



# Improving Indoor Air Quality in Colorado Schools

## Colorado Parents, Teachers, and School Officials

Colorado has established the HVAC Infrastructure Improvement Grant Fund to help schools improve ventilation, filtration, and energy efficiency in their buildings. The program supports HVAC system assessments and improvements that help ensure healthy indoor environments for students, teachers, and staff.

Ventilation, filtration, and building pressurization are foundational needs for maintaining Healthy Schools. It removes indoor pollutants that cause viruses or asthma, prevents outdoor pollutants such as wildfire smoke, and improves student performance, creating better learning environments.

### The Challenges Facing School HVAC Systems

The Colorado Infrastructure 2025 Report Card for Schools received a D+ grade from the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE). School buildings fall behind due to a lack of personnel, deferred maintenance, outdated equipment, and failed or insufficient HVAC sensing and controls. Many school buildings operate with aging HVAC systems that may experience:

- Ventilation less than an engineer's design or code minimums
- Inadequate filtration or building pressurization essential for clean air
- Control operation that results in under ventilation or wasted energy

Without proper monitoring and control, failures or insufficient operation often go undetected—until symptoms emerge within the school or among students and staff, including persistent odors, fatigue, difficulty concentrating, absenteeism, and increased asthma or allergy complaints.

**Colorado law (22-32-153) now requires ventilation and HVAC verification when schools undertake HVAC improvements with public funds. And with permanently installed airflow measurement devices, verification can be continuous for years, long after upgrades.**

### The Importance of Airflow Measurement and Verification

As part of Colorado's HVAC improvement initiatives, ventilation performance must be evaluated by qualified professionals. These assessments verify whether HVAC systems are delivering outdoor air ventilation required to support healthy learning environments.

Airflow measurement devices help professionals determine whether systems are:

- Delivering sufficient outdoor ventilation air
- Maintaining appropriate building pressure
- Energy saving controls are operating as intended

Schools planning HVAC upgrades should consider technologies that support accurate and repeatable airflow measurement, helping maintain proper ventilation performance over time.