

School Opening Update from 8/20/24 School Board Meeting

Chris Young • 5 days ago • Wednesday, Aug 21 at 7:21 AM • **North Country Union High School**

Good morning everyone!

This message to provide you with an update on the NCUHS School Opening. As a quick recap, both B & C Wing underwent PCB Mitigation Projects over the summer. The work focused on removing caulking from around windows and painting walls with epoxy paint. The C Wing project started earlier, and so we received results last week that indicated that the mitigation was successful in most of the rooms. Since the B Wing project started later, we just received the preliminary results this afternoon. Unfortunately, the testing did not show a reduction in PCB levels in B Wing, so we will not have access to B Wing classrooms for the time being.

Based on discussions with our consultants, it is possible that the reason that the results did not improve was that the crews rushed to finish work over the summer in an effort to complete the project in time for school to start. Ideally, rooms would be undisturbed before air testing to allow the mitigation efforts to take full effect. The rooms in B-Wing were tested 5 days after work completion, compared to the rooms in C-Wing that were tested 10 days after work completion. We are hopeful that additional time for cleaning, HVAC use, and air filters will make a difference in the levels and allow us to use the rooms in the near future.

In the meantime, we will need to avoid using B Wing, activate our plan that repurposes several areas to create more classrooms, as well erect tents to provide additional classroom space. Our administrative and maintenance teams have been working with multiple state agencies and divisions to plan this work, and we have made significant progress on it. However, moving to tents and repurposed spaces will require extensive planning and the timeline is simply too tight to ensure that we will be prepared for students on August 27th.

At their August 20th meeting, the NCUHS School Board approved the [2024 NCUHS Opening Plan](#) for our space, as well as directed the NCUHS & NCCC administration to decide on the length of a delay to the start of school. At this point, there are too many unanswered questions to determine how many days school opening will be delayed, but we hope to make it as short as possible and still be prepared for students. We will send out a final determination of the opening day for students by Friday, August 23rd; the timing for this notice will coincide with additional test results that we expect to have on other classroom spaces in B Wing by Friday afternoon.

In short, we will certainly be in person, our students and staff will be safe, and we will open as close to on time as we possibly can. We appreciate your support and understanding as we work to welcome our students back to school this fall, and please let me know with any questions.

Chris Young
Principal, NCUHS