

School Facilities Update

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Outline of Testimony

- Background and Overview – Act 72
- Facilities Inventory
- Facilities Assessment (Status Update)
- Funding for PCB Remediation

Background

Act 72

- Requires AOE to perform a facilities inventory and a more detailed facilities assessment
- Inventory (remote survey):
 - Inventory of School Facilities
 - Assessment of key building systems
 - Due January 2022
 - Work took longer than expected due to COVID-19 capacity impacts at AOE and in the field
- School Facilities Assessment (on site review)
 - Assessment of utilization, safety, accessibility, capacity, capacity to deliver STEAM, and facility conditions
 - Intended to assist GA with development of ranking and evaluation criteria for funding prioritization

Facilities Inventory

Inventory

- AOE engaged Bureau Veritas to perform inventory and conditions assessment survey
- Work conducted between November 2021 and March 2022.
- Surveyed: 305 schools and 384 school buildings
- Inventory Categories:
 - Safety, security and other risk factors
 - Technology and system adequacy
 - Systems (roofing, HVAC, plumbing, fire suppression and prevention, and temporary buildings)
- Intersected survey data with industry information to generate Facilities Condition Index (FCI)

Facilities Condition Index (FCI)

- Depleted value-based FCI
- Theoretical but objective indication of how much of a building or a system's lifespan has been used to date.
- Higher FCI percentages mean replacement, upgrade or renovation needed sooner.
- FCIs calculated for each system, system group, building, SU/SD, and state as a whole
- Detailed spreadsheet allows data to be visualized – working to deploy to website

FCI by System Group

System Group	Depleted Percentage FCI
Roofing	70.1%
Windows	79.2%
Elevators	80.7%
Plumbing	82.5%
Central Cooling	62.3%
Central Heating	66.9%
HVAC Distribution	75.8%
Local HVAC Systems	82.3%
Fire Suppression	64.8%
Main Electrical System	60.6%
Fire Alarm Life Safety	67.1%
Security and Notification	63.9%
Solar Power	25.8%
Temporary Buildings	76.6%
Total All Systems	71.4%

Key Takeaways

- High FCI categories (above 75%) across all schools:
 - Windows
 - Elevators
 - Plumbing
 - HVAC
 - Temporary buildings
- Mid or low FCI categories across all schools:
 - Solar power
 - Electrical and technology systems
 - Fire and safety systems
 - Central heating and cooling

Key Takeaways (cont.)

- Vermont average FCI: 71.4%
- Statewide: aging portfolio of key systems “with some inherent degradation and disrepair”
- SU/SDs with Highest FCIs:
 - 24 SUs above 75%
 - 12 SUs above 80% (across 8 counties)
- The top five FCIs all are higher than 85%:
 - Orange Southwest SU (90.5%),
 - Windsor Central SU (89.2%),
 - Mt. Mansfield UUSD (87.8%),
 - Essex North SU(87.3%),
 - Montpelier Roxbury (85.6%)

Policy Implications

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- Condition of school facilities is an important input for quality and equity of education – State has an interest in the quality of facilities
- There will need to be some prioritization of school construction funding as opposed to a flat 30% system
- Some schools should be closed
 - Declining enrollments
 - Evaluation against education policy criteria
- Many small elementary schools should be maintained due to education policy criteria; e.g., repurposing as PreK-4 community schools and more aggressive consolidation of middle level programs

Facilities Assessment

Status Update

- Attempting to fill limited service position
- Complete inventory first
- Publish RFP this spring
- Request extension to September 2023

Funding for PCB Remediation

PCB Remediation

- American Rescue Plan Act SFRF allows for funds to be used to “support public health expenditures.” Like the ARP School Indoor Air Quality Grant, PCB testing and remediation leads to improvements in indoor air quality that will impact a vulnerable population.
- PCBs originating from caulk can become airborne and absorb into other building materials, creating secondary sources which can then re-emit PCBs into the air.” Off gassing is the primary source of PCB ingestion, impacting indoor air quality for students and staff.
- Funds must address the disproportionate impact of COVID-19. Due to educational disruptions already caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the student population is particularly vulnerable to further disruptions that may arise from PCB contamination in their school building.
- Competing Priorities for ARP SFRF funds
- DEC has estimated that the total cost of assessment testing (the second step once a release is detected) and mitigation or remediation at \$41 million but don’t need all of this funding at once.