Healthy Schools, Informed Decisions
Evidence-Based Indoor Air Quality Decision-Making

Current Reality: RCPS shares the General Assembly's commitment to healthy school environments. Clean air, effective ventilation, and well-maintained buildings are essential for students to learn and for the staff who serve them to work. Indoor air quality (IAQ) is rightly a Commonwealth priority, and one that school divisions take seriously. We support reasonable, evidence-based IAQ standards that improve health outcomes for students and staff and recognize differences in division capacity.

The 2025 General Assembly reached a compromise involving HB2618 and SB1413 (22.1-141.3-5), requiring IAQ inspections at least once every four years beginning in SY 25-26. We supported the compromise legislation alongside our ongoing efforts to communicate that Virginia's 131 school divisions vary widely in size, facility age, staffing, and fiscal capacity, and to affirm that many already run proven preventive maintenance, HVAC renewal, monitoring, and IAQ response programs aligned with existing standards. New legislation was introduced in 2026 before the compromise bill from the prior Session had a chance to be implemented and sought to add new requirements, many of which are already addressed elsewhere in the Code.

Legislative Recommendation: The current, ongoing inspections are producing Virginia's first statewide, school-by-school picture of IAQ. By the end of SY 26-27, the midpoint of the four-year cycle established by the 2025 General Assembly, a meaningful body of results will be available. Reviewing them first would let policymakers identify the most common issues, direct funding and technical assistance where they are needed most, and avoid duplicative requirements or unfunded mandates that divert resources from the improvements identified by inspections.

Direct the School Health Services Committee to:

1. Receive the results of inspections conducted in SY 25-26 and SY 26-27, the first half of the four-year cycle;
2. Review them with input from divisions of varying size and capacity, VDOE, VDH, and other stakeholders; and;
3. Report findings and recommendations to the Governor and General Assembly by November 1, 2027, including resource needs and whether additional requirements are warranted.

Healthy indoor air in schools is a goal we all share. Grounding next steps in the inspection results the Commonwealth is already collecting will help ensure they are targeted, practical, and effective for every division.