

Hello \_\_\_\_\_,

May is Speech and Hearing month in Canada. To help recognize this important theme, we've outlined some practical steps to improve classroom acoustics for learning.

Unfortunately, many (if not most) classrooms do not meet the ANSI standards for classroom acoustics. This is measured by checking the reverberation time in the room; with too many hard surfaces background noise can amplify to distracting levels. Noisy classrooms can negatively impact student engagement, contribute to behaviour problems, cause vocal strain for teachers, impair language development and generally create a stressful environment.

Fortunately, there are concrete (not literally) solutions to improve classroom acoustics:

A) To reduce the reverberation time, **acoustic tiling** can be installed in a drop ceiling. We recently received the following quote for an elementary school classroom:

1) Budget = \$1385

2) Normal = \$2760

3) With Stratotile in middle of classroom = + \$375

All of these quotes include labour. Other accommodations to improve classroom acoustics include:

B) **Floorsavers** - to reduce noise from chairs (approx. \$150 for a classroom set)

C) **Sound-field Systems** enhance the teacher's voice and benefit all students (& the teacher) - \$1100 - \$1500 / classroom.

If you have any grants, or other sources of funding, I think setting up a trial / model classroom would help to determine if the benefits justify the expense.

Please let me know if you require further information about any of these options.

Regards,

Peter Smith

SD 35, TDHH

PS - I've attached a brochure providing some background information from the School Noise Action Group (SNAG).

PSS - Other schools around the District have started improving the acoustic environment in their classrooms. Douglas Park and Shortreed have purchased Floorsavers for the entire school. Many schools have some sound-field systems available and Shortreed is working on setting up a model (trial) classroom with acoustic tiling, a sound-field system and Floorsavers.

PSSS- A technician with AV Solutions has offered to test the reverberation time in any of your classrooms (at no charge) to see if they meet the recommended ANSI standards.