

Public Comments for School Board Meetings

#649

I would like to provide: *

In-Person Comments in the School Board Meeting Room

Select the meeting date:* *

September 21, 2023 6:30 p.m.

My public comments are related to: *

Safety/Security

Topic *

H-Vac Installation & Air flow, Air quality

Full Name *

Mrs. Rosina Simmons

What is your relationship to ACPS? *

Staff Member

Enter your comments here OR upload below:

Upload a copy of your public comments or other supporting documents:



[september_21st_school_board_mtg._comments.docx](#)

14.7KB · DOCX

Upload additional information:



[508cleanairbuildings_factsheet_v5_508.pdf](#) 109.5KB ·

PDF

September 11, 2023

I'm here to advocate on behalf of Francis C. Hammond family. This evening I would like to review the Facilities and Operations job on H-VAC installation, air flow, and air quality. I would like you to grade their progress. On Aug. 17-18 flex days staff were supposed to report to campus to set up their classrooms and offices. Our Principal advised us to work from home completing professional learning modules because the building wasn't ready for access!

I came in on the 17th because it was the day my son loaned his girlfriend to me to assist with setting up heavy furniture and hanging decorations from the ceiling construction workers took down. When I arrived, the lobby debris was everywhere, wires were hanging from the office ceilings and classrooms. The airflow and air quality are stifling. It was very emotional to view my beautiful school in these conditions. I stayed one hour while I had assistance. We were sweating profusely.

Later, I noticed my teacher's chair and cart for my LCD projector were missing. The staff located my cart in the basement. Although my name and room number were on the cart, the Administrative Assistant saw Construction workers using it to transport materials. My teacher's chair was never located. I sent an all-staff email to locate my property. Other staff began reporting missing furniture and items from offices and classrooms.

You may be thinking conditions at Hammond have improved with numerous phone calls, texts, and emails now that we're a month into the school year. Some areas still have no AC, bad smells from the vents and the entire building's poor air quality and airflow is a concern.

Our Principal, Building Engineer, and Custodians have worked with Facilities and Operations tirelessly to improve these conditions. We have a brand new H-VAC system, how can it be the small gym, library and many classrooms didn't have AC? The PE offices and locker rooms for dressing out still have no AC to date. They were told you never had AC, you always had fans so the implication is you're not a priority! I am here this evening to ask this board to hold the construction company responsible for missing furniture and items on our campus and Facilities and Operations to ensure proper installation of the H-VAC system.

Teachers and staff have fallen ill with respiratory infections. The classrooms are not being cleaned at a level 4 proficiency. I have gone home several days with a sinus headache that pain meds did not alleviate. Covid is still present, I have a relative recently diagnosed.

I review our Federal law from the US Environmental Protection Agency 42 U.S.C 1970, which The Clean Air Act (CAA) is the comprehensive federal law that regulates air emissions from stationary and mobile sources. OSHA, Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970 has steps to improve indoor air quality p. 19, Appendix B, HVAC System maintenance checklist, p. 20 which I believe are helpful.

Are you aware that EPA, the US Environmental Protection Agency issued a Clean Air in Buildings Challenge? As a parent, would you want your child sitting in this environment breathing in particles that can be harmful to his/her health? If you were a teacher, what grade would you record on our district report card for ensuring school safety and the health of students, and ACPS staff?

Thank You,

Mrs. Rosina Simmons

EAA Building Representative

District H President

Clean Air in Buildings Challenge

U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

MARCH 2022

This document provides basic principles and general actions recommended to improve [indoor air quality](#) (IAQ) in buildings and reduce the risk of airborne spread of viruses and other contaminants. These actions, as well as technical assistance and tools provided through the links, are intended to support building owners and operators, as well as organizational leaders and decision makers, to make ventilation and other IAQ improvements.

