



For Immediate Release

Contact: Dennis Eichelbaum
General Counsel
972-567-2963
dje@edlaw.com

National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health concludes no connection between Nichols, health claims

ARLINGTON, Texas, April 5, 2017 – There has been significant misinformation with respect to Nichols Junior High School. Here are the facts: Tarrant County Public Health Department; Environmental Protection Agency, Arlington Fire Department, and independent experts (Armstrong Forensic Laboratory, Inc.; EFI Global Engineering, Fire and Environmental Services; Engineered Air Balance Company, and; Estes McClure, and Associates), and now National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), on behalf of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, have all tested and/or reviewed the tests and have concluded that there is no credible evidence that Nichols Junior High has caused anyone's illnesses.

The NAACP, the plaintiffs in the lawsuit, and the media reports have been based upon an opinion provided by Wolf Eagle Environmental, led by an individual whose opinion was rejected by at least one court and who has previously been accused of fraud. The "Preliminary Health Review" she provided is based on guesswork, and she admits she has not even seen all the reports from those that actually performed tests at Nichols Junior High. Dr. Rich, who prepared the Wolf Eagle Environmental report, has never performed a single environmental test of Nichols Junior High for contaminants, yet she has the temerity to conclude there exists contaminants that are the actual cause of illness. (She also is not a medical doctor and has not performed a medical examination on anyone who is alleging symptoms from Nichols.)

When the plaintiffs were offered by AISD to select an independent laboratory *of their choice* that both their expert (Dr. Rich) and AISD's experts could observe as the independent technician performed the tests selected by Dr. Rich, the plaintiffs refused to agree to such an independent test performed by *anyone other than Dr. Rich*.

There is a private doctor who has been cited for concluding that Nichols Junior High is the cause of his patient's symptoms. The doctor's conclusions have been rejected by worker's compensation for having lacked any medical connection between his patient's alleged symptoms and Nichols. Additionally, that doctor, who previously reached a mediated agreed order with the Texas Medical Board based upon his treatment of patients using automobile and jet fuel exhaust, has done no testing of Nichols, but has allegedly determined with medical certainty the origin of her illness.

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' NIOSH report, which was unsolicited and independent, calls the sensation that is happening at Nichols Junior High "heightened awareness," which it defines as "a phenomena where people began noticing symptoms after hearing others talking about them." There may be persons with legitimate illnesses, and there may even be persons who have gotten ill while in Nichols Junior High, similar to employees and students who get sick in other

buildings. But the student absences this year for Nichols have been consistent with previous years and do not significantly differ from any other AISD school. The NIOSH report supports the conclusion that many of the alleged illnesses are the result of persons feeling sick only after they saw others claim illness. All the experts that have actually tested and reviewed all the reports have concluded Nichols Junior High is not the cause of these alleged illnesses.

While it has been reported that there have been more than 500 separate complaints, the fact is more than 380 of the complaints have come from 20 individuals and more than 100 are from one individual. What is concerning is that some may have actual medical issues, but they are being misled by these disingenuous reports and litigants seeking a million dollars in taxpayer money from seeking the actual cause to help doctors lead them to wellness. Out of an abundance of caution, care, and concern for the students and employees, Arlington ISD has spared no expense to test Nichols Junior High to confirm there is no relationship between the alleged illnesses and the building.

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Dennis J. Eichelbaum
Managing Shareholder
Eichelbaum Wardell Hansen Powell & Mehl, P.C.