

# Public School Facilities

## Basic Facts About Louisiana Public School Facilities

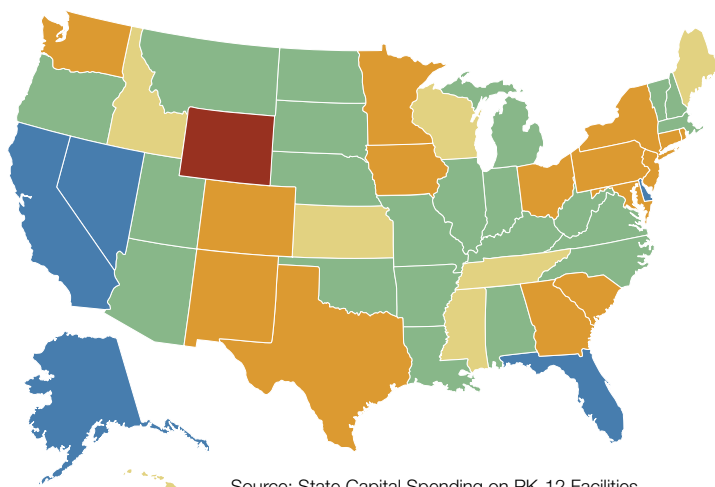
- Number of Public Schools in Louisiana: 1,427
- State Funding Allocated for School Facilities: \$0
- Total State Public School Enrollment: 702,480
- Louisiana School Facilities Assessment Conducted: none

## Facilities Construction Expenditures Per Student

### Construction Expenditures per Student

- Less than \$500
- \$500 - \$999
- \$1,000 - \$1,499
- \$1,500 - \$1,999
- \$2,000 or more

**National Average**  
**\$1,086**  
per student  
(2005 - 2008)



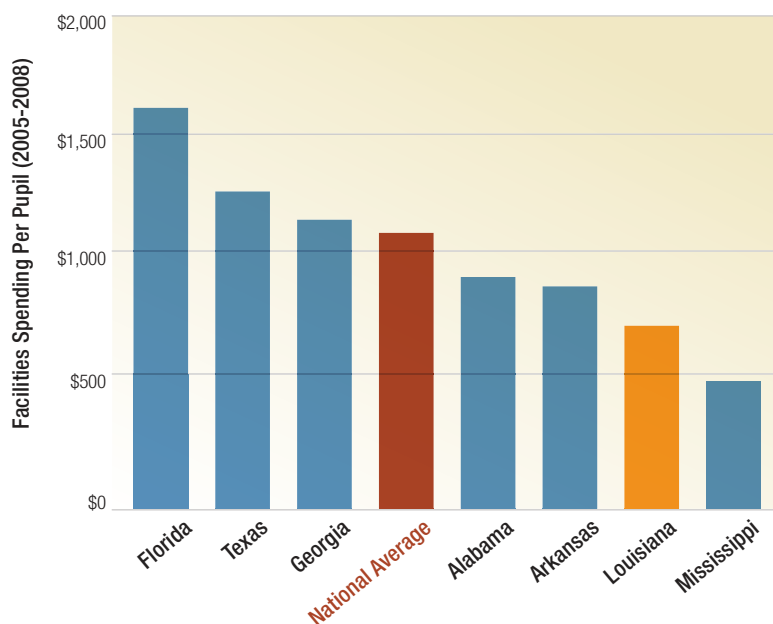
Source: State Capital Spending on PK-12 Facilities, 21st Century School Fund, November 2010

- Louisiana ranks among the states putting the least amount of funding into school facilities. In fact, Louisiana is one of only seven states in the country that does not dedicate state funding for public school maintenance, repair, or construction.
- On average, 88% of schools in Louisiana report a need to upgrade or repair buildings.
- Thirty-nine percent of schools in the state 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

- Facilities spending in Louisiana was only 60% of the national average and trailed all other states in the region except for Mississippi.
- In the decade before Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, spending was even lower at 46% of the national average. Since then, federal recovery funds have enabled hurricane-impacted areas to increase facilities spending, but in other areas of Louisiana it is still very low.
- Funds provided by FEMA to most 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 the disasters.

