

There is no national database of information on public school facilities. Some states collect information and some do not. The 21st Century School Fund and its Building Educational Success Together (BEST) partners have worked to understand the scope, scale and condition of public school facilities. This is important to building our nation's public will and our government's capacity to provide high quality public school buildings and grounds for all children in all communities.

What's the scale of our nation's elementary and secondary public school buildings and grounds?

- There are 98,706 PK-12 grade public schools, including 4,694 public charter schools in 2008-2009 and nearly 90% of all of the 55.5 million school age children in the U.S. attend public schools.ⁱ
- There is an estimated 6.6 billion gross square feet of public school building space.ⁱⁱ
- School districts manage over 1 million acres of school building site area.

What condition are our public school facilities in?

- School districts have an estimated \$271 billion of deferred building and grounds maintenance in their schools, excluding administrative facilities, which averages \$4,883 per student.ⁱⁱⁱ
- In a 2010 state survey, 10 states (CO, DE, GA, HI, IL, KY, LA, ME, MT, NJ) reported needing an average of \$4,400 per student for deferred maintenance.^{iv}
- Public school facility investment aligns with the wealth of the community the school is located in. Between 1995-2004 schools in low wealth zip codes had one third the funding for capital projects as schools in high wealth zip codes.^v

What difference does facility condition make to children and adults?

- Teachers in Chicago and Washington, DC reported missing 4 days annually because of health problems caused by adverse building conditions (with poor indoor air quality being the biggest problem).^{vi}
- A national survey of school nurses found over 40% of the nurses knew children and staff adversely impacted by avoidable indoor pollutants.^{vii}
- Students from 95 New York City Public Schools attended fewer days on average in schools with poor facilities and had lower grades in English Language Arts and Math which could be correlated to lower attendance.^{viii}
- Schools that implement energy-saving strategies – from following green building design to using energy-efficient building components to behavioral change – can reduce energy use by as much as one-third, resulting in major environmental and cost-savings benefits.^{ix}

What do tax payers spend for elementary and secondary public school facilities?

- In 2008, school districts spent \$58.5 billion for capital outlay on construction and land and building acquisition and they reported \$369.4 billion of long term capital debt.^x
- Since 1999, an average of 80% of capital outlay has been spent on new construction and additions, with 20% spent on alterations or improvements to existing buildings.^{xi}

- Schools districts spent \$49 billion, almost 10 percent, of their operating budgets on maintenance and operations of their school buildings in 2008.^{xii}
- Public school districts spent an estimated \$9.4 billion for utilities in 2008.^{xiii}

Who funds elementary and secondary public school facilities?

- Nearly all capital outlay funding is from state and local taxes, with the federal share at less than 86 cents per 1,000 dollars of state and local spending. This federal contribution is targeted to Indian, military, and charter schools, as well as a pilot program for Iowa public schools.^{xiv}
- Between 2005 and 2008, the average state share of funds for capital projects was 30%. However, this ranged from 11 states contributing no funds for school facility projects to 3 states and the District of Columbia paying 100% of the cost of school facility projects.^{xv}
- Annual costs for maintenance repair and operations, including utilities and cleaning are part of the school district operating budget, which on average, is paid for with 90% from local and state sources and 10% from the federal government.

ⁱ NCES Table 2 and Table 3. <http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2010/pesschools08/tables.asp>

ⁱⁱ Economic Policy Institute Briefing Paper #216: [Good Buildings, Better Schools, An economic stimulus opportunity with long-term benefits](#), April 29, 2008.

ⁱⁱⁱ [Repair for Success: An Analysis of the Need and Possibilities for a Federal Investment in PK-12 School Maintenance and Repair](#); memo to Economic Policy Institute from 21st Century School Fund, November 2009.

^{iv} Unpublished results of survey of state facilities directors; 2010 21st Century School Fund.

^v [Growth and Disparity: 10 Years of PK12 Public School Construction](#), BEST October 2006.

^{vi} Buckley, J., Schneider, M., & Shang, Y. (2005). *Fix it & they might stay*: School facility quality and teacher retention in Washington, D.C. *Teachers College Press, 10*, 1107-1123.

^{vii} Preliminary survey results released by the Association of School Nurses (NASN) and Healthy Schools Network, January 11, 2011. http://www.healthyschools.org/NASN-HSN_survey-press_Jan_2011.pdf

^{viii} Duran-Narucki, V. (2008). School building condition, school attendance, and academic achievement in New York City public schools: A mediation model. *Journal of Environmental Psychology 28*, 278-286.

^{ix} US Green Building Council, Project Profile: Rosa Parks Elementary School, 2008.

^x U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD), "National Public Education Financial Survey (NPEFS)," fiscal year 2008, Version 1a; Table 10.

^{xi} McGraw Hill School Construction funding K12, from www.ncef.org construction statistics.

^{xii} U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD), "National Public Education Financial Survey (NPEFS)," fiscal year 2008, Version 1a; Table 2.

^{xiii} 38th Annual Maintenance and Operations Cost Study for Schools, American School & University Magazine.

^{xiv} Federal Spending on PK-12 School Facilities, November 2010, 21st Century School Fund and National Clearinghouse for Educational Facilities. www.21csf.org and www.ncef.org.

^{xv} State Capital Spending on PK-12 School Facilities, November 2010, 21st Century School Fund and National Clearinghouse for Educational Facilities. www.21csf.org and www.ncef.org.