

Louisiana Public School Facilities

Basic Facts About Louisiana Public School Facilities

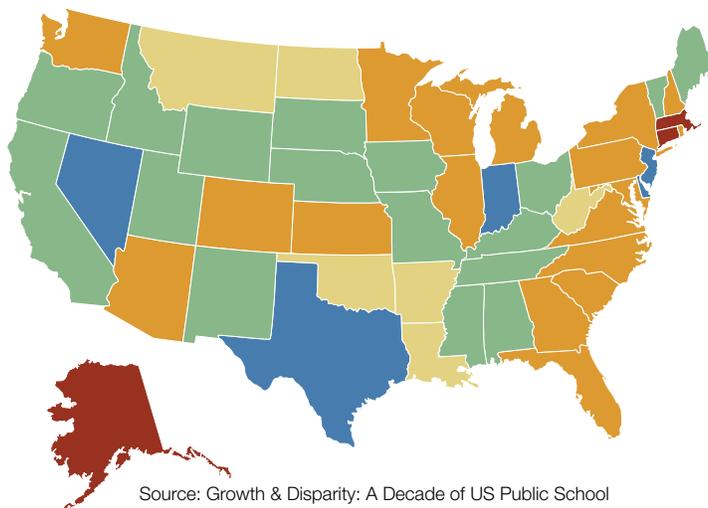
- Number of Public Schools in Louisiana: 1,447
- State Funding Allocated for Facilities: \$0
- Total State Public School Enrollment: 690,340
- Assessment of Louisiana School Facilities Needs: none

Facilities Construction Expenditures Per Student

Construction Expenditures per Student

- Less than \$4,000
- \$4,000 - \$5,999
- \$6,000 - \$7,999
- \$8,000 - \$9,999
- \$10,000 and more

National Average
\$6,519
 per student
 (1995 - 2004)



Source: Growth & Disparity: A Decade of US Public School Construction, Building Educational Success Together (BEST-2006)

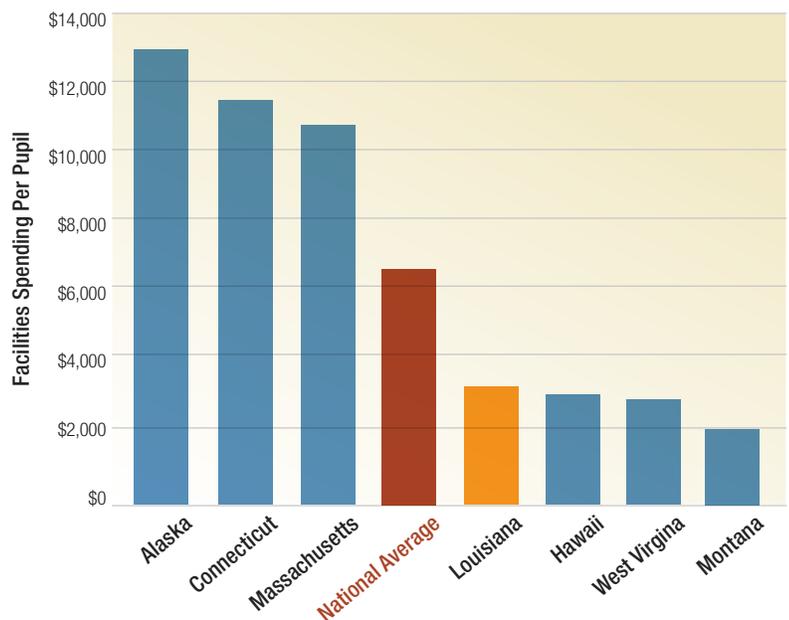
- Louisiana ranks among the states putting the least amount of funding into school facilities. In fact, Louisiana is one of only seven states that does not dedicate state funding for public school facility maintenance, repair, or construction.
- On average, 88 percent of schools in Louisiana report a need to upgrade or repair on-site buildings to good overall condition.
- Thirty-nine percent of schools have at least one inadequate building and 50 percent of schools have at least one inadequate feature, e.g., roof, plumbing, HVAC.

Source: Government Accountability Office – School Facilities: State Profiles (2005)

State Spending on School Facilities

- **Districts in Louisiana spent only 46% of the national average on public school construction.**
- Inadequate spending on school facilities prior to Hurricane Katrina left the entire Gulf region with crumbling facilities, but most significantly in Louisiana, which had the lowest spending per student in the region.
- Funds provided by FEMA to hurricane impacted areas were only sufficient to bring schools up to pre-disaster levels, which is inadequate for Louisiana schools that were entirely substandard before Katrina.

