

21st CENTURY SCHOOL FUND

IMPROVING URBAN PUBLIC SCHOOL FACILITIES

News and commentary on public school facilities with a local and national perspective from the [21st Century School Fund](http://www.FixAmericasSchoolsToday.org), a Washington, D.C. based 501(c)(3) non-profit working to build the public will and capacity to improve urban public school facilities, particularly for children from low income communities.

Fix America's Schools Today Act to Be Debated by U.S. Senate

21st Century School Fund launched www.FixAmericasSchoolsToday.org. The website provides information and a portal for youth groups, civic organizations, educators, industry representatives and labor organizations to register support for Fix America's Schools Today Act (FAST) - Senate Bill 1597 introduced by Ohio Senator Sherrod Brown and House Bill 2948, introduced by Congresswoman Rosa DeLauro.

Debate on the bill in the U.S. Senate is anticipated by the end of the year. If these bills pass, local school districts and community colleges will have \$30 billion in grants by the summer of 2012 to:

- repair and replace heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) systems;
- remove mold and reduce energy costs with roof replacement and repair;
- support technology, mechanical systems, and electricity with electrical system modernization;
- reduce water consumption, eliminate lead in water, upgrade bathrooms and plumbing;
- eliminate allergy and asthma triggers,
- contain or eliminate asbestos, and wall repair and painting;
- replace windows to save on energy use;
- install solar panels, wind generators, and geothermal or other clean energy generators; and
- make other buildings and grounds repairs and modernizations.



Student Photo - www.throughyourlens.org

Over 300,000 new jobs are expected to be generated by this work. These new jobs will help reduce the \$271 billion in deferred maintenance and repairs in K-12 public schools and meet the extensive needs for facilities in community colleges. It will also reduce ongoing operating costs for school districts and states.

Ed Facility Planning for D.C. Ward 5 Middle Schools

On November 15th, 2011, District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS) presented its proposal to address the concerns of parents about the lack of quality middle school programs in the PS-8th grade schools in their communities. The elementary schools were converted to PS-8th grade schools following school closings in 2008. This resulted in such small middle grade enrollments that important electives and activities for students were unavailable for Ward 5 middle grade students. For the 2010-11 school year there were only 790 middle grade students spread over seven PS-8th grade schools.

DCPS, working with community groups and parents proposed the following:

- One stand alone middle school with an arts and world language emphasis for 500 students.
- One PS-8th grade education campus with an International Baccalaureate (IB) program for 300 middle school students.
- Addition of 300 middle grade seats to McKinley HS, a city-wide Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) magnet school with 100 seats set aside for Ward 5 Residents.
- Close one of the currently operating PK-8th grade schools.
- Return the remaining PS-8th grade schools back to PS-5th grade elementary schools.

The committee of parents is currently discussing how to get more community members involved through more school meetings with PTA organizations and possibly some "living room chats". The Ward 5 Council on Education is drafting a response especially with regards to closing more schools.

Joint-Use Cost Calculator for Public Schools

One obstacle to intensive joint use of public school buildings and grounds is school districts knowing how to charge and charging enough to cover the real cost of facilities, operations, maintenance and capital responsibilities. Yet most school districts have not calculated the real cost of ownership of their facilities. [This joint use cost calculator](#), developed by the 21st Century School Fund and Center for Cities and Schools at UC Berkeley, enables a school district to: 1) Determine the "cost of ownership" of its facilities; and 2) Develop a fee structure for community use, based on the cost of ownership. The calculator identifies the elements of school district facility costs, calculates a per square foot cost of ownership and proposes various scenarios for cost recovery, so school districts can knowingly subsidize broader community use, or secure other public or private funds needed to support intensive community use. The calculator was piloted in the San Francisco Unified School District. We are interested in feedback on how it applies in your district. info@21csf.org

21CSF to Begin End of the Year Fundraising Appeal

Thank you for your support in helping secure safe, healthy, educationally appropriate, and fiscally sound school buildings and schoolyards for ALL children. After 17 years, we are conducting our first major end of the year fundraising appeal. We know these are tough economic times, for the 99%! If you can, please consider contributing to the 21st Century School Fund so we are able to sustain and increase our capacity for policy, advocacy, research, and constituency building. We will be contacting you with our appeal, but you can also just [donate now](#).

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