## State Capital Spending on Pk-12 Facilities



Source: State Capital Spending on PK-12 Facilities, 21st Century School Fund, November 2010



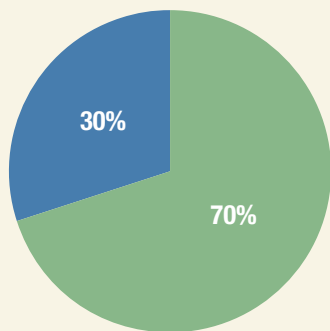
# Why Are School Facilities Important?

Our educational 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.
- **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.
- **Cognitive Abilities:** Cognitive requirements for learning – motivation, energy, attention, hearing, and seeing – are affected by the physical surroundings where they take place.
- **Classroom Environment:** The amount of natural light, the indoor air quality, the temperature, and the cleanliness of schools and classrooms all impact student learning.

Source: Do School Facilities Affect Academic Outcomes? National Clearinghouse for Educational Facilities, 2002

## Does the MFP Provide Funding for Facilities?



**There is NO capital funding built into the MFP.**

- 70% of MFP funding is required to be used for instructional purposes
- 30% of the MFP is used for all other expenses, including utilities, employee and retiree benefits, and student transportation

- The primary source of school funding is the MFP.
- The MFP formula does not dedicate funds to capital repair and maintenance.
- School districts must use the MFP to cover instructional expenses first. Instructional expenses are related to activities dealing directly with interaction between students and teachers and activities designed to improve teaching and the process of learning.
- All other expenditures covered by general funds must be paid for out of the remaining 30 percent of funds. This includes, among other things, administration of the school, services provided centrally (such as planning and evaluation), student transportation, and all expenses related to operating and maintaining the physical plant of schools (including repairs of buildings, upkeep of grounds, and security).

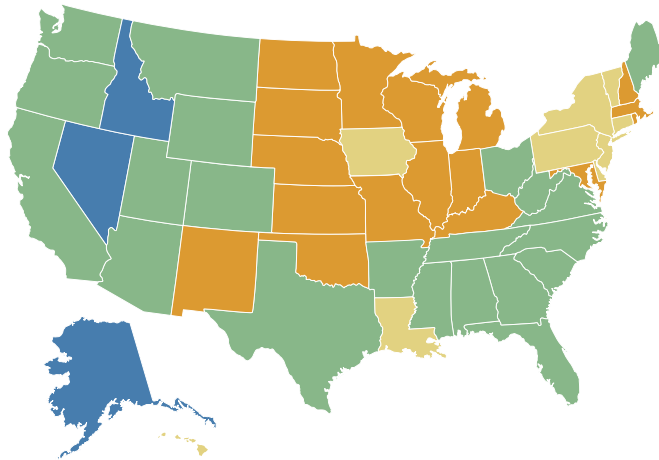
# Public School Construction

## 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 spent only 13-30% of these funds on new construction. The rest of the country spent between 31-77%.

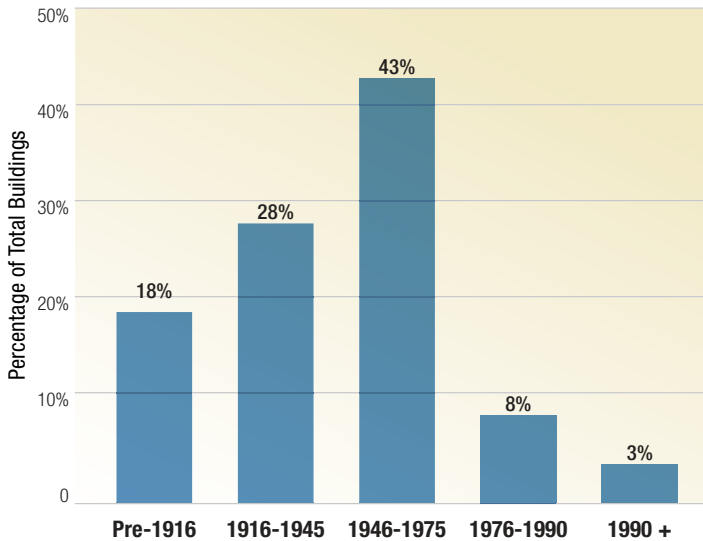
**Percent of Total School Construction Dollars Spent on New Construction**

