

Date of Hearing: August 5, 2026

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Buffy Wicks, Chair

SB 1107 (Stern) – As Amended July 2, 2026

Policy Committee: Education

Vote: 8 - 0

Urgency: No

State Mandated Local Program: Yes

Reimbursable: No

SUMMARY:

This bill authorizes a school district, with approval of its governing board, through December 31, 2031, to procure multiple design-build contracts for comparable shade structure projects at multiple sites, through a bundled single solicitation, if the cumulative project value exceeds \$1 million, but is not more than \$10 million, even if individual projects within the bundle total less than \$1 million. The bill also expands an existing exemption from California Building Standards Code regarding path of travel compliance improvements to integrated playground shade structures by adding such structures to the Division of the State Architect's (DSA) pre-checked designs list.

FISCAL EFFECT:

- 1) Ongoing General Fund costs of \$1.1 million for the Labor Commissioner's Office (under the Department of Industrial Relations (DIR)) to accommodate the additional number of projects subject to enforcement of skilled and trained workforce requirements by the Division of Labor Standards Enforcement. According to DIR, under existing law, school districts are required to use a skilled and trained workforce to perform all work for design-build projects or contracts that fall within an apprenticeable occupation in the building and construction trades.
- 2) Minor and absorbable costs to the Division of the State Architect (DSA) within the Department of General Services (DGS).

COMMENTS:

- 1) **Purpose.** According to the author:

Spending time outside plays a vital role in supporting children's overall health and academic achievement. Regular access to outdoor environments can reduce stress and inattentiveness while strengthening cognitive growth and emotional well-being. However, students in urban areas face greater exposure to extreme temperatures, which can undermine the benefits of outdoor play by increasing their vulnerability to heat-related illnesses and diminishing their ability to focus and learn. Proper shading structures are essential to lower surrounding temperatures and protect children from dangerous heat. We are proud to continue the important work of SB 515 had started by

expanding its provisions to include overhead playground structure shading, further empowering our schools to quickly and cost-effectively provide schoolyard shading that keeps our children cool while they play.

- 2) **Background. *Design Build.*** Under current law, public schools and community colleges may choose from multiple construction delivery methods for projects on their campuses. Under the design-build method, authorized for projects over \$1 million, the school district first engages a general contractor, and the general contractor engages an architect or engineer to design the project and then subcontracts with a third party who builds the project. This method can lead to greater price certainty than the alternatives and is oftentimes an overall quicker process.

This bill authorizes a school district, through December 31, 2031, to procure multiple design-build contracts for comparable shade structure projects at multiple sites through a bundled single solicitation with a cumulative project value of more than \$1 million, but not more than \$10 million, even if individual projects within the bundle have a value of less than \$1 million, and award them to either the lowest bid or the best value.

Shade Structures. DSA, housed under DGS, reviews plans for public school construction and certain other state-funded building projects to ensure that plans, specifications, and construction comply with the California Building Standards Code, including accessibility requirements for people with disabilities. To streamline plan review and approval for certain projects, DSA maintains a pre-check design list that includes over 25 “off the shelf” shade structures LEAs and community colleges may install according to an expedited review and approval process.

The California Building Standards Code requires construction projects over a certain valuation threshold (currently \$195,358) to also provide “an accessible path of travel” from the building entrance to the project location. Shade structures and other small projects that fall below the threshold amount are exempt from these path of travel requirements. The California Building Standards Code also requires that if an area has been altered without providing an accessible path of travel to that area, and subsequent alterations of that area or a different area on the same path of travel are undertaken within three years of the original alteration, therefore causing the total expenditure to exceed the valuation threshold, the original path of travel alterations must be made retroactively. SB 515 (Stern), Chapter 489, Statutes of 2023, exempted LEAs and community colleges from having to make these retroactive alterations.

This bill extends that exemption to integrated play structures attached to playground equipment.