

Better School Buildings VT (BSBvt) is a coalition of Vermont stakeholder groups advocating for state leadership in the stewardship of our public K-12 school facilities. Because of the 2007 school construction funding moratorium and other factors, the investment in our public schools infrastructure has suffered. The result is, with some exceptions, a stock of buildings that need significant investments to make them safe, healthy, energy efficient and effective in delivering a 21st century education.

BSBvt believes the State of Vermont has an essential role to play in a comprehensive approach to school modernization by:

- Providing financial incentives to school districts to modernize their facilities
- Adopting and requiring sustainable building standards for Vermont schools that receive state assistance
- Encouraging each school system to create a Facilities Director position
- Creating a State Director of Facilities position and Facilities Advisory Board at the Department of Education with adequate resources to provide statewide leadership in facility planning
- Helping each district to provide a Facilities Master Plan every 5 years with financial and technical assistance
- Helping communities create strategies for re-purposing closing schools

BSBvt sees these steps as important investments in Vermont's future. School facilities are a critical component in our education system. The benefits of these investments include:

- **Economic:** Modern, attractive schools help attract families and businesses and provide a better educated workforce.
- **Education:** Buildings aligned with pedagogy help provide a more effective education
- **Community:** High-quality school buildings builds community pride and capacity. Helping school districts re-purpose closing schools will help consolidation efforts
- **Sustainability:** Modern, energy efficient schools are durable, energy efficient and healthier, resulting in lower long-term operational costs and better educational outcomes.

We believe expenditures for this effort are investments that will pay dividends over time through increased economic development, better educational outcomes, and lower operational costs. For this reason, BBS is open to exploring new non-traditional revenue sources for funding a school modernization effort. We want to work with the state legislature and government to craft a robust program that provides leadership in the planning, construction, operation and maintenance of our community assets. Every year that passes without action only compounds the scope and cost of this enormous challenge.

BSBvt represents the membership of the following groups:

- Vermont Principals Association (VPA)
- Vermont Association of School Business Officers (VASBO)
- Vermont School Boards Association (VSBA)
- Vermont School Custodians and Maintenance Association (VSCMA)
- Vermont Businesses for Social Responsibility (VBSR)
- American Institute of Architects- Vermont Chapter (AIAVT)
- Vermont Superintendents Association (VSA)

School Construction Fact Sheet

- Vermont has had a moratorium on school construction aid since 2007. It was supposed to be temporary. It is now in its 12th year.
- There are 38 states that provide school construction financing aid and 12 that do not:
 - They are:
 - Vermont
 - Indiana
 - Louisiana
 - Missouri
 - Nebraska
 - Nevada
 - North Dakota
 - Oklahoma
 - Oregon
 - South Dakota
 - Wisconsin
 - Wyoming
- All states in in the Northeast provide school financing aid except Vermont. These programs contribute between 20 and 60% towards the cost of construction. Historically Vermont contributed 30%.
- Massachusetts has a particularly robust school construction program
 - It is funded by 1% of the sale tax
 - Since 2004 the Massachusetts School Building Authority has contributed **\$13.4B**. This is just the state's share.
 - Since the VT moratorium began in 2007, they have contributed **\$10.5B**, which is equal to \$1535 per person
 - If Vermont had invested at that rate, the State would have invested **\$957m** since 2007.
 - If Vermont collected and invested 1% of our retail gross receipts since 2007, we would have invested **\$642m**.
 - Instead we have invested **\$0**.
- But what is the need?
 - There is approximately 20m sf of schools in Vermont today
 - If we renovated 80% of the facilities at \$135sf, that is \$2.16 b in today's dollars – and that is just deferred maintenance.
 - At a 30% contribution, the state's share would be \$648m
- Cost escalation is currently 4% per year. Therefore, using \$2b as the backlog, the cost of inaction statewide is **\$80m** per year