Source: Growth & Disparity: A Decade of US Public School Construction, Building Educational Success Together (BEST-2006)



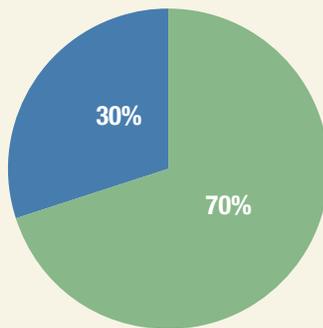
Why are School Facilities Important?



Our facilities are an important investment because our children and teachers spend most of their day inside these buildings. Many research studies have shown that school facilities affect the outcome of student performance.

- **Teacher Retention:** Poor building conditions greatly increase the likelihood that teachers will leave their school – a troubling fact given the need for more and better teachers in most disadvantaged schools (Buckley et. al 2004).
- **Cognitive Abilities:** Cognitive requirements for learning – motivation, energy, attention, hearing, and seeing – are affected by the physical surroundings where they take place (Schneider 2002).
- **Absenteeism:** Overcrowded schools lead to higher absenteeism for both students and teachers and have detrimental effects on children’s ability to learn and perform well (PolicyLink 2005).
- **Classroom Environment:** The amount of natural light, the indoor air quality, the temperature, and the cleanliness of schools and classrooms all impact student learning (Earthman 2004).

Does the MFP Provide Funding for Facilities?



There is NO capital funding built into the Minimum Foundation Program (MFP).

- 70% of the MFP funding is used for instructional purposes
- 30% of the MFP is used for utilities, retiree benefits, and transportation

- The primary source of school funding is the MFP.
- The MFP formula does not dedicate funds to capital repair and maintenance.
- On average, there is \$150 per pupil left over from the MFP in each district after instructional and other costs are paid.
- However, the school districts are paying \$444 per pupil out of funds dedicated to other purposes just to maintain their school facilities.
- Almost \$300 per pupil that could be dedicated to instruction or other purposes is being used instead to maintain the buildings.
- The national average for spending on school facility maintenance is \$873 per pupil.

