Subject: Classroom Acoustics Standards

Whereas, the American Academy of Audiology (Academy) promotes efforts to improve classroom acoustics and has been a partner in the development of the classroom acoustics standards published as the Acoustical Performance Criteria, Design Requirements, and Guidelines for Schools, ANSI S12.60-2002, and

Whereas, the Academy is vigilant to all issues associated with noise, including the implications of listening in noise, both for individuals with normal hearing and those with hearing loss, and

Whereas, listening in noise problems are exacerbated for all children because their language competency is less developed than adults and this reduced language competency leaves them even more vulnerable to the negative effects of noise on listening and learning, and

Whereas, noise in the classroom (both external noise and reverberation within the classroom) begins a domino effect where noise masks speech sounds leading to speech perception difficulties and subsequently decreased speech understanding. Children who are unable to hear and understand what is spoken experience academic achievement deficits, and often an increase in social-emotional problems, and

Whereas, children with hearing loss exhibit even more difficulty due to their reduced ability to hear caused by their hearing loss, compounded by the masking effects of noise. Further, children with attention deficits and other language and learning challenges demonstrate similar problems, and

Whereas, the Academy is in full support of the recommendations of the ANSI S12.60-2002 standard and is concerned that implementation has been limited,

RESOLVED, that the American Academy of Audiology supports an initiative for "quiet classrooms" (classrooms that meet acoustical standards that permit quality interactive instruction among all students and teachers) to improve the education of our nation’s children, and

RESOLVED, the American Academy of Audiology supports the following reflective of that initiative, including:

1. A national effort to promote awareness and the implementation of the ANSI Classroom Acoustics standard (ANSI S12.60-2002) and recommendations

2. Adoption of the ANSI standard into the International Building Code (IBC)
3. Adoption of the ANSI standard into the ADA Accessibility Guidelines
4. Development of a “Toolkit” of resources to assist persons and organizations in state and local efforts to adopt the ANSI standard for school construction
5. Targeting school parent organizations (PTOs) and teacher organizations (NEA, AFT) to increase awareness and support for classroom acoustics efforts
6. Promoting research on the effects of classroom acoustics on educational outcomes for all learners, and further

RESOLVED, The American Academy of Audiology directs staff to develop model state acoustical standards legislation and garner support from other organizations that are associated with classroom acoustics.