

Connecticut does not currently provide state funding for minor capital improvements in public schools. Without state support, the cost of minor repairs falls entirely on local taxpayers, leaving critical projects in lower-wealth districts unaddressed and impacting students' learning environments and experiences. Minor repairs left unaddressed can escalate into significant issues and compromise the condition of school facilities, resulting in higher long-term expenses.

That's why we're working with legislative leaders, education advocates, municipal officials, and community and business leaders across Connecticut to create the district repair and improvement project (DRIP) program to provide all school districts with funds for minor infrastructure projects.

If passed, H.B. 7239 would:

- Award \$30 million annually to all types of public school districts for minor infrastructure projects to proactively maintain facilities
- Ensure funds are used appropriately to provide students with safe, secure, and well-equipped school buildings
- Allow school districts to use DRIP funds to plan for long-term maintenance needs and address unexpected repairs

Below is a brief summary of each subsection of H.B. 7239.

Subsection	Policy Change(s)
<p>Sec. 1a (NEW)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Establishes definitions related to the creation of the grant program beginning in FY 2026. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Public school operator: any local or regional school district, Regional Educational Service Center (RESC), Goodwin University Magnet School (GUMS), endowed academy, or state charter school. ○ District repair and improvement project: a capital expenditure project approved by a school district for (1) construction, renovation, or expansion of school buildings and grounds; (2) improvements for compliance with health, safety, or code requirements; or (3) upgrades to, and maintenance of, fixed infrastructure. ○ Number of students enrolled: the total number of students in a school district on October 1st or the last full school day before that date.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Number of students eligible for free or reduced-price meals or free milk: the total number of students enrolled in a school district on October 1st, or the last full school day before that date, whose families meet the income guidelines set by the federal Department of Agriculture for free or reduced-price meals or free milk under the National School Lunch Program. ○ Total need students: the sum of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The total number of students enrolled in a given school year ■ 30% for each student who is eligible for free or reduced-price lunch ■ 15% for each student who attends a school in a school district where 60% or more of the students qualify for free or reduced-price lunch ■ 25% for each student who is a multilingual language learner ■ 30% for each student with disabilities
<p style="text-align: center;">Sec. 1b (NEW)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Allocates funding to the secretary of the Office of Policy and Management (OPM), on February 1st of each year, for the purposes of the district repair and improvement project program. ● Requires the secretary to allocate an amount to each school district, according to the formula established in this bill, in a subaccount for each school district. ● Requires the secretary to maintain records for each school district, including amounts credited, amounts paid out, and the available balance. ● Prohibits school districts from using funds to meet local matching requirements for state assistance programs or school building projects.
<p style="text-align: center;">Sec. 1c (NEW)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Establishes the formula to calculate allocation amounts to school districts through the grant program. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 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.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 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. ● Defines AENGLC, for the purposes of this subsection, for all public school operators. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Local school districts: AENGLC is the same as the town's AENGLC. ○ Regional school districts, RESCs, GUMS, and endowed academies: AENGLC is based on its ranking under the School Construction Program. ○ State charter school districts: AENGLC is the same as the AENGLC for the town in which the school is located.
Sec. 1d (NEW)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Requires the secretary of the OPM to notify each school district of its grant amount on March 1st of each fiscal year. ● Requires the OPM to publish the grant amounts and their calculations for all school districts on the department's website.
Sec. 1e (NEW)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Requires funds allocated to each school district to be disbursed as a grant by June 30th of each fiscal year beginning in FY 2026 by the secretary of the OPM. ● Requires school districts to use funds for reimbursement and costs related to district repair and improvement projects.
Sec. 1f (NEW)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Requires any school district that is allocated funds to produce a report for the prior year to the secretary of the OPM beginning September 1, 2027, and annually each year after. ● Requires the annual report include certification by the school districts that the project was approved by the responsible governing authority overseeing the project, and that none of the grant proceeds were used to satisfy any local matching requirements for state assistance programs or school building projects. ● Requires the OPM to publish the reports to the department's

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	website.
Sec. 1g (NEW)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Requires districts receiving a grant to maintain a detailed accounting record for all expenses incurred from the projects for a minimum of three years after project completion. ● Authorizes the secretary of the OPM to determine if a school district has improperly maintained its records. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ If found to be out of compliance, the secretary may then penalize the school district, requiring them to immediately reimburse the state in an amount equal to the grant received or reduce any future grant awarded by the amount owed.
Sec. 1h (NEW)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Requires the establishment of a nonlapsing "District Repair and Improvement Account" where funds required are deposited to be distributed by the secretary of the OPM.
Sec. 1i (NEW)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Authorizes the State Bond Commission to issue bonds occasionally in an amount not exceeding \$60 million beginning in FY 2026, with \$30 million provided on July 1, 2025.
Sec. 1j (NEW)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Specifies that the proceeds of the sale of these bonds shall be used by the OPM for the created grant program.
Sec. 1k (NEW)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Adopts provisions of the State General Obligation Bond Procedure Act (Conn. Gen. Stat. § 3-20), with bonds maturing no more than 20 years from such date, providing the State Bond Commission with authority for authorization, and defining bonds as general obligations of the state. ● Requires the State Treasurer to pay principal and interest to holders of the bonds, as part of contract with the State, when due.