

Testimony on Proposed Capital Budget - Emergency School Construction Aid

Testimony To: House Committee on Corrections & Institutions

Respectfully Submitted by: Daniel M. French, Ed.D., Secretary of Education

Date: February 19, 2021

Overview of Emergency School Construction Aid

- Statutory Language
 - Per 16 VSA §3448 (d), school construction projects under \$100,000 that are necessary to address immediate health and safety threats to students and employees created by unanticipated circumstances or events may be eligible for 30 percent school construction aid.
 - Maximum reimbursement is \$30,000.
- State Board Rule
 - Rule 6129 - Emergency Aid Approval states that a school board seeking emergency aid under this section shall make application on a form prescribed by the Commissioner.
 - Rule 6129.2 - Upon determination that such emergency exists and can be corrected in a manner consistent with the construction proposed in the application, the Commissioner may award such funds as are permitted under 16 V.S.A. § 3448(d).
- Summary
 - School Board must apply
 - Agency determines if emergency exists
 - Reimbursement is 30% up to a max of \$30,000
 - The Agency currently has an annual budget of \$100,000 for Emergency Construction Aid

History on the Appropriation

- Historically the Agency has budgeted \$50,000 per year.
- Given the age of school facilities, we decided to increase the budget to \$100,000 on a going forward basis in 2020.