

HIGH PERFORMANCE SCHOOL BUILDINGS FOR ALL CHILDREN

A DECLARATION AND CALL TO ACTION

Our children's education is vital to their future and fundamental to our democracy. Like the people and programs within them, the quality of our school buildings matters.

THE CALL TO ACTION

More money is being spent on school construction and renovation in this country than ever before. Likewise, maintenance, cleaning and repairs represent significant ongoing public expenditures. We have an unprecedented window of opportunity to design high performance school buildings for the twenty-first century.

WE CALL ON ALL MEMBERS OF OUR COMMUNITY:

CITIZENS: Demand a high performance learning environment for every child. Insist on ending the deficiencies and inequities in the conditions of public school buildings. Ensure that our investment in quality high performance facilities is not just for some, but for all students. Your involvement is vital to securing high performance school buildings.

SCHOOL DISTRICT OFFICIALS: Commit to working with the community to create and maintain high-performance school buildings.

STATE AND LOCAL SCHOOL BOARDS: Adopt policies that create and support healthy, sustainable, educationally enriching, community-centered, and cost effective schools.

GOVERNORS: Adopt high performance standards for all school design, construction and renovation projects and provide a regulatory climate and financial flexibility that foster high performance planning, design, construction, and operation.

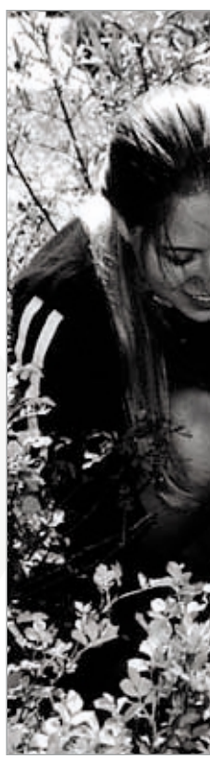
THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT: Set and enforce standards, provide technical assistance, and earmark funding to support planning, protect the natural environment, conserve energy, and guarantee healthy indoor environments in all school buildings.

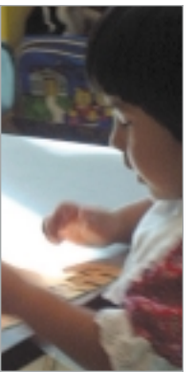
ARCHITECTS, ENGINEERS, AND THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY: Strengthen capacity for and commitment to designing and building high performance schools and provide local officials with the information and support they need to build such facilities.

ADVOCATES FOR EDUCATION, HEALTH, ENVIRONMENT, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION: Insist on high performance schools for every child. Integrate this declaration into your message and agenda and build coalitions across issues to ensure that every child attends school in a high performance school building.

FOUNDATIONS: Foster innovation and replication by providing funds for planning, technical assistance, communications, and public policy initiatives for high performance school buildings.













WHAT IS AT STAKE?

EDUCATION: The learning environment impacts student achievement and teaching quality. Studies show that students learn best in an environment that is healthy, comfortable, naturally lit, clean, and in good repair. The quality and design of school facilities affects the ability of a school to retain teachers and what and how they teach. Student and staff absenteeism are lower in buildings in good condition.

HEALTH: The school environment is not just an educational issue, but a public health concern. School buildings and their sites directly affect student and teacher health. Children are especially vulnerable to environmental hazards such as poor air quality, mold, pesticides, construction, contaminants, chemical fumes, heavy metals, asbestos, or excessive noise, heat and cold.

ENVIRONMENT: America's 115,000 schools, by their use of raw materials, commercial products, energy, land, and water, have considerable impact on the environmental quality of our communities. High performance school buildings save energy, reduce pollution and provide opportunities for children to learn environmental stewardship.

COMMUNITY: The design, construction, maintenance, and renovation of our school buildings affect not only the individuals who study and work there, but the entire neighborhood. Schools are physically prominent, a part of local history. The local public school is often our only public commons, a building claimed by everyone, inviting opportunities for shared public use.

PUBLIC INVESTMENT: Schools represent a significant investment of hard won community resources. We cannot afford to build "good-enough" schools. We owe it to future generations to find and use the building technologies and design methods that will produce schools that are not just the cheapest, but the most cost effective over time. Maintenance, cleaning and repairs represent major ongoing public expenditures and need to influence design decisions.

DECLARATION: HIGH PERFORMANCE SCHOOL BUILDINGS FOR ALL CHILDREN

ALL PUBLIC SCHOOL BUILDINGS, WHETHER NEW, RENOVATED OR EXISTING MUST BE:

SUPPORTIVE OF TEACHING AND LEARNING: High performance school buildings accommodate the learning needs of students, support a rich and varied curriculum, and give teachers practical and stimulating teaching space. They also provide for school-based programs and essential services that reduce barriers to student achievement.

HEALTHY, CLEAN, AND IN GOOD REPAIR: High performance school buildings are clean, safe and secure; with excellent indoor air quality; high levels of acoustic, thermal, and visual comfort; and large amounts of natural light. All physical systems and components are well maintained.

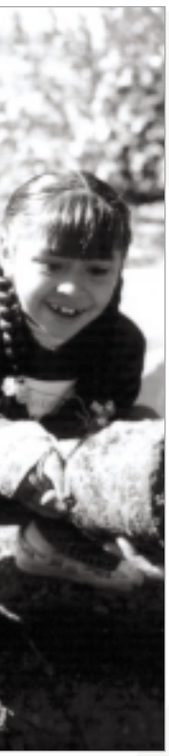
ENVIRONMENTALLY SOUND AND ENERGY EFFICIENT: High performance school buildings are sustainable. They integrate conservation and renewable energy strategies. They use energy efficient mechanical and lighting systems; socially and environmentally responsible site planning; non-toxic building and teaching materials; and water conserving design.

COMMUNITY CENTERED: A high performance school building is connected to its community. The public is meaningfully involved in designing the school and exploring possibilities for such shared uses as neighborhood health clinics, libraries, or recreation centers. Old and historic schools are renovated and modernized to continue to serve their neighborhoods.

COST EFFECTIVE TO BUILD, OPERATE AND MAINTAIN: High performance school buildings are built to optimize public investment. They are operated and maintained efficiently and designed using a life cycle cost approach that reduces the total costs of ownership. A commissioning process ensures the facility will operate in a manner consistent with the design intent.

"WE ARE TOO POOR TO BUILD CHEAP...IT'S HARD TO GET THE MONEY FOR SCHOOLS, SO WHEN WE DO, WE'D BETTER BUILD THEM RIGHT."

RON BRATLIE, ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT
ELK RIVER AREA SCHOOLS, MINNESOTA



Co-Seed



Co-Seed

JOIN US

This Declaration and Call to Action was developed by the Wingspread Symposium Steering Committee on Healthy Schools by Design of the Funders' Forum on Environment and Education (F2E2), and by the Building Educational Success Together (BEST) partners of the 21st Century School Fund.

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SIGN ON to this declaration at www.F2E2.org or www.21csf.org to join a community of people and organizations working to secure high performance school buildings for all children.

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