

School Environment Team (SET) Project

How to use the Observation Log

The Observation Log is an important element of the SET Project. Your Observation Log helps to pinpoint any areas that may need to be addressed with regard to the HVAC (Heating Ventilation and Air Conditioning) System in your school. This element of SET should be completed each time a walkthrough is held. It can also be used any time during the year to document temperature concerns or as part of an investigation that may indicate a safety issue. If there are or have been concerns surrounding temperatures in the building, the Observation Log may help to identify multiple areas where this is occurring and help to establish documentation and possibly a pattern, which may assist in corrective action.

Please note, the Observation Log is the only element of SET which must be completed during school hours.

DIRECTIONS:

1. To complete the form with accuracy, it is important that the observer take a blank copy of the **Observation Log** and a thermometer with them as they walk from room to room recording temperatures.
2. Before beginning the walk from room to room in the building, complete the sections of the form listing all the Room Locations you plan to include in this observation as well as the date and outside weather conditions. Outside weather conditions will always affect the temperature and humidity as institutional HVAC systems in nearly every case do not control humidity, and are not designed for zero temperature gradients.
3. It is critical that all temperatures be taken while the room is occupied. The presence of people can increase the temperature and humidity in a room as well as reduce the level of oxygen.
4. As the observer enters a room, check either "yes" for odor or "no". Count the number of person's in the room when the temperature is to be taken. Temperatures should be taken with the observer standing next to an inside wall. Temperatures may vary if taken close to a door or window. After recording the temperature, also write the time of day in the "Temperature in Room" box. Check for signs of humidity: curling papers, sweating children or teachers (*before determining that this is caused by humidity, check the schedule for the group of children – did they just come from P.E.?*) moisture on walls, etc..
5. Complete the Observation Log for all the areas listed. Determine how often this type of observation should be completed. Request a review of the findings and any necessary corrective action with the person responsible for the maintenance of the HVAC system at your school.

RECOMMENDED EQUIPMENT: digital or electronic thermometer

Please read

Danger of Possible Mercury Poisoning: Please use a non-mercury thermometer.

Commonly available thermometers may vary by several degrees from the actual room temperature. Carbon dioxide release by the room's occupants (although significant with regard to the level of oxygen in the room) is not as significant as compared to the heat being released by the body. Body heat is significant as it adds to the heat load in a room. Therefore, it is important in the determination of HVAC balance that the number of people that will be present during the critical phases of the HVAC cycles be accounted for in the system requirements.