

# Health and Safety Guide for K-12 Schools in Washington State – 2024 Update of the 2003 Edition

References:

[WAC 246-366-110](#): Sound Control

[WAC 246-366-030](#): Site Approval

[Chapter 296-817 WAC](#): HEARING LOSS PREVENTION (NOISE)

[WSSP 2023 Version \(ospi.k12.wa.us\)](#)

<b>H. Sound Control</b>		<b>WAC or other Code Reference</b>	<b>Standard/Recommended Practice</b>	<b>Plan Review</b>	<b>Reason for Change</b>
H001	In new construction, the actual background noise at any student location within the classroom shall not exceed 45 decibels (dBA). <del>The health officer shall determine compliance with this section when the ventilation system and the ventilation system’s noise generating components, e.g., condenser, heat pump, etc. are in operation. Noise measurements shall be conducted for a duration period of 30 seconds or more in an unoccupied room with mechanical . Testing shall be done when all components of the ventilation systems are in operation.</del>	246-366-110(2) <del>ROW 19.27</del>		x	<a href="#">Clarification of requirement. SBOH rule, not a Building Code.</a>
	<del>Note: Per WAC 246-366-010 the definition of “new construction” includes new school buildings, additions to existing schools, renovation of existing schools, schools established in existing buildings previously used for other purposes, installation/alteration of any equipment or systems, and portables constructed after the regulation effective date.</del>	<del>246-366-010(4)</del>		<del>x</del>	
H002	Existing portable classrooms built prior to 1/1/90 are exempt from noise level requirements when: (1) there have been no changes that would <del>have increased</del> noise levels; (2) the portable was previously <del>in use for general instruction used as a classroom</del> ; (3) the portable was previously owned by the district; and (4) the <del>site is in compliance with WAC 246-366-030(3). portable meets all site requirements.</del>	246-366-110(3)		x	<a href="#">Clarification of requirement.</a>
H003	The maximum ambient noise level in industrial arts, CTE (voc-ed) and trade classrooms constructed after 1/1/90 shall not exceed 65 dBA (Leq). <del>Noise measurements shall be conducted for duration of 30 seconds or more in an unoccupied room with mechanical and ventilation systems operating, including fume hoods and dust collectors, at the highest expected output. when all fume hoods and dust exhaust systems are operating. Testing shall be done when room is unoccupied.</del>	246-366-110(4)		x	<a href="#">Clarification of requirement.</a>

H. Sound Control		WAC or other Code Reference	Standard/Recommended Practice	Plan Review	Reason for Change
H004	The noise exposure for students in CTE (voc-ed) and music areas shall not exceed the <a href="#">noise levels in Table 1 of WAC 246-366-110, L&amp;I WISHA noise level rules</a> . No person shall be exposed to sustained sound levels equal to or greater than 115 dBA for 1 second or longer, <del>or to impact / impulse noise over 140 dBA for less than one second.</del>	246-366-110(5) <del>WAC 296-62-090</del>		x	<a href="#">Clarification of requirement. WAC 296 is for employees.</a>
H005	When noise exposure exceeds the <del>L&amp;I WISHA maximum levels in Table 1 of WAC 246-366-110, any student or staff occupied area, and engineering methods cannot reduce the noise levels to a permissible level,</del> <a href="#">approved hearing protection, e.g. ear plugs, muffs, etc.</a> , shall be provided <del>to</del> and used <del>by the exposed students. Hearing protectors shall reduce student noise exposure to comply with the levels specified in Table 1. Maximum sound exposure levels can be found in L &amp; I WISHA rules.</del>	246-366-110(5) Table 1 246-366-110 (6) <del>WAC 296-62-090</del>			<a href="#">Clarification based on rule language.</a>
H006	The employer shall administer a continuing, effective, hearing conservation program, as described in WAC 296- <del>81762-Part K</del> whenever employee noise exposure equals or exceeds an 8-hour Time-Weighted Average (TWA) sound level of 85 dBA measured on the A-scale weighting at slow-response, or a noise dose of fifty percent.	296- <del>81762-090</del>			<a href="#">L&amp;I code move.</a>
H007	The design of classrooms should take into account potential issues with speech interference levels when having more than one instructional class in any single area, e.g., open concept classrooms, <a href="#">connected classrooms with doors and operable partitions</a> , multi-purpose areas, gymnasiums, music rooms, etc.		OSPI <a href="#">WSP 2023 IEQ4.0 Acoustic Performance</a>	x	
H007a	NOTE: Wireless microphone systems for classroom areas are available that provide teachers the ability to <del>be</del> speak and be heard over large groups and <del>still</del> avoid damage to their vocal <del>chords</del> . <a href="#">Wireless microphones do not negate the requirements for not exceeding 45 dBA background levels in classrooms.</a>		OSPI <a href="#">WSP 2023 IEQ4.2 Sound Amplification</a>	x	