

SUMMARY OF THE 2018 ANNUAL MEETING

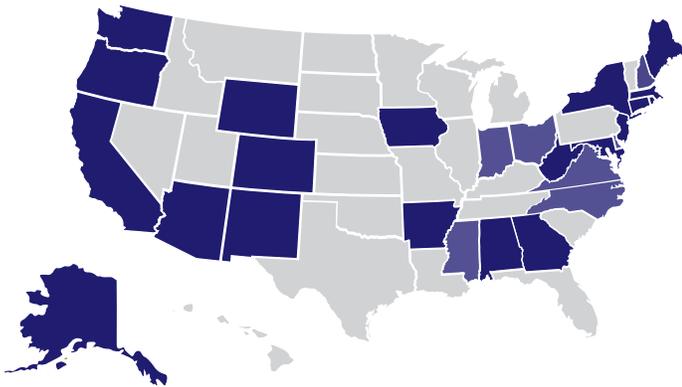
On December 2–4, 2018, the National Council on School Facilities (NCSF) convened twenty-one state level public school facilities officials, Indiana’s Chief Academic Officer, and facilities representatives from DoDEA and the Bureau of Indian Affairs for its sixth annual meeting at the Washington Plaza Hotel in Washington, D.C.

2018 National Council President Kosta Diamantis, Director of School Construction Grants & Review for the Connecticut Department of Administrative



NCSF President Kosta Diamantis (CT) and 21CSF Executive Director Mary Filardo, welcome the school facilities officials.

Services, welcomed the NCSF members and guests. Diamantis highlighted the importance of the Council as advocates for our nation’s public school facilities. Mary Filardo, Executive Director of the 21st Century School Fund (21CSF), provided a brief history of the Council. 21CSF has provided strategic and research support and staffing to the Council since its inception in 2012.



2018 Member States  Participating States 



Back Row (L to R): Del McOmie (WY), Andy Stine (CO), Perry Taylor (AL), Pat Schofill (GA), Melanie Drerup (OH), Kosta Diamantis (CT), Bob Gorrell (MD), Justin Rogers (WA), Scott Brown (ME), Amy Clark (NH), Susan Kutner (NJ), Leanna Heiman (OR) **Front Row:** Ken Folks (IN), Bernie Piaia (NJ), Rosanne Groff (NY), Manuel Cordero (RI), Tim Mearig (AK), Paul Bakalis (AZ), Michael Elliott (OR), Jonathan Chamblin (NM), Brad Montgomery (AR), Nathan Maune (NC), Rob Olsen (IA), James Pennewell (DE) **Present, but not pictured:** Debora Norris (AZ), Walt Keays (BIA), Daniel Galvan (BIA), Steve Donley (DoDEA).

*Hold The Dates for the 7th annual meeting!
December 1-3, 2019 in Washington, D.C.*

2018 STATE REPORTS

An important purpose of the Annual Meeting is to add to state officials' understanding of the varied and changing state roles in public school facility quality, efficiency, equity, and funding. In the first session, each state official described his or her state's school-facilities program and reported on the top school-facilities issues that his or her state is currently facing and how the state is addressing those issues.

Topics discussed include the following:

- Capital-funding levels have not fully recovered from cutbacks during the Great Recession;
- The unpredictability of capital-funding levels in many places makes planning and optimal portfolio management difficult or impossible;
- Inadequately staffed state agencies struggle to review capital projects within timeframes required to avoid causing project delays and cost increases;
- Inequities in revenue and resources between low-wealth and declining-enrollment (often rural) districts and high-wealth/-growth districts are compounding inequities in facilities conditions;
- Increasing costs of construction mean that districts are able to address a smaller and smaller portion of their existing capital needs;
- States and districts need more and better data on the condition, adequacy, and maintenance of school facilities in order to properly prioritize their capital investments and obtain the greatest possible return on those investments;
- The absence of clear and proven best practices for enhancing school safety and security hinders states' ability to guide local districts and ensure efficient and effective use of dollars allocated for enhancing safety and security in schools; and
- States increasingly are exploring and/or adopting powerful tools such as statewide facilities assessments; facility-condition indexes; life-cycle cost analyses; reviews of state-facilities program policies and practices; and analyses of wealth indexes used in the allocation of state capital dollars.

