



MONTANA ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL BUSINESS OFFICIALS

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Low cost, high return ways to improve the performance of your portables.

Maintenance is the key to healthy school environments.

*By Tom Hardiman, Executive Director
Modular Building Institute*

Despite recent advances in portable designs to accommodate energy efficiency, concerns focus on the environmental atmosphere and energy efficiency of the portables that are already in use. It is important to realize that both conditions are dramatically affected at the local level. Portables, like any other facility, require the proper operation and maintenance to sustain a healthy learning environment and improve energy efficiency.

A 2004 study of environmental conditions in public classrooms by the California Air Resource Board and the California Department of Health Servicesⁱ found that both portable and traditional classrooms have some environmental conditions that need improvement. However, the most serious problems occurred only in a small percentage of classrooms. The study concluded that "design capacity did not appear to be a common problem in this study. Improved operation and maintenance would go a long way to address many of the problems identified."

Below are several actions that will improve the performance of today's portables and are measures that will quickly provide results in the form of energy savings, increased student and teacher morale, and improved student performance.

Protect Indoor Air Quality

First, specify no- and low-emitting building materials and furnishings to reduce airborne contaminants. CHPS has developed a list of low-emitting materials for schools, which can be found at www.chps.net

Prevent Mold

Second, install proper drainage systems and control measures to prevent mold. Some areas to consider are landscaping systems that prohibit water from hitting the actual structure and draining off. It is also important to provide proper grading and drainage systems and mitigation procedures for water leaks. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency provides an Indoor Air Quality Tools for Schools Action Kit that details more indoor air quality maintenance and control procedures.

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"MASBO IS DEDICATED TO TRAINING AND SUPPORTING THE PEOPLE RESPONSIBLE FOR BUSINESS OPERATIONS OF MONTANA SCHOOLS. THE GOAL IS TO ENABLE MEMBERS TO MANAGE THE BUSINESS IN ORDER TO SUPPORT EDUCATION FOR MONTANA CHILDREN"

Gains in Energy Efficiency

First, install programmable thermostats in all existing portables and require programmable thermostats for any new portables. Second, choose site placement of portables to maximize the benefits of daylighting. This measure will improve the energy efficiency of the portable and could lead to improved student performance. Finally, for any portables that use a wall-mount HVAC system, specify a Seasonal Energy Efficiency Ratio of 12 vs. 10. The higher the ratio, the more efficient your unit is and the lower your energy bills.

Improve Room Acoustics

Acoustics are problematic in traditional classrooms as well as portables. MBI has several suggestions on how to provide the best acoustics (measures equally positive for traditional classrooms):

- Assure seating away from highways and busy roads where possible
- Reduce outside noise levels during instruction periods when possible
- Use wireless microphone systems for cost-effective resonance

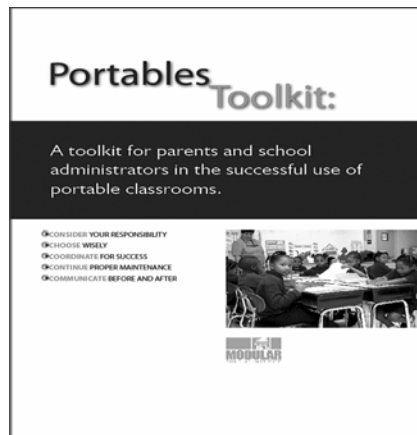
Although some teachers turn off the HVAC unit in an attempt to reduce noise, we advise against this practice. Studies have shown that student comfort and indoor air quality contribute more to a positive learning environment than acoustics. When you turn off the HVAC system, you are actually diminishing the learning environment.

¹ Environmental Health Conditions of California's Portable Classrooms - A joint report submitted by California Air Resource Board and the California Department of Health Services - Nov 2004.

Maintenance and Replacement

There are two points that go farther than any of those already mentioned to ensure a positive learning environment in portable classrooms. Retire older portables when they become unserviceable or do not provide an adequate learning environment and properly maintain the portables currently in use. Today's portable classrooms are designed to last up to 30 years. But this timeline is completely dependent on the proper maintenance of the portable in every year of its life. Portables should never be used beyond the recommended life of the unit.

Tom Hardiman is the executive director of the Modular Building Institute. He can be reached at tom@modular.org



The Modular Building Institute (MBI) is a non-profit trade association that represents manufacturers and dealers of portable classrooms. MBI offers a free Portables Toolkit that gives detailed information on the proper maintenance of portables as well as best practices. The resource is free of charge to any parent, teacher or school administrator and can be downloaded at modular.org. Modular.org also provides links to other healthy classroom guidelines from EPA and CHPS.

Posting Alert - Mandatory FMLA Change

On January 28th, 2008, President Bush signed into law an extension of family leave time for members of the U.S. armed forces. This regulation is governed as part of FMLA and is part of the *Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008!*

Employers covered by FMLA must post the new notice if they have 50 or more employees. **Employers are required to have the new posting even if none of their employees are currently on FMLA leave.**

You are required to post the most recent FMLA information along with 5 other required regulations:

- Minimum Wage
- Rights under USERRA
- Equal Employment Opportunity
- Right to Safe & Healthy Workplace
- Employee Polygraph Privacy

The average annual state expenditure on a prisoner is \$23,876, in contrast to \$8,701 per year on a K-12 student.

Source: Pew Report: One in 100 Behind Bars in America and Education Finance Statistics Center

Great Falls Budget Workshop

Gloria Hicks, Joni Woldstad, Deb Steinbacher, Caroline Forseth are working hard. Denise Ulberg is assisting.



