



School District Health & Safety – Emergency Repair Grants *2024 Supplemental Capital Project Request*

Project Class: Grant

Starting Fiscal Year: 2024

Project Summary

Superintendent Reykdal requests \$2.5 million to provide more funding to the School District Health and Safety Emergency Repair Grant Program funded by the Legislature in 2023-25 Biennial Capital Budget due to the increased need by school districts. The program provides funding to school districts who do not have the financial resources to address building system failures that impact the day-to-day operations of their schools. Funding will ensure that school districts are able to address emergency repairs that impact the operations of their schools.

Project Description

The Legislature first appropriated K-12 Emergency Repair Pool funding in the 2011-13 Biennial Capital Budget to address unexpected and imminent health and safety hazards at K-12 public schools, including skill centers, which have an impact on the day-to-day operations of the school facility and has continued to fund the program.

In the 2023-25 Capital Budget, the Legislature provided \$5 million for the program and as of July 2023, the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) has provided \$1.75 million in funding to six districts for projects that required immediate remedies. To ensure there is funding available to assist school districts to address emergency repairs throughout the entirety of the 2023-25 biennium, OSPI is requesting \$2.5 million in additional funding.

Without this additional funding, school districts that experience a building system failure and do not have local funding will need to use educational funds to make the needed repairs which will impact student learning.

This request would continue the funding of grants to support school districts to address imminent health and safety repairs which impact student learning.

What is the problem/opportunity? Identify: priority, underserved people/communities, operating budget savings, public safety improvements & clarifying details. Preservation projects: include information about the current condition of the facility/system.

The Legislature first appropriated K-12 Emergency Repair Pool funding beginning in the 2011-13 Biennial Capital Budget to address unexpected and imminent health and safety hazards at K-12 public schools, including skill centers, which have an impact on the day-to-day operations of the school facility.

Emergency Repair Pool grants are for school districts that do not have the financial resources to fix and repair building systems which impact health, safety, and student learning. Many of the state's school districts cannot raise funding to make need repairs to their building systems because they rely on capital levies and debt-service levies (also referred to as bond measures) which require voter approval to pay for minor repairs and major renovations of school facilities. Many factors influence a district's ability to pass levies or bond measures, including the assessed property values in a district. School districts with lower assessed property values will require a higher tax rate to raise the same amount of tax dollars as a school district with higher assessed property values. Capital levies require 51% approval from their voters, while bond measures require a higher threshold at 60% plus one vote.

As of July 2023, OSPI has already provided a total of \$1.75 million in funding to six districts for projects that required immediate remedies. This funding has been provided out of the \$5.0 million provided in the 2023-25 biennial capital budget.

OSPI seeks a backfill of \$2.5 million in funding to continue this successful program and will continue using the Legislature's established criteria below when granting funding:

- An emergency declaration must be signed by the school district board of directors.
- The emergency declaration must include a description of the imminent health and safety hazard, the possible cause, the proposed scope of emergency repair work and related cost estimate, and identification of local funding to be applied to the project; and,
- Grants of emergency repair moneys must be conditioned upon the written commitment and plan of the school district board of directors to repay the grant with any insurance payments or other judgments that may be awarded.

What will the request produce or construct (i.e., building predesign or design, construction of additional space, etc.)?

School districts rely on capital levies and bonds, which require voter approval, to pay for major and minor repairs at school facilities. Many school districts have been unsuccessful in passing capital levies or bonds and do not have the financial resources to address safety, health, and equal access issues that have a direct impact student learning.

This request continues grant programs that provide school districts with the resources to address health, safety, and other emergent concerns so students have a safe and healthy environment for learning.

When will the project start/end? Identify if the project can be phased, and if so, which phase is included in the request. Provide detailed cost backup.

Grant funding will be awarded to the school districts as the requests come in. The emergency repairs are not phased and are provided to districts as soon as possible to ensure a safe and healthy learning environment.

How would the request address the problem or opportunity identified in question 1? What would be the result of not taking action?

Local school districts will receive funding to make needed major and minor repairs to schools to provide a safe and healthy learning environment for students.

These major and minor repairs will help districts preserve their school facilities and extend their useful life which may delay the need for a major school replacement through the School Construction Assistance Program.

What alternatives were explored? Why was the recommended alternative chosen? Be prepared to provide detailed cost backup. If this project has an associated predesign, please summarize the alternatives the predesign considered.

Bond elections and issuing levies require a lot of time in planning and would not serve districts well in case of emergent health and safety issues. Hence this grant program is the only feasible option available.

Which clientele would be impacted by the budget request? Where and how many units would be added, people or communities served, etc.

This grant program will allow districts who do not have the financial resources to make major and minor repairs to schools to address needed safety and health repairs which impact student learning.

Does this project or program leverage non-state funding? If yes, how much by source? If the other funding source requires cost share, also include the minimum state (or other) share of project cost allowable and the supporting citation or documentation.

Non-state funds will not be used to complete the emergency repairs.

Describe how this project supports the agency's strategic master plan or would improve agency performance. Reference feasibility studies, master plans, space programming and other analyses as appropriate.

This project supports Superintendent Reykdal's K-12 Education Vision of his goal for Washington's public education system to prepare every student who walks through our school doors for post-secondary aspirations, careers, and life.

Does this project include IT related costs, including hardware, software, cloud based services, contracts or staff? If yes, attach IT Addendum.

N/A

If the project is linked to the Puget Sound Action Agenda, describe the impacts on the Action Agenda, including expenditure and FTE detail. See Chapter 12 Puget Sound Recovery) in the 2021-23 Operating Budget Instructions.

N/A

How does this project contribute to meeting the greenhouse gas emissions limits established in RCW 70A.45.050, Clean Buildings performance standards in RCW 19.27A.210, or other statewide goals to reduce carbon pollution and/or improve efficiency?

The projects will meet OSPI’s Washington Sustainable Schools Protocol.

How does this project impact equity in the state? Which communities are impacted by this proposal? Include both demographic and geographic communities. How are disparities in communities impacted?

The emergency repair pool funding is granted to school districts to remedy instances that affect the health and safety of students and staff. There are several communities in Washington state that are unable to pass bonds/levies and even more school districts that struggle to conduct emergent facility repairs due to lack of funding available in their capital accounts for routine maintenance. This disparity affects the low-income students, and students of color disproportionately. The emergency grants will be awarded based on need and hence, will help to reduce the disparities across the state.

Is there additional information you would like decision makers to know when evaluating this request?

N/A

Location

Address: 600 Washington St SE

Zip Code: 98504

County: Thurston

City: Olympia

Legislative District: 22

Describe Growth Management Impacts

School districts are responsible for determining whether and how they need to participate in the planning process with the city or county planning authority.

Grant Recipient Organization

Washington State Public School Districts

Application Process Used

The Emergency Repair Pool grant program will mirror the requirements established by the Legislature in the 2019-21 biennial Capital Budget.

Funding Requested

- 2025: \$2,500,000
- 2026: \$0
- 2027: \$0
- 2028: \$0

- 2029: \$0
- 2030: \$0
- 2031: \$0
- 2032: \$0
- 2033: \$0