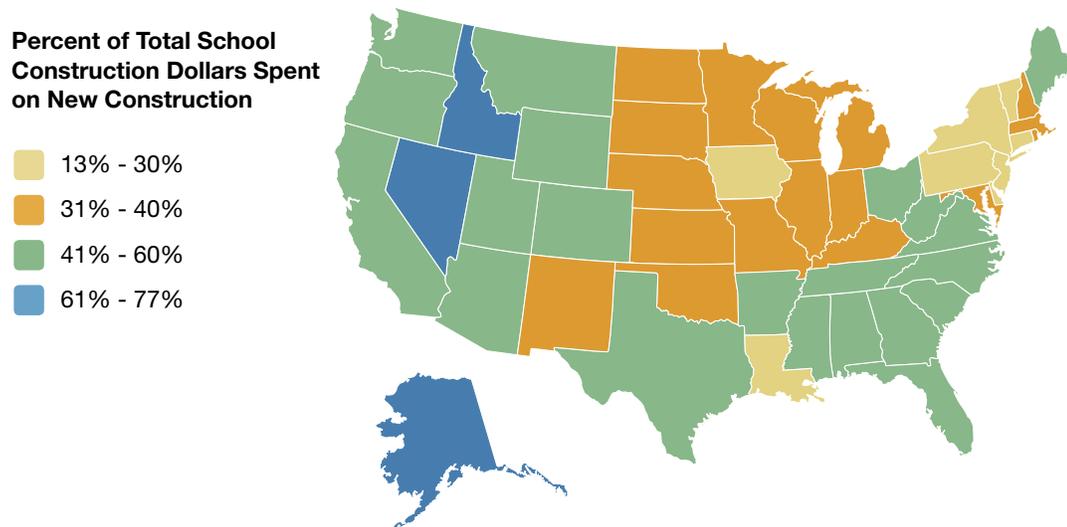


Public School Construction

New Construction Across the United States

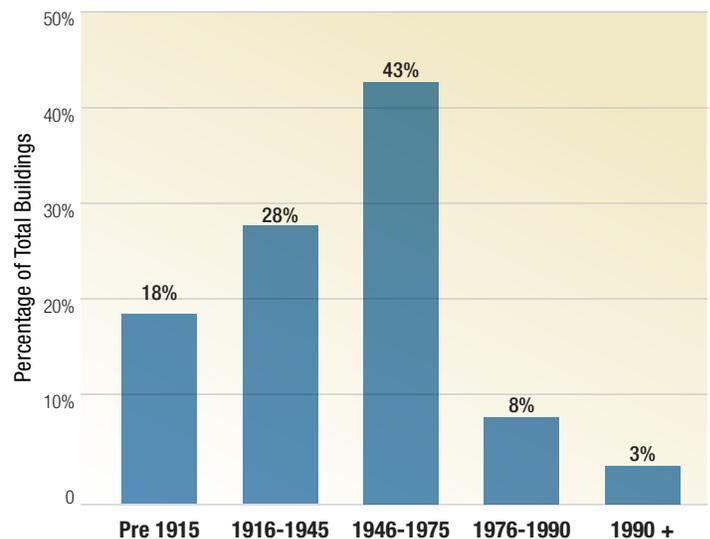
The map below represents the percentage of total public school facilities funds spent on new public school construction in the United States. Louisiana is one of eight states that spend only 13-30% of these funds on new construction. The rest of the country spends anywhere from 31-77%.

Source: Growth & Disparity: A Decade of US Public School Construction, Building Educational Success Together (BEST-2006)



- New Orleans offers a good example of the low percentage of recent school construction in Louisiana. The majority of New Orleans school facilities are 30+ years old. In fact, only 3% of schools were built in the last 18 years. The poor state of facilities in Orleans Parish is not just the result of Hurricane Katrina, but is due to the age of the facilities and a statewide lack of funding to keep them in a suitable state of repair.
- Based on these facts, the Recovery School District developed a School Facilities Master Plan to completely overhaul the school facilities in Orleans Parish. The Master Plan was approved in late 2008 by both the Orleans Parish School Board and the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education.
- The Master Plan proposes six phases of construction and renovation of schools with a combined cost of \$2 billion. A total of \$675 million for Phase I construction is secured by insurance proceeds, FEMA funds, and Community Development Block Grants. **Only funding for Phase I has been secured.**
- The Master Plan will address years of deferred maintenance and rebuild schools that are too old or damaged for repair. **The only reason funding is available to execute new construction in New Orleans is because of the federal funds given as a result of the storm.** Otherwise, New Orleans public school buildings would be on par with or worse than the rest of the state.

New Orleans Public School Facilities Breakdown by Year of Construction



Source: Louisiana Department of Education, 2006



Louisiana Facilities Needs: \$ Per Pupil

Estimated Amount of Facilities Needs on a Per Pupil Basis

A December 2008 study by the American Federation of Teachers identified the school infrastructure funding needs of states across the nation. Because some states lack statewide facilities assessments they were matched with similar states that do have a usable assessment. **Louisiana is matched with South Carolina because Louisiana does not have a statewide facilities assessment.**

Based on this study, Louisiana needs the second highest amount (\$10,070) of estimated funding per pupil for facilities in the nation after Hawaii (\$18,373).

Source: Growth & Disparity: A Decade of US Public School Construction, Building Educational Success Together (BEST-2006)

States	Per Pupil Need
Hawaii	\$18,373
Louisiana, South Carolina	\$10,070
Arkansas, Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska	\$9,726
North Carolina, Virginia	\$7,086
Alabama, Mississippi	\$6,943
Alaska	\$5,834
Ohio, Michigan, Pennsylvania, Wisconsin	\$5,065
West Virginia, Idaho, North Dakota, South Dakota, Wyoming	\$4,257
California	\$3,943
Tennessee, Indiana, Oklahoma	\$3,807
Georgia, Florida	\$3,365
Texas	\$2,855
Kentucky	\$1,505

Source: Building Minds, Minding Buildings: School Infrastructure Funding Need, American Federation of Teachers (2008)

Inadequate Facilities

In 1996, the Government Accountability Office reported that schools with the greatest number of students qualifying for free or reduced lunch also reported the most inadequate buildings. **Schools with 70% or more of their students qualifying for free or reduced lunch reported that 41% of their buildings were inadequate.** Schools with fewer than 20% of their students qualifying for free or reduced lunch reported only 25.1% of their buildings as inadequate.



What is an Inadequate School Building?

Avoyelles High School in Avoyelles Parish is an inadequate school facility. Eighty-four percent of Avoyelles Parish students qualify for free or reduced lunch. Their buildings are in severe disrepair. Below are two pictures of Avoyelles High School, which was built in 1927 and survived the flood of 1928. It has portable buildings in use that date back to the 1960's and in the winter the temperature in these portables drops to below freezing.

