



BASIC

[Re] Build America's School Infrastructure Coalition

Media Release - July 28, 2021

Once in a Generation Opportunity - Communities Need a \$100 Billion for School Facilities in Reconciliation

Washington, D.C. – July 28, 2021 – The [\[Re\]Build America's School Infrastructure Coalition \(BASIC\)](#) sent a letter addressed to Senator Chuck Schumer (NY), Senator Bernie Sanders (VT), Senator Patty Murray (WA), Speaker Nancy Pelosi (CA-12), Congressman John Yarmuth (KY-03), and Congressman Bobby Scott (VA-03) requesting \$100 billion in direct grants to improve the nation's public school facilities in reconciliation:

Dear Leader Schumer, Senator Sanders, Senator Murray, Speaker Pelosi, Representative Yarmuth and Representative Scott:

On behalf of the [Re]Build America's School Infrastructure Coalition (BASIC), and the 130+ education, civic, environmental, labor, and industry organizations we represent, we request that Congress include \$100 billion in the reconciliation bill for direct grants to improve our nation's public school facilities. This level of investment will provide critical help to our lowest wealth districts and highest need facilities.

This is a once-in-a-generation opportunity that cannot be missed. One hundred billion dollars is about 10% of the national ten-year \$1.1 trillion dollars of capital investment needs. But when targeted to low wealth districts and high need school facilities, this investment can make a significant impact on longstanding inequities experienced by low income and minority children and youth. These inequities are structured into a system that depends on local property or sales taxes for financing public school facilities improvements.

Public school districts lost an opportunity to address long-standing public education facilities deficiencies in 2009 when \$16 billion (nearly \$23 billion in today's dollars) was dropped from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). This loss has been acutely felt over this last decade. Our public school facilities can't afford to be neglected again.

Our public school buildings and grounds will yield high returns on important priorities of the American Jobs and Family Plans such as:

Child health: With federal facilities funds, public school districts can implement and support permanent and holistic remedies to poor conditions to ensure that children are in healthy and safe facilities and that school facilities have school-based health clinics and school nurse offices that meet modern standards.

Early childhood education and childcare: With federal facilities funds, public school buildings can be readily retrofitted for universal Pre-Kindergarten classrooms and child care spaces.

Child nutrition: With federal facilities funds, districts can modernize their school kitchens, cafeterias, and create schoolyard gardens to improve the nutrition of children and their families, reducing chronic conditions like obesity and diabetes.

Teacher retention: With federal facilities funds, school districts can improve teacher working conditions by providing air conditioning, reliable heating, good indoor air quality, lighting, and acoustics, but also retain teachers by providing them the technology and specialized teaching spaces they need for science, art, music, special education, and physical education.

Community college affordability: With federal funds to modernize schools, poor facilities will not be a barrier to student success that leave students ill-prepared for post-secondary education, which increases costs, as families and community colleges pay for remedial education that should have taken place in high schools.

Environmental sustainability and resilience: Federal funds will help modernize and replace old public schools so they conserve land, energy, and water, reduce carbon emissions, and in the face of climate change, can help save lives, and reduce the level of relief funding needed following disasters.

Good jobs in communities across the nation: With federal funds to modernize, retrofit, and build public schools and grounds in low wealth urban, suburban, town, and rural communities, good jobs will help stabilize or grow the population and revitalize the economy of struggling communities. Congress has provided the funding to reopen schools this fall but these funds are insufficient when it comes to the challenge of building a new generation of 21st-century school facilities. Now is the time to build back better. If states secure the federal funding commensurate with the importance, scale, and relevance of facilities responsibilities, then our low wealth and high need districts will be able to deliver significant facility improvements to support child health and nutrition, child care and Pre-K, teacher retention, college affordability, environmental sustainability, resilience, and good jobs.

Thank you for your hard work on behalf of families and communities.

