and use of air purifying units being added to each of the classrooms including the hallway since teachers often have their doors open. The selection of these purifiers should be made by a knowledgeable person in this area and professionals that can install them correctly and maintain them with clean filters when necessary.

I am including a list of companies that build units specifically for these airborne contaminants. Again, they are not cheap, but the lives of our children are worth far more.

I am hoping this can be remedied by providing the district and board this information so that immediate action can be

taken. If action is not taken promptly to ensure the health of these students I will be forced to reach out to local media to help inform the other parents about what their children are being exposed to on a daily basis as well as letting the general public know the liability the district has placed on itself by not addressing this clear and obvious problem. It doesn't take more than a second of walking into those portable classrooms to know there is a problem, clearly one that has been being ignored at the sake of our children's health and well-being. I truly hope to see swift and immediate action to remedy this problem and provide these children an environment that is not dangerous to their health.

Sincerely,

A Concerned Parent

Air Purifiers:

Grainger

Austin Air Healthmate

AirPura

AirDoctor

Enviroklenz

<image001.jpg>

From: Robine, Cathy G <Cathy.Robine@beaufort.k12.sc.us>
Sent: Sunday, September 29, 2019 7:55 PM
To: Rodriguez, Francisco
Subject: RE: River Ridge Mobiles Health Concerns

Thank you for taking action and keeping us informed.

Cathy G. Robine
Beaufort County Board of Education
District 8 Representative
610-888-5296

From: Rodriguez, Francisco
Sent: Sunday, September 29, 2019 3:49 PM
To: BOEOnly <BOEOnly@beaufort.k12.sc.us>
Cc: Oetting, Robert S <Robert.Oetting@beaufort.k12.sc.us>
Subject: RE: River Ridge Mobiles Health Concerns

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Subject: Re: River Ridge Mobiles Health Concerns

Dear Board Members,
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Sent from my iPhone

On Sep 27, 2019, at 11:49 AM, Wisniewski, Rachel K <Rachel.Wisniewski@beaufort.k12.sc.us> wrote:

All:

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Begin forwarded message:

From: Mary Smith <[REDACTED]>
Date: September 27, 2019 at 11:37:51 AM EDT
To: frank.rodriguez@beaufort.k12.sc.us
Cc: Christina.gwozdz@beaufort.k12.sc.us,
Cathy.robine@beaufort.k12.sc.us, William.smith2@beaufort.k12.sc.us,
Earl.campbell@beaufort.k12.sc.us, Melvin.campbell@beaufort.k12.sc.us,
John.dowling@beaufort.k12.sc.us, Patricia.fidrych@beaufort.k12.sc.us,
Richard.geier@beaufort.k12.sc.us, joann.orischak@beaufort.k12.sc.us,
david.striebinger@beaufort.k12.sc.us, rachel.wisniewski@beaufort.k12.sc.us
Subject: River Ridge Mobiles Health Concerns

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beyond inexcusable. Why would you put children and teachers back in those rooms before scientifically confirming that the air quality is safe? Who deemed that the air was safe for these children and teachers? Where is the documentation? Since the health of so many children and teachers are at risk, I took it upon myself to purchase my own air quality monitor and test the air last night during open house. I am revolted by the results and shocked by what appears to be a cavalier attitude toward the health of our children.

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From: Wisniewski, Rachel K <Rachel.Wisniewski@beaufort.k12.sc.us>
Sent: Monday, September 30, 2019 10:14 AM
To: Mary Smith
Subject: Re: River Ridge Mobiles Health Concerns

Good morning Ms. Smith:

I sent a reply to your email on Friday but it appears it did not go to the right email address. I wanted to let you know that I appreciate you bringing this to my attention. It is my understanding that the administration has been in touch with you and is addressing this matter. If you have any further questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me. Thank you again!

Warmest regards,
Rachel

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