Infectious diseases like COVID-19 can spread through the inhalation of airborne particles and aerosols. In addition to other layered prevention strategies, taking actions to improve IAQ can reduce the risk of exposure to particles, aerosols, and other contaminants, and improve the health of building occupants. None of these actions will eliminate risk completely, and building owners and operators may not need or be able to take all actions listed below. The best combination of actions for a building will vary by space and location. When determining which actions to take to help protect occupants, building owners and operators should consider, for example, public health guidance, who and how many people are in the building, the activities that occur in the building, outdoor air quality, climate, weather conditions, and the installed heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) equipment. Some actions may increase energy consumption and may be more appropriate as temporary measures when disease transmission is higher. Building owners and operators should engage experts, facilities managers, and others who are skilled, trained, and/or certified in HVAC work to develop and implement plans to improve IAQ and manage air flows. [Individual actions](#) and layered prevention strategies remain important measures for reducing the spread of viruses.

[American Rescue Plan](#) and [Bipartisan Infrastructure Law](#) funds can be used to supplement investments in ventilation and IAQ improvements in public settings.



1. CREATE AN ACTION PLAN FOR CLEAN INDOOR AIR IN YOUR BUILDING(S) that assesses IAQ, plans for upgrades and improvements, and includes HVAC inspections and maintenance.

- Determine how clean outdoor air is brought into the building and distributed to all occupied spaces. Understand and document how HVAC systems work for your building.
- Work with an HVAC expert to assess and inspect systems for ventilation, filtration, and air cleaning. Verify through [commissioning, testing, and balancing](#) that building systems are functioning as designed.
- Implement other IAQ assessment approaches such as carbon dioxide (CO₂) monitors as needed.
- Determine how much clean air (outdoor air + filtered HVAC recirculation air) is needed and verify or measure air delivery for each room or space.
- Assess if you need to manage the direction of air flows in higher risk areas of your building (e.g., in a school nurse's office).
- Create an IAQ action plan that includes regular inspections and maintenance, including filter replacements, and HVAC system upgrades or improvements, as needed.
- Support the people who operate or help with building and air distribution systems by providing [continuing education and training](#).



2. OPTIMIZE FRESH AIR VENTILATION by bringing in and circulating clean outdoor air indoors.

- Ensure [outdoor air](#) is acceptably clean or is adequately filtered as it is brought into the building.
- Properly use [economizers](#), which are devices that supplement mechanical cooling with fresh air, to efficiently and cost effectively increase fresh air ventilation.
- Run HVAC systems during all occupied hours to ensure clean air enters and is distributed throughout the building.
- Ensure that exhaust fans in bathrooms are functioning, and set fans to run during occupied hours.
- Increase volume of clean, outdoor air at times of higher risk (e.g., at times of elevated risk of COVID-19):
 - [Adjust HVAC settings](#) while considering thermal comfort, humidity, outdoor air quality, and energy use.
 - Consider [running the HVAC system](#) to refresh air before arrival and/or remove remaining particles at the end of the day (e.g., 1-2 hours before/after the building is occupied), as needed.
 - Check with an HVAC expert to understand the maximum outdoor air your system can support.
- Open operable windows, as weather, outdoor air quality, occupant safety, and HVAC systems permit. To the extent possible, enable cross ventilation by opening windows and doors at opposite sides of the room or building. (Note: Opening windows while running HVAC systems may increase energy costs or introduce other air contaminants.)



3. ENHANCE AIR FILTRATION AND CLEANING using the central HVAC system and in-room air cleaning devices.

- Install properly sized [MERV-13](#) air filters or the highest rated MERV filters that the HVAC system can accommodate.
- Close off any gaps around air filters to minimize air moving around them instead of through them.
- Use [portable air cleaners](#) to increase air cleaning rates in areas where air flow and central filtration are insufficient:
 - Select devices that are appropriately [sized for the space](#) in which they will be used. Consider [ENERGY STAR](#) certified products. If noise is a consideration, look for a product with lowest perceived sound levels.
 - As a temporary measure, [do-it-yourself air cleaners](#) can also be built from HVAC filters and box fans.
- Increase ventilation and/or filtration in areas with higher emission of airborne particles and aerosols (e.g., gyms, cafeterias, or choir/music rooms at schools). You can make adjustments for these areas by:
 - Increasing the volume of clean, outdoor air delivery.
 - Using portable air cleaners.
 - Setting up extra exhaust ventilation to move air directly to the outside.
- Consider an upper-room [Ultraviolet Germicidal Irradiation \(UVGI\)](#) system to clean the air. (UVGI systems require professional design and installation, in consultation with experts.)