Hats off to Judith Gap Trustees who actually endured and absorbed all the information.



And still ended up with a smile!



Pictured above are: Cheri' Nygard, Gwyn Andersen, Adam Anfinson and Paul Taylor.

Calendar of Events

- June 12-13** – Ed & Local Govt. Committee – Helena
- June 18-20** – MASBO Summer Conference – Great Falls
- Oct. 15-17** – MCEL – Billings
- Nov. 7-10** – ASBO - Denver
- June 17-19, 2009** MASBO Summer Conference – Holiday Inn Grand – Billings
- Oct 14-16, 2009** MCEL – Missoula
- Oct 23-26, 2009** ASBO - Chicago

MASBO helping MASBO



Nicole Beyer from Sidney will be this year's recipient.

Please bring your donated item(s) to the registration desk at the Summer Conference in June. If you want to donate something, and are not planning to attend the conference, please send item(s) to the MASBO office no later than June 11.

Value Added Services for MSUIP Members

(By Theresia LeSueur, PHR)

The Montana Schools Unemployment Insurance Program (MSUIP) directors and staff recently participated in a Strategic Planning Session. This session proved to be fruitful for current members and potential members. The view of those involved was unanimous in that the unemployment claim begins with the hiring process. With that being said it was determined that it was time for the MSUIP to provide additional services to our membership in the way of employment advocacy starting with the hiring level.

As a result of the Strategic Planning Session MSUIP is proud to announce that they will

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begin providing value added services to our membership for FY09. These services are outlined in the following information.

- Montana Education Law Reporter (MELR)
 - ❖ Subscription included with membership
 - ❖ Yearly updates
 - ❖ Hard copy and searchable electronic access via password through MTSBA/MSUIP website
- RIF/Employment Training Workshop
 - ❖ Full day training
 - ❖ Free to MSUIP members
- Pre-loss Legal Services
 - ❖ Three (3) hours of free legal consultation per incident
 - ❖ MTSBA attorney to assist on employment/unemployment matters

Already a member of MSUIP? Your rates will remain the same for FY09 and you are able to access these value added services with no additional cost to your district beginning July 1, 2008.

Not a current member of MSUIP? There is still time to join. The state provides that a school district can join MSUIP effective July 1 of each fiscal year. In order to make the deadline we must have all signed forms and agreements in our office by May 26, 2008. Joining is easy. An enrollment packet is provided with a checklist explaining each step to make becoming a member easy. We are available to guide you through the steps which include:

- Membership in MASBO and MTSBA
- Completing a program agreement
- Completing an inter-local agreement
- Completing a board resolution for joining
- Complete the UI employer registration
- Complete the election of method of payment
- Provide a signed claim release
- Provide a copy of your most recent UI tax notice from the state

For more information about the program or these new value added services you may contact Montana Schools Unemployment Insurance Program at (406) 457-4407 or Montana School Boards Association at (406) 442-2180.

Are You CERTIFIED?

Become a Montana Registered School Business Official

Get the recognition you deserve.

Contact the MASBO office and get started. 442-5599

NEW Opportunities to get Certified!

- 1) Come to the MASBO office in Helena and take the test(s).
- 2) Get a group together and we will come to you.

Register today at: <http://fs3.formsite.com/masbo/form262881316/index.html>

Vendors register at: <http://fs3.formsite.com/masbo/form618469798/index.html>

40th Annual MASBO Summer Conference Schedule at a Glance

Monday June 16

- 2:30 – 8:30 New Clerk Workshop (NCW)

Tuesday June 17

- 8:00 – 5:00 NCW (continued)
- 8:00 – 5:00 Black Mountain Users Group Workshop
- 5:30 – dark MASBO Golf Game

Wednesday June 18

- 8:00 – 9:00 Health Insurance 101, MUST (open to all conference attendees at no extra charge and is part of the NCW)
- 9:00 – 10:15 Minutes, Meetings and Agenda Debra Silk, MTSBA (open to all conference attendees at no extra charge and is part of the NCW)
- 10:30 – 11:30 SB 419 Eligibility Guidelines For Dependent Children Presenter: Bob Robinson, MUST, MS-SF (open to all conference attendees at no extra charge and is part of the NCW)
- 12:00 – 4:30 Opening General Session (lunch)
 - Nominations
 - 2008 Outstanding Business Official
 - School Law Update
 - SAS 112 Audit Finding Introduction
- Evening – no activities planned. Have a free evening.

Thursday June 19

- 8:00 – 8:55 7 Breakout sessions
- 9:00 – 9:55 7 Breakout sessions
- 10:10 – 11:05 7 Breakout sessions
- 11:10 – 12:05 7 Break out sessions
- 12:05 - 1:15 Group Lunch
- 1:15 – 2:10 7 Breakout sessions
- 2:15 - 3:15 7 Breakout sessions
- 3:30 – 4:30 Vendor Showcases
- 4:30 – 6:30 Free Time
- 6:30 – 9:00 MASBO 40th Anniversary Semi-formal dinner with LaDonna Gatlin performing a 45 minute concert entitled “Sentimental Journey”. Vendor door prize give away and Silent Auction concludes.

Friday June 20

- 8:00 – 9:00 7 Breakout sessions
- 9:00 – 10:00 7 Breakout sessions
- 10:00 – 10:55 7 Breakout sessions
- 11:15 – 1:30 Closing General Session with Guest Keynote by LaDonna Gatlin entitled “Tune Up Your Life”. Final presentations. Final Door Prizes.

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