

AMERICAN ACADEMY OF AUDIOLOGY

Resolution: 2008-02

Subject: Classroom Acoustics Standards

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

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

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

12
13 Whereas, noise in the classroom (both external noise and reverberation within the classroom)
14 begins a domino effect where noise masks speech sounds leading to speech perception
15 difficulties and subsequently decreased speech understanding. Children who are unable to hear
16 and understand what is spoken experience academic achievement deficits, and often an increase
17 in social-emotional problems, and

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

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

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

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

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34 1. A national effort to promote awareness and the implementation of the ANSI Classroom
35 Acoustics standard (ANSI S12.60-2002) and recommendations
36 2. Adoption of the ANSI standard into the International Building Code (IBC)

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

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

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13 References: Acoustical Performance Criteria, Design Requirements, and Guidelines for Schools,
14 ANSI S12.60-2002