



Schools Where You Can Learn, Thrive and Be Inspired

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I've joined [Parenting.com](#) and the [Mom Congress](#) in a Back-to-School blog-a-thon! These posts are an opportunity for us to show children across the country that we are committed to their education. I wrote to the students who we at the Center for Green Schools work for every day.

Dear students,

I'm not a parent yet, but I am a daughter. This year, my mom retired from the public school system she had worked in for more than 20 years. She dedicated her life to improving our education system, but now has permanent damage to her lungs from her time spent in portable classrooms and aging school facilities.

My promise, and the promise of the [Center for Green Schools](#) at the [U.S. Green Building Council](#), is that you will never have to attend a school that will make you sick. And my wish for you is that you will have the chance to attend a school that will enhance and improve your learning experience.

I promise that you will go to a school with clean, fresh air. Why? Because poor air quality can trigger asthma attacks, the number one reason why sick kids have to miss school. Green schools have plenty of fresh air and fewer toxins for you to breathe.

I promise that you will never get the "2:30 headache." A teacher I recently met in DeKalb County, Georgia told me that before she moved to her green school, she and her fellow teachers all suffered from the "2:30 headache," which is a term they coined to describe the physical pain that set in after spending a full day in an old school building. You shouldn't ever have to feel this and neither should your [teachers](#).

I promise that you will always be able to hear your lessons. This seems obvious, but a student who can't hear his or her teacher speak because of poor acoustics can't learn the material being presented. Unfortunately, most classrooms in U.S. schools force teachers to strain their voice to be heard, and kids to strain their ears to listen. At the Center, we're helping schools and the people who design and operate them to create classrooms where kids can hear what their teachers teach and maybe even hear themselves think too.

I promise that you'll have the opportunity to enjoy all that nature has to offer. If your school is anything like my schools were, class is sometimes fun and a lot of the time boring. At the Center we're committed to helping teachers create meaningful opportunities for students to get their feet wet and their hands dirty - whether it's measuring the amount of rainwater collected from a rooftop cistern, or planting an edible schoolyard filled with fresh vegetables to be served up in the cafeteria. Connecting the classroom to what goes on outside of it can make every subject more fun - from math to social studies to art class.

As we get back into the school year groove, remember that the environment in which we live, learn, work and play impacts how we feel and perform. Our mission at the Center is to help create [safe and healthy](#) facilities that enhance kids' ability to learn and teachers' ability to teach. While you are hard at work in school, we are hard at work creating better schools where you can learn, thrive and be inspired. That is my promise to you.

You can read the original post on Parenting.com: www.parenting.com/blogs/mom-congress/rachel-gutter/school-should-never-make-you-sick



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1 comment

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Bj Moore

1 year 36 weeks ago

Chalk dust is cited by medical and asthma specialists as an irritant and as an asthma trigger. Changing from chalkboards to whiteboards has been recommended to improve classroom air quality. This change doesn't have to break the bank - boards can be inexpensively resurfaced in-place, on the wall, using Evergreen film by www.dryeraseforless.com. This film goes up in minutes, uses a non-toxic adhesive, has no fumes, and can provide a beautiful, resilient surface for writing or projection. Improve air quality and help our schools shrinking budgets stretch further with this product. (It has a 7 year warranty too!)

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