

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF BROWARD COUNTY

The More Open and Collaborative the Program, the Better the IAQ Outcomes

PROGRAM RESULTS

Broward uses survey results to track IAQ concerns and responses over time, and monitors workers' compensation claims.

- ▲ Implemented *IAQ Tools for Schools* in 206 locations so far and continues to add at least 20 new schools each year.
- ▲ Achieved a 50-percent decrease in IAQ complaints, and continues to observe a declining trend.
- ▲ Observed correlation between schools with IAQ programs and decrease in reported IAQ issues, as well as workers' compensation claims and the average expense per claim.
- ▲ Institutionalized IAQ and other green initiatives by including them in district strategic plans and following up with written plans of action for all members of the school community.

The School Board of Broward County, Florida (Broward) experienced a mold crisis in 2002 that led to the implementation of a comprehensive, district-wide *IAQ Tools for Schools* Program. *"Before 2002... we were taking some action to address IAQ, but our activities were not systematic and they were not undertaken in a spirit of collaboration. Our crisis caused a paradigm shift in our approach... Now, we're much more focused on involvement, communications and collaboration with the community, the unions and all the disciplines throughout the district. Before, we worked behind the scenes... in a veiled way... but now, everyone in the district understands IAQ and knows they have a role to play in promoting healthy school environments."*

– Jeff Moquin, Executive Director, Support Operations

Organize for Success — Identify Existing Assets: When the district was hit with a crisis, they looked for an organization that was viewed as effective and trustworthy to carry their IAQ plans forward. In 2002, they engaged the existing Facilities Task Force, comprised of union members, teachers, parents, school board members and others.

Build an Effective Team: Broward engaged all possible stakeholders for the IAQ Subcommittee, including the district's superintendent. Then they recruited IAQ committees in each school to serve as trainers, survey administrators and community liaisons.

Design Standard Operating Procedures: Broward created a comprehensive manual codifying all of their IAQ management policies and standard operating procedures into one unifying document, ensuring the best practices that have become institutionalized over the past eight years never lose their meaning or purpose. They distribute the manual at annual kick-off training sessions and make it readily available to anyone on their website. By making sure everyone in the community knows how their IAQ management program operates, they have created a legacy of knowledge and practice that virtually guarantees its sustainability.

PLAN YOUR SHORT AND LONG-TERM ACTIVITIES: Put Goals in Writing

"As our IAQ program grows, we strive to grow with it and stay current. We realigned our policies and procedures with the Key Drivers and Technical Solutions of the Framework to develop a comprehensive Indoor Air Quality Manual and concise IAQ Resource Guide. Along with our Environmental Stewardship Strategic Plan, these are the blueprints we will use to realize our vision of success in environmental management."

– Jeff Moquin,
Executive Director, Support Operations

Assess Your Environments Continuously — Listen to Occupants: To ensure that the district-level team gets thorough input from building occupants, Broward's online survey is designed to be simple and comfortable for building occupants to use (e.g., no name required), and the robust, online survey assessment instrument automatically compiles survey findings and maps required response activities to create a complete picture of each facility.

Plan Your Short and Long-Term Activities — Prioritize Actions: Broward's system names IAQ work orders according to a priority ranking based on the seriousness of the IAQ concern and the nature of the required response (e.g., behavioral change versus equipment repair).

Communicate with Everyone, All the Time — Be Transparent & Inclusive: Where once IAQ issues were addressed quietly, now the district broadcasts information about its facilities — problems and all — on its website, on its cable access television station, and through written action plans to remediate the issues identified on their walkthroughs, which are distributed to all stakeholders.

Act to Address Structural, Institutional and Behavioral Issues — Educate Staff About IAQ to Change Behavior: By engaging the unions and parent groups, the IAQ Subcommittee changed the way the Facilities and Maintenance and Operations Departments did business. They helped staff become collaborative problem-solvers rather than secret keepers.