



Ventilation Review and Compliance

On June 22, 2020, the State issued guidance for operating school ventilation systems during the COVID-19 pandemic. We contracted with Van Zelm Engineers (High Schools), Silver, Petrucelli & Associates, Inc. (Middle Schools), and CBK Engineering (Elementary Schools), to inspect and evaluate building systems to ensure our readiness for reopening.

The Board of Education is committed to ongoing maintenance of our building systems which includes ongoing preventative maintenance to ensure optimal operation. While providing proper ventilation in school buildings is always a priority, our immediate focus is on what needs to be done prior to the start of school to ensure we are complying with State guidelines relative to COVID-19.

First and foremost, reopening with the Hybrid Learning Model reduces building occupancy by over 50%. As we continue to run our central ventilation systems at full capacity, this will create a significant increase in air exchange and air flow throughout our buildings.

While our building ventilation systems are an important factor, we also need to consider other ways of maximizing outdoor air ventilation, as follows:

- Where temperature allows, open windows and interior doors to allow for fresh air exchange, while maintaining all security processes/precautions.
- Split air conditioning units may continue to be used. These are wall mounted units that do not connect to a central ventilation system.
- Based on building configurations there are no window air conditioning units, window fans or ceiling fans in school buildings.
- Pedestal or free-standing fans that circulate existing air around a room should not be used.
- DPH does not recommend separate, free-standing air cleaner or HEPA filter units for individual classrooms.

Before School Opens:

DONE	State Guidance	FPS Response
✓	1. Commission building mechanical systems for full occupancy.	All buildings have been running at full occupancy continuously for the past 12 months.
✓	2. Operate all ventilation systems at full capacity for one week prior to reopening.	All ventilation systems have been running at full capacity through the summer.
✓	3. Communicate changes to staff.	No changes to current systems. Communicated information regarding areas not served by central ventilation.

After School Opens:

DONE	State Guidance	FPS Response
	1. Flush inside air for two hours prior to and one hour after occupancy (minimum) with dampers open as fully as possible.	In place.
	2. Program and lock fan schedules to align with the building occupancy schedule	In place.
	3. Develop a system for building users to notify facilities if the building needs to be open longer than usual so fan schedules can be altered.	In place. Building use is limited at this time. Fan schedule already runs before/after school hours.
	4. Keep ventilation system running during all occupied hours.	In place.
	5. Do not allow teachers/staff to make changes to ventilation system controls in their rooms.	Systems are locked in individual rooms.
	6. Run bathroom exhaust systems 24/7.	In place.
	7. For isolation rooms, consider adding supplemental filtration.	Identify and deploy air cleaners meeting guidance specs.
	8. Develop a specific plan for performing routine inspections and maintenance.	In place.
	9. For buildings without central ventilation systems/areas not served by the central ventilation system, maximize available dilution ventilation and minimize the spread of virus particles inside.	Encourage staff to open windows and interior doors to maximize air flow, while maintaining security precautions.

You will see additional action items in the executive summaries posted on the FPS website, (2020 Reopening > Building Readiness), including:

- Replacing filters, checking/repairing filter frames, and upgrading to MERV-13 rated filters where appropriate. New filters are being shipped to us and installation will begin next week. Some odd-size filters will ship within a few weeks.
- Checking/repairing outside dampers. We are currently working with a combination of in-house staff and external vendors to check and repair the dampers. This work will be completed prior to school reopening on September 8th.
- Retro-commissioning of all buildings (Note: This would be a multi-year plan requiring a significant budget allocation to cover all buildings. Retro-commissioning is part of our long-range planning and begins this year at Fairfield Ludlowe High School. Holland Hill and Riverfield were commissioned when new systems were installed within the past five years.)

Rest assured, your children’s health and safety remain our top priority and our buildings are ready to receive them.

Angelus Papageorge
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