



2025 REPORT CARD FOR AMERICA'S INFRASTRUCTURE

Schools



SUMMARY



America's 98,000+ public PK-12 schools serve 49.4 million students, but many buildings are aging, averaging 49 years old, and lack detailed condition data. In school year 2021-2022, only 10% of school spending went to facilities, mostly for new construction rather than maintenance. The annual funding gap to bring schools to good repair grew from \$60 billion in 2016 to \$85 billion in 2021.

Critical needs include removing lead from water and installing cooling systems as temperatures rise. A 2021 study found 13,700 schools still need air conditioning, requiring over \$40 billion. Moving forward, better asset management, updated building codes, high-quality public data, and predictable infrastructure funding are essential.

FAST FACTS

- Only seven states saw school enrollment increases between 2019 and 2021.
- Nearly 14,000 schools will need air conditioning because of higher daytime temperatures.
- Recently, voters have approved 76% of local school bond or tax measures during elections.
- Fewer than half of states collect representative data on their school facilities. Based on public data, the average age of main instructional buildings in America's public school system is 49 years.

SOLUTIONS TO RAISE THE GRADE

- ✓ Explore alternative financing to support school construction.
- ✓ Update the Government Accountability Office's 2020 study on school facility conditions.
- ✓ Create district-level capital plans to improve resilience and ensure new and retrofitted schools meet modern codes and standards.
- ✓ Establish regular, predictable funding mechanisms for physical school infrastructure, providing equitable investments in lower-income communities.

To explore more solutions to raise the grades check out infrastructurereportcard.org