



October 24, 2024

Dear Windermere Family -

I write to inform you that a serious construction safety incident occurred at Windermere on Friday, October 18, 2024. The construction in the area was halted immediately. Thankfully, no student, staff member, or construction employee was injured.

On the morning of October 18th, a trade-contractor was removing a portion of an exterior masonry wall when part of a concrete block fell through the ceiling into the hallway located at the intersection of the 6th-grade wing and the main hallway. The debris fell within proximity of a student walking in the hallway.

To be clear - this incident was preventable, should never have occurred, and could have resulted in serious injury to students or staff. Construction work of this nature is not permitted while staff or students occupy the building.

During the past several days, the administration has been working with O & G Industries (construction manager), Arcadis (project manager), Town of Ellington's Permanent Building Committee (PBC) Chair Peter Welti, and PBC Member and Board of Education representative Gary Blanchette to understand why this occurred, assess accountability, and ensure the safety of the project moving forward.

The following steps have been taken:

- The foreman has been replaced
- Additional safety employees have been added at no cost to the taxpayer
- Another layer of safety inspections is now required prior to any demolition work
- The trade-contractor will be fined monetarily to the benefit of the taxpayer

The safety and security of the Ellington Family, especially children, is paramount. Members of the Permanent Building Committee and the Board of Education were promptly notified.

While there is much to be proud of regarding the progress of the Windermere Building Project, this incident should not be minimized. At this time, I am confident the appropriate corrective actions have been taken to benefit the Windermere staff and students.

Please contact me directly with any questions or concerns at 860-896-2300, snicol@ellingtonschools.net.

Regards,

Dr. Scott Nicol, Superintendent of Schools