

# WEST CARROLLTON SCHOOL DISTRICT

*Communicating to Build Trust, Conduct Effective Assessments and Deliver IAQ Results*

## PROGRAM RESULTS

**WCSD tracks the number and type of IAQ concerns reported on annual surveys.**

- ▲ Found less severe IAQ problems that take less time to address from year to year.
- ▲ Improved student performance and attendance, and increased levels of staff and community trust.
- ▲ Increased voter support: converted a fixed-term levy to a permanent one to provide guaranteed funds for capital improvements and operations.

West Carrollton School District (WCSD) began thinking seriously about IAQ issues in the wake of a public IAQ, moisture and ventilation problem that resulted in a lawsuit and negative media attention in the fall of 2001. In response, WCSD launched an IAQ management program in December 2001 to improve facility conditions and regain the public trust. The district built a program using guidance from the *IAQ Tools for Schools* Action Kit. “*IAQ Tools for Schools gave us the guidance we needed to form our original committee and assess our facilities... an organizational framework and the credibility we needed in the wake of our crisis.*” – Dana Green, Business Manager

**Organize for Success — Build an Effective Team:** WCSD’s initial IAQ Team was a diverse group. Members included once-skeptical parents, school board members, the superintendent, the business manager, the operations supervisor for maintenance and facilities, union representatives from the teachers and classified workers unions, and at least one representative from each building. This composition made the team a communications network, a warehouse of facility expertise and a decision-making body that could authorize spending and assign personnel. Over time, the make-up and focus of the IAQ team has evolved to meet the shift from IAQ to student and staff health, wellness and safety.

**Assess Your Environments Continuously — Identify and Prevent Risks:** WCSD continues to conduct preventive assessments by benchmarking all rooms in the district and conducting in-depth occupant surveys annually. The district uses these data to establish a picture of the normal functioning of every location in every facility. These tools allow them to recognize small problems early and act to prevent big problems from emerging.

**Plan Your Short and Long-Term Activities — Put Goals in Writing:** Including IAQ issues in the strategic plan ensures that WCSD remains committed to the program because IAQ is linked to a core competency and a core belief. With a pirate as its mascot, the district is serious about changing the community’s attitude towards the importance of IAQ — holding true that “the big ‘P’ in ‘Pirate’ is perception.” “*IAQ management is more than a plan, it is a WCSD core competency — defined by our belief that IAQ is inextricably linked to wellness, and furthered by aligning our work systems and processes with the IAQ Tools for Schools guidance.*” – Dr. Rusty Clifford, Superintendent

“*IAQ Tools for Schools is our framework for promoting high quality environmental health, safety and wellness. It provides direction for the design, alignment and deployment of our key operational processes and IAQ management system.*”

– Dr. Rusty Clifford,  
Superintendent

## ASSESS YOUR ENVIRONMENTS CONTINUOUSLY: Listen to Occupants

“We would not have imagined doing walkthroughs the way we now do them — with thorough input from staff and reviewing each facility with a fine-toothed comb — if we hadn’t learned to do so from the *IAQ Tools for Schools* Action Kit.”

– Dana Green,  
Business Manager

## Communicate with Everyone, All the Time — Be Transparent & Inclusive:

During the IAQ crisis, WCSD observed the positive values of integrity, honesty, responsibility and open communication: it was the best strategy for diffusing the media and demonstrating to the public and staff a “sincere commitment to protecting school health and safety.” “*The IAQ Tools for Schools approach for addressing problems has become a way of life for everyone in the school community, from administration to students. It has allowed us to tell our story with passion and a sense of purpose.*” – Dana Green, Business Manager

## Act to Address Structural, Institutional and Behavioral Issues — Educate Staff About IAQ to Change Behavior:

WCSD involves all staff in the assessment process to build their knowledge of and confidence in the IAQ program and to get better data on facility conditions. Staff participation in the in-depth surveys transforms them into educated IAQ champions and building stewards. This has resulted in an annual decline in the number and severity of walkthrough-related issues for six consecutive years.