



[Re]Build America's School Infrastructure Coalition's (BASIC) Statement on the Reopen and Rebuild America's Schools Act (RRASA)

Washington D.C., January 29, 2021--The [Re]Build America's School Infrastructure Coalition ([BASIC](#)) is incredibly pleased and grateful that Chairman Bobby Scott (VA-03) of the House Education and Labor Committee and Senator Reed (RI) have once again introduced the Reopen and Rebuild America's Schools Act (RRASA). This legislation is of utmost importance to our underserved communities, as it would provide \$100 billion over 5 years to help modernize our nation's schools in low-wealth and high-need rural, town, suburban and urban communities.

The poor conditions of public school buildings and grounds are barriers to meeting the public health guidelines that will enable the poorest districts to mitigate the spread of the COVID-19 virus and reopen schools. But these conditions have been barriers ahead of this pandemic.

Shockingly, many of our nation's students and teachers endure indoor learning environments with poor air quality, crowded classrooms, dysfunctional bathrooms, unsafe drinking water, leaky roofs, and extreme temperatures. Additionally, their outdoor environments discourage healthy outdoor play or education. Further, schools often lack modern educational and environmental design and construction. They use far too much energy and still have legacy toxics like asbestos, lead, and PCBs throughout their school buildings. Schools that average nearly 50 years old do not meet ADA requirements, they do not have early childhood classrooms, they don't have relevant science labs, technology, special education or art spaces.

These poor building conditions severely hinder student engagement, reduce teacher retention, and negatively impact the health and wellness of both educators and students. Our low-wealth public school districts lack the funding they need to meet the demands for healthy, safe, educationally inspiring and environmentally sustainable public school buildings and grounds. COVID-19 has made the condition of our schools and the necessity to improve them imperative by shining a national spotlight on these long-standing issues.

The time is now for Congress to meet its responsibilities by enacting RRASA into law and proving to Americans that our government indeed cares about the health and safety of our children and educators. Improving our nation's school facilities will not only put our country on track to recover from this pandemic, but it will also make these community facilities more resilient to future disasters and health crises. Lastly, rebuilding America's schools will provide adequate facilities to train our future workforce in modern buildings as well as create 2 million jobs for those engaged in the construction of this critical part of the nation's infrastructure.

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[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.

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