Proposed DRIP Program vs. Non-Priority List Grants

The purpose of this document is to highlight the key differences between Non-Priority List grants for school district capital improvement projects and the proposed District Repair and Improvement Project (DRIP) program.[1] The table below details the key components for each grant program.

Component	Non-Priority List Grant Program	H.B. 7239: District Repair and Improvement Project (DRIP) Program
Purpose	To assist **eligible** school districts with costs related to emergency repairs or replacements, and select minor capital improvements.	To provide annual grants to **all** public school districts for minor infrastructure projects to proactively maintain facilities, plan for long-term maintenance needs, and address unexpected repairs.
Funding Type	Reimbursement grant awarded **periodically** based on project eligibility and state funding	Grant awarded **annually at the start of each fiscal year**
Amount	Varies annually	$30 million annually
Revenue Stream	Sale of General Obligation Bonds	Sale of General Obligation Bonds
Responsible State Agency	Department of Administrative Services (DAS)	Office of Policy and Management (OPM)
Eligible Entities	● Connecticut towns and municipalities ● Regional School Districts ● Regional Educational Service Centers (RESCs) ● Goodwin University Magnet School (GUMS) System ● Endowed academies	● Local and regional boards of education ● Regional Educational Service Centers (RESCs) ● Goodwin University Magnet School (GUMS) System ● Endowed academies ● State charter schools
Eligible Expenses	**Specific** set of eligible expenses: ● Costs to remedy damage from fire and catastrophe; ● Corrections for safety, health, and other code violations; ● Roof replacements; ● Remedying a certified school	**Broad** set of eligible projects: ● Construction, renovation, repair, or enlargement of school buildings or school grounds, including parking lots, athletic fields, and playgrounds;

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[1] For more information on Non-Priority List grants, please visit https://portal.ct.gov/das/grants/non-priority-list. For more information on the proposed District Repair and Improvement Project (DRIP) program, please visit https://linktr.ee/DRIPprogram.

Component	Non-Priority List Grant Program	H.B. 7239: District Repair and Improvement Project (DRIP) Program
	- indoor air quality emergency; - Installation of insulation for exterior walls and attics; and - Purchase and installation of a limited use and limited access elevator, windows, photovoltaic panels, wind generation systems, building management systems, a public school administrative or service facility, or portable classroom buildings.	- Improvements to school facilities for compliance with health, safety, or code requirements; and - Purchase, installation, or maintenance of, or improvements to, fixed school infrastructure, including: heating, ventilation and air conditioning systems, plumbing, electrical systems, and roofing.
Process	Before grants are disbursed, districts **must receive approval** for their minor school construction projects from the DAS. Districts request funding through the school construction grant application. This process includes: - Submitting an application through CORE-CT; - Receiving legislative approval by vote of its legislative body if a district is a local or regional school district; - Providing proof of local authorized funding; - Plan review and approval by DAS; and - Additional documentation depending on school and project type. Applications are reviewed by the commissioner of the DAS and approved on a case-by-case basis **if funding is available**. If funding and construction plans are approved, districts are provided with progress payments of the State's share as work is completed.	Before grants are disbursed, districts **do not need approval** for their district repair and improvement projects from the OPM. However, if the secretary of the OPM finds funds were used outside of eligible expenses, then the school district must immediately reimburse the State in an amount equal to the grant received, or the OPM will reduce any future grant award by the amount owed. Districts receive a grant by June 30th of each fiscal year, and school districts are required to use funds for reimbursement and costs related to district repair and improvement projects. Districts can choose to roll over funds and save for future projects. Districts must also submit a report annually to the secretary of the OPM, which must include the following: - The amount spent on each project; - Certification by the school district that the project was approved by the responsible governing authority overseeing the project; and - Certification that none of the

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		grant proceeds were used to satisfy any local matching requirements for state assistance programs or school building projects.
Grant Calculation	Grants are calculated as a **percent of total project cost** based on each district's school construction state reimbursement percentage. Reimbursement rates are calculated annually based on the adjusted equalized net grand list per capita for each district.[2]	Districts are allocated grant amounts **separate from projects and based on a formula**, where: ● 50% is allocated based on district enrollment, where a district's total need student count is divided by the sum of all districts' total need student counts; ● 20% is allocated equally among all school districts; and ● 30% is allocated based on district wealth, where the inverse of a district's adjusted equalized net grant list per capita (AENGLC) is multiplied by a district's enrollment divided by the sum of all district products resulting from their inverse AENGLC multiplied by enrollment. Eligible projects **do not** require a specific local share of project costs.
Timeline	Eligible school districts may apply at any time, and grants are approved on a case-by-case basis by the commissioner of the DAS within available funding.	**February 1st**: The secretary of the OPM is allocated funding from the district repair and improvement account for the purposes of DRIP program grants. **March 1st**: The secretary of the OPM will notify each school district of their DRIP program grant amount, and post all district grant amounts and calculations on the OPM website.

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[2] To learn more about state reimbursement percentages for school construction, please visit https://portal.ct.gov/das/office-of-grants-administration/school-construction-state-reimbursement-percentages.

Component	Non-Priority List Grant Program	H.B. 7239: District Repair and Improvement Project (DRIP) Program
		June 30th (at the latest): The secretary of the OPM will issue grants to each school district, which can be used for reimbursement and costs associated with DRIP projects. **September 30th (at the latest)**: Districts will submit a report to the secretary of the OPM, which includes the amount spent on each project, certification that the project was approved by the board of education or similar authority, and certification that the grant funds were not used to satisfy a local matching requirement for state assistance programs, or for school building projects funded by the State.
Example Projects	- Ashford Elementary School Roof Replacement (2025, $5 million project) - West Hartford, Webster Hill Elementary School Energy Conservation (2025, $4.3 million project) - Stratford Academy - Johnson House Code Violation (2024, $1.6 million project) - Greenwich High School Renovation (2023, $3 million project)	Districts could leverage DRIP funds for the example projects listed to the left, but also smaller projects, including, but not limited to: 1. Replacing a gymnasium floor. 2. Creating a STEM lab. 3. Retrofitting classroom space for students with disabilities. 4. Painting classrooms and cafeterias. 5. Replacing ceiling tiles.