

Jefferson County Teachers Association

Watterson City West Building, Suite 300
1941 Bishop Lane, Louisville, KY 40218
(502) 454-3400
www.jcta.org

To the Members of Metro Council:

As the President of the Jefferson County Teachers Association (JCTA), I have the privilege of representing 6,000 public school employees. Our organization is committed to promoting success for every learner in our Jefferson County Public Schools, serving as a voice for excellence in public education, and advancing human, civil, and economic rights for all. It is this mission that leads me to write today in support of O-134-22, an ordinance which seeks to reduce the risk of children to lead exposure.

JCTA is very concerned about the data showing that childhood lead exposure significantly impairs a child's cognitive, intellectual, and developmental potential. A 2022 study published in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences showed that children exposed to lead had lower standardized test scores than their peers. That same study showed that Black students are more likely to be exposed to lead, and that lead exposure is a significant factor in the test score gap we see between Black students and white students.

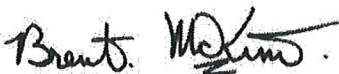
The data in Louisville is also concerning. We know that 18,000 children in Louisville live in rental units where they are at risk of lead exposure. Data also shows that almost 10,000 children in Louisville have tested positive for lead exposure since 2005. Children living in West Louisville are almost 10 times more likely to be exposed to lead than are children in other parts of our city.

The evidence is clear: exposure to lead is driving educational inequity. The evidence is also clear that cities who have enacted proactive lead inspection schemes have seen a drop in the number of children exposed to lead. Because JCTA is committed to ensuring every child has a full opportunity to learn, we support creating a proactive lead inspection program in Louisville.

This investment in our children's future will generate an impact for many decades to come. Not only will it further educational equity and opportunity, but it will also save valuable public resources. Studies have showed that every dollar invested in lead exposure prevention generates at least \$17 in return from educational outcomes, lifetime earnings, and reduced healthcare and incarceration expenses.

If I can provide any further information or answer any questions, please let me know. Thank you for your consideration of this important legislation.

Sincerely,



Brent McKim
JCTA President

Affiliated With

National Education Association



Kentucky Education Association