Sincerely,

21st Century School Fund
AASA, The School Superintendents Association
Abruna & Musgrave, Architects
Afterschool Alliance
AIHA
Air Equipment Company
American Federation of School Administrators
American Federation of Teachers
American Institute of Architects Committee on
Architecture for Education
American Library Association
American Occupational Therapy Association
American Planning Association
American Society of Civil Engineers
Artcobell
Association for Learning Environments
Association of School Business Officials
International (ASBO)
Baltimore City Public Schools
BAMA Kids, Inc.
Blackridge Health & Educational Solutions
BlueGreen Alliance
BRICK Education Network
Bristol Virginia Public Schools
Build Up California | Early Learning Facilities
BuildingAction: The Coalition for Sustainable
Buildings
Californians for School Facilities
Campaign for Environmental Literacy
Carrier Corporation
CBRE Heery, Inc.
Center for Cities + Schools
Center for Green Schools @ USGBC
Children & Nature Network

Kansas City Public Schools
Kansas Green Schools Program/Kansas
Association for Conservation and Environmental
Education
KCI Technologies Inc.
KIPP
LaBella Associates
Living Classroom
Maine Parent Teacher Association
Mark Design Studios Architecture, PC
Maryland ACLU
Michigan Education Justice Coalition
National Alliance for Public Charter Schools
National Association for Music Education
(NAfME)
National Association of Elementary School
Principals (NAESP)
National Association of Energy Service Companies
National Association of Federally Impacted
Schools
National Association of Secondary School
Principals
National Council on School Facilities
National Education Association
National Indian Education Association
National Parent Teacher Association
National Rural Education Association
National Wildlife Federation
nature+play designs
New America
NJ Education Law Center
North American Association for Environmental
Education
Out Teach

Children's Environmental Health Network
City of Austin Parks and Recreation Department
CITYGREEN DC
CMTA Engineers
Collaborative for High Performance Schools Inc.
College Achieve Public Schools
Colorado Alliance for Environmental Education
Communities In Schools Pittsburgh - Allegheny County
Connecticut School Indoor Environment Resource Team
Cooperative Strategies
daVinci Planning, PC
DLR Group
Durham Public Schools
EARTHDAY.ORG
Edmonds School District
Ed-Space Consulting and Project Management
Education Market Association
Ensenar Educational Services
enVerid Systems
Facility Adviser
Fairfield Enterprise, LLC
Go Green Initiative
Great Northwest Education Cooperative
Green Building Initiative
Green Schools National Network
Green Schoolyards America
Greenbank Associates
Grimm + Parker Architects
Healthy Schools Campaign
Healthy Schools Network, Inc.
Heart of America
High Performance Learning Environments
Huckabee, Inc.
Impact Fitness Foundation
Inclusive Prosperity Capital
International Council of Employers of Bricklayers and Allied Craftworkers
International Union of Bricklayers and Allied Craftworkers
International WELL Building Institute
iXero
Johnson Controls
Jones Whitsett Architects
KABOOM!

Parents For Students Safety
PBS Engineering and Environmental, Inc.
pcbinschools.org
Perkins Eastman
Philadelphia Healthy Schools Initiative
Public Economics, Inc.
Public Private Action
Public Schools Interest Group - American Planning Association
Quattrocchi Kwok Architects
Reflo
Rhode Island Environmental Education Association
Richmond Forward
SafeTraces, Inc.
School Board Of St. Lucie County
School Board Partners
School Energy Coalition
School PRIDE Foundation
School Site Solutions, Inc.
School-Based Health Alliance
SGA/Narmour Wright
Shawnee Heights Unified School District (KS)
SMART California Sheet Metal Workers' Local 104
Southern Echo Inc.
Southern Rural Black Women's Initiative
SRBWI/BAMA Kids, Inc.
Strategic Energy Innovations
StudioGC architecture + interiors
Susan Epstein and Associates
Ten Strands
Texas Fast Growth Coalition
The American Society of Interior Designers
The Low Income Investment Fund
The Portal Coalition
The Wild Center
UndauntedK12
Urban Pathways K-5 College Charter School
Women for a Healthy Environment .

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The [Re\[Build\] America's School Infrastructure Coalition \(BASIC\)](#) is a non-partisan coalition of civic, public sector, labor, and industry associations who support federal funding to help under-served public school districts modernize and build K-12 public school facilities. We believe that ALL children should attend healthy, safe, and educationally appropriate school facilities. It's BASIC.

To learn more: Visit BASIC's [website](#), which includes [resources](#) and recent school facilities news. Follow BASIC on Twitter [@BuildUSschools](#)