

## New Construction

### Acoustics

The Orange Board of Education recognizes that a poor acoustical environment in schools hinders learning and causes problems for students with special needs. Research supports the need for improved classroom acoustics. Studies indicate that poor acoustics interfere with learning and pose a particular barrier for students with special needs. Much of the education that takes place in classrooms hinges on oral communications. Attention to acoustics in learning spaces will insure that students with normal hearing as well as students with special needs will be able to communicate effectively in all learning spaces.

A good learning and listening environment is achievable if classroom acoustics are considered at the onset of the design process and with early collaboration of school planners, architects, contractors and suppliers to assure that the classroom environment adequately limits background noise and reverberation.

In compliance with state law, any District school building project authorized by the General Assembly after July 1, 2005, classrooms or libraries shall be constructed or altered in accordance with the *American National Standard: Acoustical Performance Criteria, Design Requirements and Guidelines for Schools*, ANSI S12. 60-2002. This requirement shall not apply to classrooms or libraries where adequate acoustical modifications cannot be met without compromising health and safety or the educational purpose or function of a specific classroom or library.

The Orange District will apply to the Commissioner of Education for a waiver from the acoustical standard for any relocated classroom that will be used by the same District school for a period of less than thirty-six months. Such waiver request will be granted by the Commissioner provided the waiver application includes evidence that the Board, with notice to parents, students and teachers, held a public hearing on the effects that required acoustical standards for classrooms may have on a student's ability to learn.

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

[10-220](#) Duties of boards of education.

[10-291](#) Approval of plans and site. Expense limit.

[10-292](#) Review of final plans by Commissioner of Education. Exceptions; role of local officials.

P.A. 05-6, June Special Session, AAC Authorization of State Grant Commitments for School Building Projects and Other Miscellaneous Provisions.

Policy adopted: May 13, 2013