



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

**Hartford Parents of Clark Elementary School Request Emergency Meeting with Governor
about Toxic Chemical Found in Their Children's School**

**Wednesday, February 11, 2015 | 1:00 pm
Governor Dannel P. Malloy's Office, 210 Capitol Avenue, Hartford, CT**

Hartford, CT: Hartford parent leaders and education advocates will hand deliver a letter requesting an emergency meeting with Governor Malloy and any other health and education decision makers. The meeting is requested because of grave concerns about the health, safety, education and overall wellbeing of children that attended Hartford's John C. Clark Elementary School.

Clark Elementary School, a systemically low performing school, was closed for the remainder of the school year due to levels of polychlorinated biphenyls, PCB, a hazardous chemical that was discovered in the air at the school.

Clark parents and other community members are understandably alarmed because they were provided no timely information as to the why the school was closed. Furthermore, they have not been provided with any information regarding the possible health effects on students from the long term chemical exposure and the potential need for medical monitoring. In addition, Clark parents had absolutely no input as to other schools where their children were transferred.

Many parents, mostly of color and residing within low-income communities, state "this incident appears to be yet another where education decision makers have not adequately engaged parents in the decisions made about their children, the students of Clark School. Furthermore concerns exist about the lack of enforcement of Community Right to Know laws. We are hopeful that these failures are not another instance of students and parents from poorer districts being treated with less concern than those in more affluent neighborhoods."

**For more information please contact: Milly Arciniegas, Hartford Parents
University, millya@hartfordparentuniversity.org or call Gwen Samuel at 203-443-3203 or
email info@ctparentsunion.org**

###



February 11, 2015

Governor Dannel P. Malloy
State Capitol
210 Capitol Avenue
Hartford CT 06106

RE: Requesting an Emergency Meeting with the Governor Regarding Toxic Chemical found in Clark Elementary School

Dear Governor Malloy:

We have come together as parents of public school students from communities across Connecticut to request an emergency meeting with you and any other appropriate health and education decision makers. The meeting is requested because of grave concerns about the health, safety, education and overall wellbeing of children that attended Hartford's John C. Clark Elementary School.

As you may know Clark Elementary School, a systemically low performing school, was closed for the remainder of the school year due to levels of polychlorinated biphenyls, PCB, a hazardous chemical that was discovered in the air at the school.

Clark parents and other community members are understandably alarmed because they were provided no timely information as to the why the school was closed. Furthermore, they have not been provided with any information regarding the possible health effects on students from the long term chemical exposure and the potential need for medical monitoring. In addition, Clark parents had absolutely no input as to other schools where their children were transferred.

It is with these sentiments that parents are requesting an emergency meeting with your office to address our concerns and request short and long term solutions that are in the best interest of children *most* in need.

This incident appears to be yet another where education decision makers have not adequately engaged parents in the decisions made about their children, the students of Clark School. Further concerns exist due to lack of enforcement of the Community Right to Know law. We are hopeful that these failures are not another instance of students and parents from poorer districts being treated with less concern than those in more affluent neighborhoods.

Due to the gravity of this situation, we look forward to meeting with you within the next 48-72 hours. Moving quickly to make this happen, may help to ease the fears of parents. This issue is of utmost importance to all parents of children who may attend poor-performing schools in old buildings throughout Hartford and other urban cities throughout Connecticut.

We thank you in advance for your prompt consideration of our request because we, as parents, want to believe all Connecticut children matter, regardless of zip-code.

Sincerely,

Mille Soto
School Governance Council, Chair
John C. Clark Elementary School

Milly Arciniegas
Executive Director,
Hartford Parent University

Gwen Samuel
President
CT Parents Union

Cc: Via Email

Hartford Board of Education
State Department of Education