

Dear Community,

September 22, 2020

On August 24, 2020 the Whitehall community was hit with a devastating storm that resulted in over 6" of rain falling in a very short period of time. That storm created significant water and sewer back-up into the Whitehall High School leaving over 1" of standing Category 3 (black water) in all areas of the High School facility with several inches to several feet of water in other areas.

The district IMMEDIATELY reached out to our **Insurance Carrier, NYSIR (the New York School Insurance Reciprocal)** who after several calls by the district, sent an adjuster to the building on the 25<sup>th</sup>. Since this time, we have been STRUGGLING DAILY to get a response on coverage for this multi-million dollar loss. The district has been asked for, and has provided to NYSIR all documentation requested; including a preliminary engineering report identifying the root cause of the damage being "Water and Sewer backup" that resulted from overwhelmed drains and sewer system. Of important note, the district is covered for 30+ Million Dollars for water and sewer backup, yet **NYSIR continues to remain SILENT** on coverage after **4 weeks**.

As I sit here on September 22, 2020 in a temporary office space with our entire high school student body relegated solely to remote instruction as a result of the extensive damage to the school; we have STILL not received a response from NYSIR on coverage. We have been told repeatedly that we would receive a response "soon". On September 8, 2020 NYSIR sent ACTUAL REPRESENTATIVES to the district for the first time since the loss. At that meeting, we were promised a response in 48 hours. That timeline has come and gone. Each and every day that NYSIR takes to make the right choice to cover the extensive loss of August 24<sup>th</sup>, the longer that our students will be precluded from being offered and receiving the in-person instruction that they deserve.

I am reaching out again today to the local Print Media as well as Television News Media to share our story. Additionally, below I share with the Whitehall Community which includes our Parents, Faculty and Staff as well as our Elected Officials and Board Of Education the **contact information for the New York School Insurance Reciprocal Executive Director, Assistant Executive Director, the Vice President of Claims as well as their Board of Governors**. Should you wish to reach out to any of these individuals and express your concern; I would certainly encourage you to do so.

Together, I truly hope that we can **encourage (NYSIR)** the New York School Insurance Reciprocal, to make the Right Choice and provide coverage for our qualified loss. Our students deserve to receive an in-person education in a clean and safe facility.

In Solidarity,

Patrick Dee  
Superintendent of Schools.

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