

OSPI's 2021–23 Capital Budget Requests

Increasing Access to Funding for K–6 School Construction

\$111.8M for the 2021–23 Biennium

The current funding model for school construction projects has not been updated to support class-size requirements at the elementary level. This request would create a new funding model to increase state support to local school districts, allowing districts to build classrooms that meet modern educational standards and educator/student ratios.

Skills Centers Major & Minor Works

\$101M for the 2021–23 Biennium

Skills centers across the state are in need of upgrades to address health and safety concerns and programmatic needs. This request would fund upgrades for several skills centers based on a list put together last year by skills centers directors statewide. The directors used a variety of different variables, with a focus on student health and safety, to determine which projects should receive priority funding.

Continuing our Commitment to Small School Districts

\$72.7M for the 2021–23 Biennium

There are some small school districts and tribal compact schools that are unable to participate in the School Construction Assistance Program (SCAP), the state's matching program for funding school construction projects, because the community property values are not high enough for the program to serve its intended purpose. This request would continue the Small District Modernization Grant Program funded by the Legislature in 2019. This program assists school districts (with enrollments of 1,000 students or less) and tribal compact schools that are not eligible to participate in SCAP with facility modernization, equipment upgrades, and building system repairs.

Continuing the School Seismic Safety Retrofit Program

\$50M for the 2021–23 Biennium

In 2019, the Department of Natural Resources performed safety assessments of more than 200 public school buildings throughout the state. Their findings indicated that many older school buildings are seismically vulnerable and need to be retrofitted to protect the safety of students and educators. This request would continue to build on the funding provided in the 2020 budget so that school districts have the resources needed to seismically retrofit our school



buildings. The funds will continue to be prioritized based on risk level, building use, district financial capacity, and anticipated building life.

Building a Skilled Workforce through Equipment Upgrades

\$15M for the 2021–23 Biennium

As our economy demands a workforce with more technical skills, our classrooms should shift to meet that need. This request would continue the competitive grant funding last provided in 2017 to support school districts in creating the learning spaces needed for science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) education and career and technical education (CTE) programs.

Providing Equitable Access to Funds for Health & Safety

\$13M for the 2021–23 Biennium

School construction funding in Washington state relies, in large part, on each district's ability to pass local capital levies and construction bonds. Many factors influence a district's ability to pass levies or bond measures, and as of June 2020, 98 districts statewide had not been able to pass a capital bond in the past 20 years, which prevents them from accessing funding through SCAP. This request would continue the funding provided in 2019 to support districts in addressing long-standing urgent facility concerns that impact student and staff safety, health, and comfort in school buildings. Grant funds can be used for health and safety, equal access, and emergency repairs.

Expanding the Healthy Kids-Healthy Schools Program

\$10.5M for 2021–23 Biennium

The Healthy Kids-Healthy Schools grant program supports school districts in helping students maintain a healthy weight, enjoy active lives, and encourage good eating habits. Districts typically use the funds for purposes such as building gardens and greenhouses, renovating school kitchens, providing access to fresh produce, purchasing water bottle filling stations, building covered play areas or playground equipment, and more. This request would continue the funding provided in 2019 so more students can benefit from the program.