K-12 School Construction in California:  
Policy Framework for Sustainable School Facilities

Senate Select Committee on School Facilities

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CC&S School Facilities Work
Key Framing Points

1. Facilities overlooked as important element of student success and in closing the achievement gap

2. Schools are one of most important infrastructure assets in neighborhoods
State Responsibility in Public School Facilities

1. Ensure educational appropriateness
2. Ensure student safety
3. Ensure equity
4. Assist with LEA capital costs
5. Ensure wise investment
What is California’s need?

- Enrollments continue to rise
- Large maintenance backlog
- Enormous local appetite for state bonds
  - $35 billion in state bonds since 1998
  - $80 billion state and local since 1998
California’s Need:
School Facility Conditions

• CA has among the nation’s worst school facilities (US GAO 1996)

• 1/3 of students in overcrowded or out-of-repair schools (LAO 2001)

• Poor conditions in state’s 85,000 portables (CARB & DHS 2003)
Meeting California’s Need: Behind in National Spending Per Student

1995-2004 Average
National: $6,519
California: $4,919
Meeting California’s Need: Inequities in School Facility Expenditures

Lowest income school districts spent the least on facilities (1995-2004)
Meeting California’s Need: Inequities in School Facility Expenditures

Disparity greater on spending on improvements to existing schools
Why the Inequities Matter:
What we know about the importance of school facilities

- Facility quality impacts students’ experiences in school and ultimately their educational achievement
- Green buildings promote efficient use of public resources
- Quality school buildings support community vitality
- School facilities affect land use, growth, and transportation
High Quality Schools for a Sustainable California: Policy Recommendations

1. Establish a vision and policy framework to connect:
   - High quality educational outcomes
   - Community reinvestment
   - Sustainable regional growth
   - Sound infrastructure investment

2. Ensure accountability and equity in state school facility funding
   - Establish database on facilities, conditions, spending
   - Assess state allocation along equity lines
High Quality Schools for a Sustainable California: Policy Recommendations

3. Align facility funding with educational priorities
   • Close facility condition gap
   • Support teachers’ working conditions
   • Funding model shouldn’t discourage small schools

4. Incentive local agency collaborative planning
   • Incentivize joint planning and siting
   • Incentivize co-location and joint use
High Quality Schools for a Sustainable California: Policy Recommendations

5. Conduct outcome evaluation
   - What are we getting for our $80 billion?
   - What design choices improve school quality?

6. Evaluate SFP Funding Model
   - Is the per-pupil model getting us what we want?
   - Are we building high quality schools?
   - Funding guidelines and education goals disconnected
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