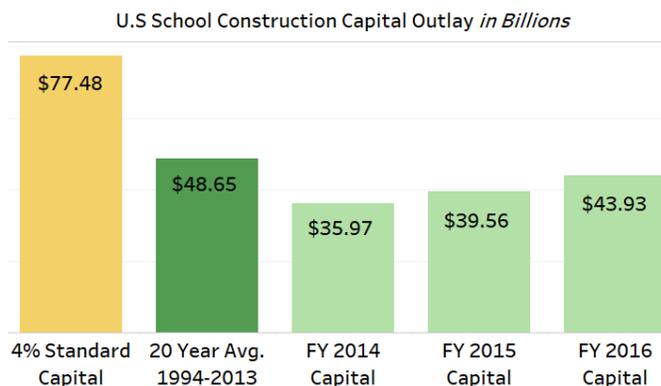


Rosanne Groff, N.Y. State Education Department; Bernie Piaia, N.J. Department of Education; and Ken Folks, Indiana Department of Education.

STATE OF OUR SCHOOLS 2018 UPDATES

In 2016, the National Council on School Facilities partnered with the 21st Century School Fund and the Center for Green Schools at USGBC to prepare [State of Our Schools: America's K–12 Facilities \(2016\)](#). The report provided data by state on local district capital outlay and maintenance and operations expenditures in fiscal years 1994 through 2013. At the Meeting, 21CSF [released comparable data](#) for fiscal years 2014, 2015, and 2016.

21CSF's key finding is that annual state and local capital outlay in FY 2014–2016 was lower than the 1994–2013 average (2014\$) and was far from the \$77.48 billion per year required for proper stewardship of existing public K–12 facilities. This standard—equal to 4% of current replacement value of the facilities—includes the cost of renewing or replacing building systems, addressing deferred maintenance, and modifying spaces to meet modern educational and building-code requirements. The national trend, shown below, were largely mirrored in the states.



EXPLORING PUBLIC-PRIVATE INVESTMENTS

With districts and states seeking ways to close funding gaps, state officials explored the potential benefits and challenges to using public-private partnerships. Mary Filardo led a discussion about options for engaging private funding to support public school facilities and the key capabilities that public entities must have in order to adequately represent and protect the public's interests in such partnerships.

The discussion explored the statement: The costs are too high and most local school districts' technical capacity is too low for them to responsibly use non-traditional methods of financing, delivering, procuring, and managing capital assets. But if state facilities programs had the ability to provide sufficient technical assistance and could help small districts bundle projects,

FACILITIES ASSESSMENTS

Having complete and comparable data on the condition and educational adequacy or suitability of existing K–12 facilities is essential when trying to determine how to best address communities' facilities needs. Jeff Vincent, Director of Public Infrastructure Initiatives from the Center for Cities + Schools at U.C. Berkeley (CC+S) moderated a panel discussion on state-level facilities assessments. The panel discussed best practices around obtaining, maintaining, and using facilities data that are comprehensive and comparable within a state. Among the best practices mentioned were 1) using a single assessment rubric and normed assessors to evaluate all of the facilities in the state; 2) measuring the remaining life of key building systems as a percentage of their expected lifespans in order to quantify the condition deficiencies; 3) weighting the condition deficiencies to reflect their impact on



Jeff Vincent (CC+S) moderates a discussion panel on facilities assessments. Panel (L to R): Andy Stine, Colorado Department of Education; Rosanne Groff, New York State Education Department; Del McOmie, Wyoming State Construction Department; Manuel Cordero, Rhode Island Department of Education; and Bob Gorrell, Maryland Interagency Commission on School Construction.

then districts might responsibly obtain private capital by employing non-traditional methods of financing, delivering, procuring, and managing capital assets for a subset of projects.

