



October 21, 2014

### **KFCS' District Newsletter**

By Paul Hillyer, KFCS' Superintendent  
Modern School Facilities' Effect on Learning

One of the main reasons the KFCS' Board of Directors decided to seek a KU remodel was to improve student learning. They reasoned that a modern facility would better meet the learning needs of students today. Recently, an article written by Arnie Hollander for the Center for Innovative Facilities explains why the board's view on this is correct. Below is the abridged version of the study. You can find more information at their website: [www.cisforegon.org](http://www.cisforegon.org).

#### **Part 1: Physical Factors**

Key features of schools affect student and teacher health and safety and a student's ability to learn. When these features are properly designed, engineered, and maintained, they provide:

- clean air, which reduces exposure to airborne diseases and toxic fumes;
- good lighting conditions that enable students to see more clearly, which makes reading easier;
- natural views to reduce stress and improve positive outlooks;
- furniture that enables students to move while sitting, thus improving their ability to concentrate;
- good acoustics resulting in the ability to hear well and understand more clearly what is said in the classroom;
- temperature control, creating a comfortable temperature where students and teachers are not distracted by cold or hot conditions.

With these features in place, a student's ability to learn is increased. However, these features alone do not create the complete picture.

#### **Part 2: What Students Feel**

The environments that we experience affect us at both emotional and physical levels. When we enjoy a place, we experience feelings of delight, joy, happiness, and pleasure. When we do not enjoy a place, we feel anxious, depressed, fearful, or just plain stressed.

Scientists and doctors have now been able to document the parts of our brain that respond when we are in places we enjoy and those parts of our brain that respond when we do not like what we see and feel. We now know which hormones and nerves are triggered by such feelings. And we also know that the stress-induced hormones reduce our ability to fight infection, our ability to remember, and our ability to heal when we do get sick.

*"Jacob?" "Here."*

*"Emma?" "Present."*

*"Daniel?" He's out sick.*

*"Abigail?" She's out sick, too.*



*Are our schools making our students sick? Do schools contribute to student and teacher illness and absenteeism and affect a student's ability to maximize his or her learning?*

Yes.

**Other News:**

1. A successful bond issue would provide the features above for students in our schools.
2. **Please remember to vote.** Ballot boxes will be in all schools at conferences. Every vote counts!
3. The other reasons given by the KFCS' Board of Directors for proposing the facility bond were to provide safe schools and to invest in our community.
4. For more information on the KUHS Bond, please visit [www.kfalls.k12.or.us](http://www.kfalls.k12.or.us) and click on **KUHS Bond Information.**
5. Klamath Union's Math Team, coached by Ms. Young, took first place at the ? competition held October 21, 2014, in Medford.
6. Concerned about the high rates of suicide in our county and in our state? Join us and other concerned community members **Oct 29<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 a.m in the OIT auditorium** to hear from Julie Zielinski, author of "Matt's Last Call" and Liaison to Washington State's **Concerns of Police Survivors.** The loss of Julie's son, a young Marine veteran and former sheriff's deputy, to suicide fueled her passion to raise awareness around our region and inspire us to make a difference.

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