

SCHOOL + STATE  
FINANCE PROJECT

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DISTRICT REPAIR &  
IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM  
(DRIP)

# The Importance of Safe Schools

- **Impact on Learning Outcomes:**
  - Research shows safe, healthy schools improve academic performance.
  - Poor facilities (e.g., mold, inadequate ventilation, noise) harm student health and learning.
- **Socioeconomic Disparities:**
  - Economically disadvantaged students are less likely to attend schools in “good” or “excellent” condition.
  - Schools in underserved communities face higher environmental hazards, exacerbating inequities.
- **Takeaway:** Investing in school infrastructure is essential for student success and equity.

Sources: Eitland, E., Klingensmith, L., MacNaughton, P., Cedeno Laurent, J., Spengler, J., Bernstein, A., & Allen, J.G. (2017). Foundations for Student Success: How School Buildings Influence Student Health, Thinking and Performance. Boston, MA: Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, Center for Health and the Global Environment. Retrieved from [https://forhealth.org/Harvard.Schools\\_For\\_Health.Foundations\\_for\\_Student\\_Success.pdf](https://forhealth.org/Harvard.Schools_For_Health.Foundations_for_Student_Success.pdf).  
Blagg, K, Terrones, F., & Nelson, V. (2023). Assessing the National Landscape of Capital Expenditures for Public School Districts. Washington, DC.: Urban Institute. Retrieved from <https://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/2023-01/Assessing%20the%20National%20Landscape%20of%20Capital%20Expenditures%20for%20Public%20School%20Districts.pdf>.

# The Benefits of School Facility Investments

- **Improved Student Outcomes:** Studies show better facilities correlate with higher student achievement.
- **Economic Impact:**
  - Research has also shown school facility investments result in increased home values.
  - The impact of these investments is most significant in communities with higher levels of student need and diversity.
- **Example:** Districts with modernized facilities have better attendance and test scores.
- **Takeaway:** Upgrading facilities benefits students and strengthens local economies.

Sources: Lafortune, J., & Schönholzer, D. (2022). The Impact of School Facility Investments on Students and Homeowners: Evidence from Los Angeles. *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics*, 14(3), 254-289. Retrieved from <https://www.aeaweb.org/content/file?id=14772>.

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# Current Challenges in CT School Facility Funding

- **No Grants for Minor Capital Repairs**
  - CT's current School Construction Grant Program only reimburses for **major renovations or new construction**.
- **Non-Priority List is Limited**
  - Only select **emergency repairs or minor improvements** are eligible — **and only for eligible districts**.
- **Deferred Maintenance Leads to Higher Costs**
  - Without minor capital support, **districts defer repairs**, leading to **costlier fixes and larger construction projects** in the future.

# DRIP for Minor Repairs

- **Public School District Repair & Improvement Project (DRIP) Program**
  - Creates a **stable, annual grant** for every school district to fund **minor capital improvements**.
- **Modeled After LoCIP**
  - LoCIP is a successful state bonding program for town infrastructure.
  - DRIP mirrors this structure for schools.
- **\$30 million allocation**
  - Funded at a level **consistent with LoCIP's historical allocation**.
- **Fair & Flexible Distribution**
  - Formula-based aid aligned with **existing education grants**.
  - Funds go **directly to boards of education**.
  - **Bankable**: Districts can save over years for mid-sized capital projects.

# DRIP Distribution Formula

Component	Weight	Calculation
<b>District Enrollment</b>	50%	District need student count divided by the sum of all districts' need student counts
<b>Municipal Wealth</b>	30%	Inverse of district AENGLC multiplied by district enrollment divided by the sum of all district products resulting from their inverse AENGLC multiplied by enrollment
<b>Flat Grant</b>	20%	Flat grant portion divided equally across all eligible districts.

# How Districts Could Utilize DRIP Funding

- Replacing failing HVAC units to ensure safe air quality
- Upgrading outdated electrical systems for tech compatibility
- Repairing roofs, windows, and doors to prevent further damage
- ADA compliance upgrades for accessible classrooms
- Renovating nurse's offices and bathrooms for student health
- Improving athletic fields and facilities for student wellness and extracurricular engagement
- Addressing mold, lead, and asbestos issues proactively
- Paving deteriorating school parking lots and walkways

# Next Steps

- **HB 7239 ([link](#)) Raised by Finance, Revenue & Bonding Committee**
- **Strong Public Support**
  - A public hearing was held on **March 24<sup>th</sup>**
  - **Superintendents and district leaders** testified in favor of the bill
- **Awaiting Committee Action**
  - **Joint Favorable (JF) deadline: April 24<sup>th</sup>**

# Contact Us

For questions or comments about the information in this presentation,  
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