Filardo provided examples of non-traditional funding opportunities for real-estate-based public-private development and joint-use partnerships as well as performance contracts such as energy-savings agreements. Filardo also described how 2017 changes in federal tax law expanded the possibilities for using Opportunity Funds to bring private investment to public K–12 facilities located in [Opportunity Zones](#) and provided state officials with a list of public K–12 schools in existing Zones.

educational adequacy; 4) aggregating the system-level condition deficiencies to arrive at a facility-wide measure of condition; and 5) maintaining the validity of the resulting data by physically assessing each facility at least every four years. Having such data enables districts and states to better manage their facilities portfolios and to plan their capital expenditures years before they must be made.

GAO WORKING ON TWO STUDIES

Joining the session on facilities assessments were Alison Grantham and Bill MacBlane from the Education, Workforce and Income Security Division at the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO). They are lead analysts on two upcoming studies on K-12 school facilities. One study just underway is exploring whether U.S. public schools are ADA accessible. This study was requested by U.S. Representatives Nadler, Scott, and Serrano. The second study is part of a mandate in the FY2019 Budget Act and charges the GAO with describing the condition of our nation's K-12 public school facilities. While at the meeting, Grantham and MacBlane listened to the facilities officials to gain insight into how to meet the state officials who will be important contacts for their studies and how to obtain the data and information needed for the studies.

ENVIRONMENTAL RESILIENCE

Alex Donahue, Deputy Director of the 21st Century School Fund, moderated a session on state roles in fostering environmentally resilient school facilities. The facilities officials discussed their states' roles and responsibilities in the planning and management of environmental resilience in their school buildings.

On the Friday before the Annual Meeting, a 7.0-magnitude earthquake hit the Anchorage, AK-area school systems. Tim Mearig of the Alaska Department of Education & Early Development described his department's reactions and the resiliency of Alaska's school facilities. Nathan Maune of the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction shared his experience in responding to the damage that N.C. schools suffered in the recent hurricanes. Anisa Heming of the Center for Green Schools at the U.S. Green Building Council described the movement to develop building standards for resilience and tools to measure resilience. Heming cited the new [RELI](#) resilience standards and rating system developed through a process under the American National Standards Institute (ANSI).

SAFETY AND SECURITY

Every state and agency official indicated that they had spent significant time on questions of school security following the tragedy at Parkland High School. However, the Colorado and Connecticut officials indicated that they had previously engaged in significant assessments, program development, and facility modifications following the Columbine and Sandy Hook shootings. The Council sought to identify technical input for state officials to ensure that they had information on effective practices to support their states. Robert Boyd, Director of the Secure Schools Alliance, moderated a session with Vice Chairman Mark Williams of the Partner Alliance for Safer Schools and Ben Gorban of the Police Foundation. They provided a [safety-assessment tool](#) and led a discussion on the states' roles in integrating safety and security into facilities planning and management.

The state officials agreed that districts will pay greater attention to security as they design and build new facilities than they may have in the past. However, they noted the fact that facility remedies alone are unlikely to prevent or address the threats associated with school violence. They highlighted the importance of a holistic rather than a piecemeal approach to facilities improvements for school security, noting that a leaky roof or a nonfunctional heating system can turn a secure school into an environment that does not support teaching and learning. It is crucial that safety and security not push the impact of educationally inadequate facilities out of the picture, particularly when there is no consensus about what is most effective in establishing safety and security.



Alex Donahue, Deputy Director (21CSF) moderating the environmental resilience session.

