

ASSEMBLY THIRD READING
AB 1822 (Muratsuchi)
As Amended March 23, 2026
Majority vote

SUMMARY

Authorizes the State Allocation Board (SAB) to prioritize construction and leasing of projects that include an efficient response to extreme heat and climate change.

Major Provisions

Authorizes the SAB, by the adoption of rules, to establish priorities for the construction and leasing of projects to those school districts the pupils of which will benefit the most to include an efficient response to extreme heat and climate change.

COMMENTS

Background on the School Facilities Program (SFP). The construction and rehabilitation of public K-12 facilities are funded by a combination of state and local general obligation (GO) bonds, developer's fees, and local assessments such as Mello-Roos community facilities districts. State bond funds are allocated pursuant to the SFP and administered by the Office of Public School Construction (OPSC) under the direction of the SAB, a ten member body comprised of the Department of Finance, the Director of the DGS, the Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI), three Senators, three Assemblymembers, and a Governor's appointee. Responsibilities of the SAB include apportioning state funds to school districts for construction, modernization and repair of public K-12 school facilities, adopting policies, and overseeing school facility programs.

Under the SFP, the New Construction program requires a 50% match from local educational agencies (LEAs), unless the LEA qualifies for financial hardship, which pays up to 100% of project costs. Modernization funds are awarded at 60% with a 40% match. Since the inception of the SFP in 1998, voters have approved \$54 billion in state GO bonds for K-12 schools. In November 2024, voters approved Proposition 2, providing \$10 billion for school facilities (\$8.5 billion for K-12, \$1.5 billion for community colleges). Proposition 2 included new components to the SFP, including supplemental grants of up to 5% of project costs for projects to advance state energy goals and adapt to higher average temperatures that pose a threat to the health and safety of students and staff, and authorized projects to advance state energy goals, support outdoor learning environments, directly shade and protect students from higher average temperatures, which may include incorporating nature, and natural materials.

This bill seeks to authorize the SAB to prioritize projects that include an efficient response to extreme heat and climate change. Current law specifies that only certain project applications are prioritized by the SAB, including those that pose an immediate risk to the health and safety of pupils and school staff.

California climate change impacts. California's climate is generally expected to become hotter, drier, and more variable over the coming decades, increasing the risk of catastrophic wildfires, droughts, floods, extreme weather, biodiversity loss, and sea level rise. California's Fourth Climate Assessment estimates the economic cost to California for these losses by 2050 will be over \$100 billion annually. Average global temperatures have increased since 1895, with the

fastest relative increase beginning in the 1980s. Nine of the ten hottest years recorded have occurred in the last decade. In California, the statewide average temperature is predicted to increase 1.9°F by 2025 and 4.6°F by 2050. Populations in cooler parts of the state, particularly along the coast, are generally at greater risk of health-related illness because they are less acclimatized to heat, people may be less aware of behaviors to reduce exposure, and the built environment is not designed for warmer temperatures.

Urban areas have higher temperatures than the surrounding areas due to pavement and building materials that absorb sunlight and heat. This phenomenon is referred to as the urban heat island effect. Average daytime temperatures in urban areas are 1-6°F warmer than surrounding areas, but at night that increases to as much as 22°F as heat is gradually released from buildings and paved surfaces. The urban heat island effect increases the health risks associated with extreme heat for populations living in those areas. A number of strategies can be used to mitigate the urban heat island effect, such as shading, green spaces, and the use of cool building and paving materials.

LEAs have diverse and unique energy and climate challenges. Public K-12 facilities in California include approximately 12,800 schools with more than 714 million square feet of space, making LEAs the largest category of building in the public building sector. Unlike other commercial end users, government buildings generally are not able to use energy savings to reinvest in more capital improvements, which leads public buildings to require regular cycles of investment to update facilities and replace less efficient appliances. While some school districts may seek local and state bond or tax funding to make these updates, other school districts may seek monies and tax incentives from the recently enacted federal Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) and Inflation Reduction Act (IRA).

LEAs have a number of climate change-related improvements they could make to their schoolsites, including fuel switching, electric vehicle (EV) charging, on-site clean energy generation, and replacing HVAC systems and water filtration with more efficient equipment. LEAs with sufficient resources may have little difficulties in taking advantage of new funding opportunities as they arise; however, smaller LEAs and LEAs with limited support resources may experience tremendous challenges meeting these requirements without additional funding and technical assistance.

According to the Author

According to the author, "As a former school board member, and a parent of a child in public schools, I appreciate how integral a school's physical environment is to a student's achievement and motivation. AB 1822 will urge the State Allocation Board to consider the prioritization of projects that include an efficient response to extreme heat and climate change, because both are increasing in intensity and should be further incorporated into school design."

Arguments in Support

The Small School Districts Association writes, "Across California, school districts are increasingly experiencing the impacts of rising temperatures and more frequent extreme heat events. Many existing school facilities were constructed decades ago and were not designed to operate safely or efficiently under the climate conditions we are now facing. Allowing the SAB to consider climate resilience—particularly the need to address extreme heat—when prioritizing facility funding would help ensure that scarce state resources are directed toward projects that protect student health and maintain safe learning environments.

Importantly, this approach does not mandate new construction requirements or impose additional regulatory burdens on our schools. Instead, it simply allows the SAB to take into account whether a project meaningfully improves a school's ability to respond to extreme heat and related climate challenges when evaluating applications.

Many of our small and rural schools are in geographically disparate parts of the state and are particularly impacted by extreme heat."

Arguments in Opposition

The SFV Alliance writes, "We agree with the notion we do have high temperatures throughout California caused by extreme variables of the climate. When the temperature goes to 100F + and then drops to 50F that is an intense change. 50F, 40F or even mid 30F may not seem like much in other parts of the country that get into sub-freezing temperatures, but in a state like ours has volatile shifting temperatures that makes it harsh on our bodies to adjust.

The climate needs to be considered when constructing or rehabilitation school structure in California. We take great issues with the wording "climate change". Based on the data we have procured, it is flimsy science based on an agenda to electrify all power that we use as consumers. We see the reason to do that is not based on efficiency but control of our personal use of resources and movement. We ask that the author re-write the legislation to remove "climate change" from the wording and replace it with "extreme variable climate".

FISCAL COMMENTS

According to the Assembly Appropriations Committee:

No new state costs.

VOTES

ASM EDUCATION: 8-0-0

YES: Patel, Hoover, Alvarez, Bonta, Castillo, Garcia, Lowenthal, Zbur

ASM APPROPRIATIONS: 14-0-1

YES: Wicks, Hoover, Aguiar-Curry, Caloza, Dixon, Fong, Mark González, Krell, Pacheco, Pellerin, Sharp-Collins, Solache, Ta, Tangipa

ABS, ABST OR NV: Arambula

UPDATED

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