- 13% - 30%
- 31% - 40%
- 41% - 60%
- 61% - 77%



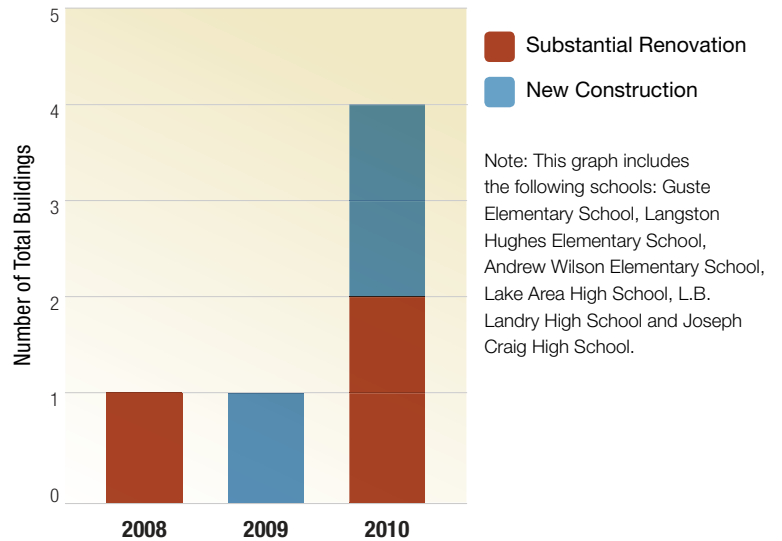
Source: Growth & Disparity: A Decade of US Public School Construction, Building Educational Success Together, BEST-2006

**New Orleans Public School Facilities Breakdown by Year of Construction Pre-Katrina**



Source: Louisiana Department of Education, 2006

**New Orleans Public School Facilities Breakdown by Year of Construction Post-Katrina**



Note: This graph includes the following schools: Guste Elementary School, Langston Hughes Elementary School, Andrew Wilson Elementary School, Lake Area High School, L.B. Landry High School and Joseph Craig High School.

Source: Recovery School District Program Update, December 2010

- 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. 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.
- The Recovery School District and Orleans Parish School Board developed a School Facilities Master Plan to rebuild or renovate

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 approximately \$1.8 billion. **A total of \$1.84 billion has been secured from FEMA funds and 6 schools have been built or renovated thus far.**

# 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 has never conducted an assessment of school facilities across the state.**

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).

States	Per Pupil Need
Hawaii	\$18,373
<b>Louisiana, South Carolina</b>	<b>\$10,070</b>
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% of their buildings as inadequate.



Avoyelles High School

## What is an Inadequate School Building?

Avoyelles High School in Avoyelles Parish and Bernard Terrace Elementary in Baton Rouge both have inadequate school facilities. Seventy-three percent of Avoyelles High students qualify for free or reduced lunch, and 81% of Bernard Terrace students qualify for free or reduced lunch. Their buildings are in severe disrepair. Avoyelles High was built in 1927 and survived the flood of 1928. These schools have overcrowded classrooms, crumbling fixtures, cracked paint, and out-of-date portables that cannot keep students warm in the winter.



Bernard Terrace Elementary





Scott S. Cowen Institute  
for Public Education Initiatives

200 Broadway Street, Suite 108  
New Orleans, LA 70118  
504.274.3690  
<http://education.tulane.edu>