

# UniServ Update

## School and Classroom Temperature

When temperatures and humidity are high in your building, it makes working difficult for staff and learning difficult for students. Here is a fact sheet of what you should know about Maryland law and your rights under our contract to a safe and cool working environment.

Maryland state law requires that all school buildings be equipped with an HVAC system capable of maintaining temperatures between 65- and 75-degrees Fahrenheit, and humidity between 30 and 60 percent (COMAR 14.39.07.07D).

This does **not** mean temperatures or humidity must always remain within that range, only that the HVAC system be **capable** of maintaining that temperature. AACPS policy states that temperatures should not exceed 78 degrees or fall below 68 degrees for most schools. Our contract entitles the FAC to vote to request an inspection of any perceived health and safety risks, including temperature, under Article 18E:

**Article 18E:** "Conditions on school premises which are considered by the Faculty Advisory Council to endanger the health and safety of pupils or Unit I members shall be reported to the principal, who shall immediately request an inspection by persons qualified to determine the existence or the extent of the alleged hazard. Upon receipt of recommendations from the qualified persons appropriate remedial action shall be taken at once."

If temperatures in your building are consistently above 78 degrees Fahrenheit, here's what you should do:

1. Record the temperature using a thermometer and note the room number and time of day when the reading was taken. Several readings in different parts of the building all showing excess temperatures will make your case stronger.
2. Report the temperature to your administration and head custodian in writing and ask them to inspect the HVAC system.
3. If they fail to take action, you should submit the concern to the FAC under the language of Article 18E and insist that your administration put in a "work order" to AACPS Facilities.
4. AACPS Facilities will determine if there is something wrong with the HVAC system or if repairs are required.
5. If admin still takes no action, contact your UniServ Director who can help you advocate with AACPS.

If there is nothing "broken" with the HVAC system, and thus nothing to repair, then our contractual protections are more limited. In these situations, your UniServ Director can assist you in organizing with your colleagues to best advocate for stop-gap measures like fans, or other changes that can reduce temperatures in the building.