

Joint Legislative Task Force on School Construction Funding Brainstorm Session

Tier 1 Options

1. Develop a competitive “safety net” program for school districts that are unable to access state assistance due to multiple bond levy failures, lack of property tax base, low property tax valuation and/or small district size. One model for consideration is the special education safety net process in the operating budget for districts that can demonstrate extraordinary circumstances. Another option is to consider a per student allocation funding model given certain thresholds.
2. Develop a new competitive grant program, or modify the existing “Small Repair Program” to address the fiscal impact of the proposed health and safety rules changes proposed by the State Board of Health.
3. Develop a competitive grant program for all-day kindergarten programs.
4. Increase the square foot allocation and/or area cost allowance for specialized program spaces or unique building circumstances. For example: science labs, early learning facilities, and historic school buildings.
5. Modify the already enhanced square foot allocation for special education.
6. Provide policy guidelines or actual requirements regarding the appropriate use of portable classrooms.
7. Create a more expedited approval process within OSPI for fast growing school districts (modified D-form process).
8. Develop legislation that encourages/incentivizes cooperative partnerships/joint use of facilities with early learning providers, social service providers, skills centers, community and technical colleges, and public baccalaureate institutions. Use HB 3291/SB 6872 (2008 session), an act relating to community schools, as an initial discussion document.

9. Extend the current statutory six year limit for the expenditure of impact fee revenues to ten years under certain circumstances (e.g. land acquisition or other possible longer term school construction related needs). Use HB 3246/SB 6892 (2008 session), an act relating to time limits of school impact fee expenditures, as an initial discussion document.
10. For each School Construction Assistance Program project release, direct OSPI to calculate and provide project specific information using the template projection (state and local share of project costs, total project square footage and state eligible square footage, match ratio). Also, direct OSPI to provide post project completion costs.

Tier 2 Options

1. Develop a method that accounts for regional cost differences.
2. Raise or eliminate the match ratio floor.
3. Eliminate the local match requirement.
4. Create an entirely new funding formula; i.e., per student allocation.
5. Fund school districts' land acquisitions.
6. Increase the per square foot area cost allowance.
7. Differentiate between new construction and modernization area cost allowance.

Tier 3 Options

1. Reduce capital appropriations in other state programs or dedicate a minimum amount of the debt limit capacity to K-12 capital construction.
2. Utilize some of the unused capacity in the \$3.60 state property tax i.e. impose a statewide property tax increase.
3. Increase the local school district debt limit and thereby allow some school districts to potentially pass additional bonds.
4. Propose a constitutional amendment to allow "simple majority" for local school district bonds.

5. Increase so called “sin taxes” and dedicate the revenues to K-12 school construction.
6. Allow higher school district impact fees for growth.
7. Propose a statewide bond issue for K-12 school construction.
8. Expand the current debt limit by including near general fund or other sources. This most likely would require a constitutional amendment.
9. Other?