

Q&A

Research of Evidence-based Educational Facility Impact

What is being researched?

Evidence-based impact of facility features on learning, attendance, and absenteeism.

How many facilities are included?

One elementary campus at each district. Minimum of 10 Texas school districts in the Hill Country and West Texas.

What will be assessed?

Assessment categories include acoustics, building systems age, indoor air quality, lighting, moisture control, operating cost, safety, and security.

How does this research differ from similar efforts?

Many facility impact on learning research efforts use subjective data collection methods such as surveys, questionnaires, etc. Such subjectivity can result in questionable findings. This research effort is based on objective, empirical methods.

How will objectivity be ensured?

The facility assessment will be based on empirical bench marks, and will be performed by architects, engineers, and certified indoor environmental consultants with extensive experience in school facilities. The same team will assess all facilities. Scientific measurements will be taken for facility features such as IAQ, lighting, and acoustics. The facility conditions will be compared to standardized testing, attendance, and absenteeism rates. Variables considered include socioeconomics, parental involvement, teacher qualifications, educational program, and school size.

How will the data be analyzed?

Regression analysis will be used to determine the relationship of specific facility features to achievement, attendance, and absenteeism. An independent statistician will review the regression analysis.

How will the findings be used?

Findings will be used to educate districts about proven facility impact on learning, optimize facilities, model facility improvement scenarios, and project facility improvement impact on learning.

Who is sponsoring this research?

This research effort is privately funded by HCA. No special interest groups, manufacturers, or associations are funding or sponsoring this research.

Hasn't facility impact on learning been determined?

There is evidence-based support to establish an association of some facility features and student performance. Contrary to popular belief, the empirical support for other building features impact on learning is weak. In *Green Schools, 2007* the National Research Council of the National Academies concluded there is insufficient evidence of association of lighting and achievement; and there is not adequate evidence to establish a relationship of overall building condition and student test scores. *Green Schools* concluded more well designed, evidence-based study is needed. Thus, this research effort.

What are the qualifications of the research team?

HCA was one of eight firms in the nation to receive the 2006 Council of Educational Facility Planners "Impact on Learning Award". The award was based on practical methods of measuring facility impact on learning. HCA has served more than 30 Texas school districts, most on a repeat basis. Additional information can be found at www.hcausa.com

How can my district benefit?

- Discover district facility impact on student achievement, attendance, & absenteeism.
- Learn how to measure & project facility impact on learning.
- Comprehensive assessment of an elementary.
- Improve facility return on investment (ROI).
- Valuable baseline facility data.
- Can be used to verify sustainable building performance.
- No cost to district.

What is the schedule?

Recruit participating districts	Dec-Jan 2009
Gather district data/interview district	Jan-Feb 2009
Evaluate district data	March 2009
Evaluate facilities	March-May 2009
Collect achievement/attendance data	Summer 2009
Evaluate data & regression analysis	Summer 2009
Review findings with districts	Fall 2009
Publish findings	Fall 2009

What does the district have to do?

Provide facility information such as building blue prints, age of building systems, absenteeism rates, average daily cost of substitutes, historical campus energy use, number of district maintenance staff, number of campus custodial staff, campus educational plan, average campus teacher experience level, and campus parental involvement levels.

Will district information be kept confidential?

The statistical analysis will be published (i.e. averages, mean, outliers, association, etc). Facilities will be identified numerically in the study (i.e. school 1, 2, 3, etc). Participating districts will be identified in list form if approved by the district.

How can my district participate?

Call us at the numbers below or email us at contact@hcausa.com. We will send your district a participant agreement for review and signature.

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