TIME FOR A FEDERAL SCHOOL INFRASTRUCTURE PROGRAM

In the 115th Congress, Representative Bobby Scott (D-VA) and Senator Jack Reed (D-RI) sponsored legislation to invest federal dollars in public K–12 facilities. They are preparing to re-introduce their legislation in the 116th Congress. Moira Lenehan, senior policy advisor to Senator Jack Reed (RI), participated in a session in which the facilities officials discussed their states' readiness to administer a federal school infrastructure program according to the terms of the legislation introduced in the 115th Congress. Key requirements for the states include the following:

- (A) Provide technical assistance;
- (B) Maintain an online database of inventory;
- (C) Update the database every two years;
- (D) Make the data accessible to the public, LEAs, and Tribal governments;
- (E) Issue and review regulations to ensure health and safety during construction and renovation;
- (F) Issue and review regulations to ensure safe, healthy, and high-performing school buildings;
- (G) Create a plan to reduce or eliminate exposure to toxins and chemicals in schools, including mercury, radon, PCBs, lead, vapor intrusions, and asbestos; and
- (H) Establish a state plan, state matching funds, and a need-based competitive grant program to LEAs.

After Lenehan's presentation, the state facilities officials conducted table discussions on the requirements and support of the school facilities legislation and the challenges these requirements impose on their states. They questioned whether dedicating one percent of each state's proportion of the federal funding would be enough to enable the states to carry out their required responsibilities. Their view was that states that currently lack state-level facilities programs—as well as potentially others—might need more than one percent.

CAPITOL HILL VISITS

The National Council on School Facilities is part of the leadership team of the [\[Re\]Build America's School Infrastructure Coalition \(BASIC\)](#). Following the two-day Annual Meeting, 14 state facilities officials and a number of Council sponsors met with members of Congress and their staffs, for a total of 53 meetings covering 23 states. Van Heuvelen Strategies, a D.C.-



Moira Lenehan, Office of U.S. Senator Jack Reed (RI) discussing federal legislation with Jonathan Chamblin, New Mexico Public School Facilities Authority.

based government-relations firm, provided support to the National Council for the second year of Hill visits.

The state officials' primary objective was to provide information about the public K–12 facilities in their states, as well as the capabilities of their states and districts, to policy makers as they consider K–12 facilities within the larger conversation about infrastructure. The participants met with both Democratic and Republican representatives and focused on key committees of jurisdiction. The state officials found that Members and staff wanted to learn about local facilities challenges and that some were very interested in supporting a federal legislative solution, even as others expressed concern about such a federal program.

During a subsequent debriefing, the state officials who visited Congressional offices indicated that they had achieved their informational objective and felt that their efforts would contribute positively to the policy making that is likely to take place in the 116th Congress. They expressed appreciation for the guidance and support that the Council staff and VHS partners provided to them.



Paul Bakalis and Debora Norris, AZ School Facilities Board with Tim Mearig, AK Department of Education & Early Development.

LOOKING FORWARD

In strategic-planning discussions, participants and the NCSF Board of Directors identified the following key Council priorities for 2019:

- Continue to expand state membership, including states without school-facilities programs.
- Support the network of state officials in communication with each other.
- Maintain active participation in BASIC to ensure that state voices are heard regarding the need for schools to be included in a federal infrastructure package.
- Research and report on key facilities data measures, such as condition, spending, needs, and standards.
- Raise funds to be able to employ a full-time executive director and a support staffer who can support improved communications.



www.FacilitiesCouncil.org

For general inquiries and partnering/sponsorship opportunities, contact Alex Donahue at adonahue@21csf.org.



Melanie Drerup, Ohio Facilities Construction Commission, Perry Taylor, Alabama State Department of Education, and Rosanne Groff, New York State Education Department discuss potential strategies to improving PK-12 facilities planning.

2018 BOARD ELECTIONS

On December 4, 2018 President Kosta Diamantis (CT) passed the gavel to 2019 President Paul Bakalis (AZ), and the member-state representatives elected four of their number to open positions on the National Council's Board of Directors:

- President-Elect: Scott Brown, Director of School Facility Programs, Maine Department of Education.
- Treasurer: Joe da Silva, School Construction Coordinator, Rhode Island Department of Education.
- Midwest Region Representative: Rob Olsen, Infrastructure Consultant, Iowa Department of Education.
- Northeast Region Representative: Bernie Piaia, Director of Facilities, New Jersey Department of Education.

THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS

