



[Re] Build America's School Infrastructure Coalition

Media Release - March 31st

BASIC Coalition commends the inclusion of public schools in the President's infrastructure plan; encourages an increase in grants for public school infrastructure.

WASHINGTON D.C. - March 31, 2021—The [Re]Build America's School Infrastructure Coalition (**BASIC**), made up of over 130+ education, civic, labor, and industry groups nationally, is working to secure a federal investment to rebuild America's public schools. We commend President Biden for including K12 public school facilities in his American Jobs Plan. However, BASIC strongly believes that \$100 billion in direct grants—not the \$50 billion for bonds and \$50 billion in direct grants under the current proposal—is absolutely critical to have the impact President Biden himself has said is so urgently needed.

We know this Administration grasps the need to provide safe and healthy buildings for America's 50 million school children, educators, and staff to address the longstanding crumbling and decrepit condition of our nation's school buildings and grounds. Researchers estimate that school districts need at least \$1 trillion in 2020 dollars for school modernization and renewals over the next ten years. A federal investment of \$100 billion will help state and local governments build back better and more fairly—which are clear priorities of this Administration.

Mary Filardo, BASIC's Founder, explains: "Even with the \$100 billion in direct grants, this will still be an incredible financial challenge for the poorest states and districts. Building back better and fairly, justifies at least \$100 billion in direct grant funding." She continues, "this will enable states to target the lowest wealth districts and districts to fund projects that will create 21st century public education environments that are healthy, safe, climate resilient, net zero energy, educationally appropriate, and community centered."

This cannot happen under the Administration's current proposal with only half of the school infrastructure funding (\$50 billion) in grants and the other half in bonds (\$50 billion). The proposed bond program provides an interest subsidy on funds borrowed for school facility construction, but districts are required to pay all they borrow back. Oleta Fitzgerald, Director, Children's Defense Fund's Southern Regional Office says: "This is precisely what exacerbates structural inequities in the education system. Poor districts have little to no tax base to repay debt, it compounds structural inequity for the children who need it the most." While important to districts and states, **bonds are not direct grants from the federal government and the \$50 billion in Biden's proposal does not equal a \$100 billion federal investment in school infrastructure.**

We strongly urge the Administration to provide \$100 billion in direct grants for K12 facilities and encourage them to look to Chairman Scott's and Senator Reed's Reopen and Rebuild America's Schools Act (RRASA) to codify the priorities this Administration

has for building back better public schools fairly. We are eager to work with the Administration to improve and pass this much needed legislation which, at long last, will make our public school facilities an integral part of our national infrastructure policy.

Contact: Mary Filardo, 21st Century School Fund, MFilardo@21csf.org 202-285-8947

###

The [Re\[Build\] America's School Infrastructure Coalition \(BASIC\)](#) is a non-partisan coalition of civic, public sector, labor, and industry associations who support federal funding to help under-served public school districts modernize and build K-12 public school facilities. We believe that ALL children should attend healthy, safe, and educationally appropriate school facilities. It's BASIC.

To learn more: Visit BASIC's [website](#), which includes [resources](#) and recent [school facilities news](#). Follow BASIC on Twitter [@BuildUSschools](#)

21st Century School Fund | 1816 12th Street, NW, Washington, DC 20009

[Unsubscribe {recipient's email}](#)

[Update Profile](#) | [Customer Contact Data Notice](#)

Sent by mfilardo@21csf.org powered by



Try email marketing for free today!