4. GET YOUR COMMUNITY ENGAGED IN YOUR ACTION PLAN by communicating with building occupants to increase awareness, commitment, and participation in improving indoor air quality and health outcomes.

- Communicate to affected people (e.g., building occupants, workers, students, teachers, and parents) about how the [action steps](#) you are taking will improve indoor air quality and reduce disease transmission in your building.
- Show your work by hosting building walkthroughs, posting descriptive signage, or communicating on social media. Demonstrate the importance of individual actions to ensure facility operations are optimal (e.g., keeping ventilation systems clear of clutter).
- Provide feedback mechanisms such as maintenance requests to identify repair issues and surveys to gather perspectives from your community.
- Remember [individual actions](#) and layered prevention strategies remain important measures for reducing the spread of viruses like COVID-19.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Clean Indoor Air Resources

Indoor Air Quality

<https://www.epa.gov/indoor-air-quality-iaq>

Indoor Air and Coronavirus (COVID-19)

<https://www.epa.gov/coronavirus/indoor-air-and-coronavirus-covid-19>

Ventilation and Coronavirus (COVID-19)

<https://www.epa.gov/coronavirus/ventilation-and-coronavirus-covid-19>

Air Cleaners, HVAC Filters, and Coronavirus (COVID-19)

<https://www.epa.gov/coronavirus/air-cleaners-hvac-filters-and-coronavirus-covid-19>

Interactive Ventilation Tool

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/interactive-ventilation-tool.html>

Indoor Air Quality Scientific Findings Resources Bank

<https://iaqscience.lbl.gov/>

Ventilation in Buildings

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/ventilation.html>

Ventilation in the Workplace

<https://www.osha.gov/ventilation>

Improving Indoor Ventilation During Cold Weather

<https://www.osha.gov/sites/default/files/publications/OSHA4172.pdf>

COVID-19 Guidance on Ventilation in the Workplace

<https://www.osha.gov/sites/default/files/publications/OSHA4103.pdf>

ASHRAE Epidemic Task Force, Core Recommendations

<https://www.ashrae.org/file%20library/technical%20resources/covid-19/core-recommendations-for-reducing-airborne-infectious-aerosol-exposure.pdf>

Resources for Schools

Creating Healthy Indoor Air Quality in Schools

<https://www.epa.gov/iaq-schools>

Efficient and Healthy Schools Campaign

<https://efficienthealthyschools.lbl.gov/>

Efficient and Healthy Schools Website

<https://www.energy.gov/eere/buildings/efficient-and-healthy-schools>

ASHRAE Epidemic Task Force Guidance for Schools and Universities

<https://www.ashrae.org/file%20library/technical%20resources/covid-19/ashrae-reopening-schools-and-universities-c19-guidance.pdf>

Resources for Building Professionals

Indoor Air Quality Master Class Professional Training Webinar Series

<https://www.epa.gov/iaq-schools/indoor-air-quality-master-class-professional-training-webinar-series>

Indoor Air Quality in Offices and Other Large Buildings

<https://www.epa.gov/indoor-air-quality-iaq/indoor-air-quality-offices-and-other-large-buildings>

Better Buildings Resource Center: Building Operations during COVID-19

<https://betterbuildingssolutioncenter.energy.gov/covid19>

ASHRAE Indoor Air Quality Guide

<https://ashrae.org/iaq>

ASHRAE Epidemic Task Force Guidance for Commercial Buildings

<https://www.ashrae.org/file%20library/technical%20resources/covid-19/ashrae-commercial-c19-guidance.pdf>