



Facility Equity Initiative – Application Overview

Every child deserves to attend a 21st century learning environment. This is not a reality for many Rhode Island students that enroll in our neediest districts. Consistent with State Priorities, RIDE’s Strategic Plan, and Rhode Island General Law, **the Rhode Island Department of Education created a new initiative in FY 2022 to help create facility equity between Rhode Island students.** The \$30M in funding this year allows us to expand the eligibility to the ten LEAs with base reimbursement rates over 45%.

These communities enroll most of the State’s Free and Reduced Lunch students, Multilingual learners, and Differently Abled students. These resources will allow LEAs to fund projects that otherwise would not advance or would rely on issuing high interest bonds. The focus of this initiative is to provide transformative 21st century learning spaces to students in these communities. Preference is given to community spaces (i.e., library, media center, science labs, cafeteria, auditorium) that are used by most students at each school.

The School Building Authority has partnered with the Office of Energy Resources (OER) and the Division of Equity, Diversity, Inclusion (DEDI) to provide LEAs with additional resources. All LED lighting projects will receive *100% State reimbursement*. Any project that achieves a minimum 15% Minority Business Enterprise (MBE) utilization will receive an increase of 10 bonus points on their State reimbursement rate.

Application Overview

The objective of FY 2023 School Building Authority Capital Fund is to begin creating Facility Equity within our state, by leveraging existing resources and targeting them to communities with limited financial capacity. The scoring rubric awards incremental points based on the type of project, number of students impacted, wealth of the community, individual building needs, and timeline.

Examples of Eligible Projects

- Converting Libraries into Media Centers
- Improving Auditoriums
- Creating Project Based Learning Maker Spaces
- Providing Learning Commons or Breakout Spaces
- Common Spaces with Dual Student/Community Use
- Modernizing Science Labs
- LED Lighting & Energy Upgrades that Improve Learning (stand alone projects or combined with above)

As part of an eligible project, associated health & safety upgrades can be included, such as:

- Heating & Ventilation Systems (i.e., providing ventilation to new Media Center)
- Building Envelope (i.e., window replacements when modernizing science labs)
- Hazardous Materials Abatement (i.e., asbestos abatement when improving auditoriums)
- Energy Improvements (i.e., new LED lights in the hallway leading to the Maker Space)

Additional Application Requirement

LEAs seeking Facility Equity Initiative support must have an active Necessity of School Construction approval and commit to completing the project by June 30, 2024. LEAs without a Necessity of School Construction approval can still apply as long as they certify the LEA’s commitment to obtain Council approval by May 2023.



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Project Prioritization

The application has several mechanisms to identify and prioritize educational enhancement projects by awarding points based on the communities' need, the number of students impacted, commitment to utilizing MBE vendors, and completion date.

Type of Project: preference given to high impact visual enhancements, creation of 21st century learning spaces, and spaces with dual student/community use.

Number of Students Impacted: community spaces will be prioritized over single classroom projects.

Project Schedule: Projects that can complete prior to the start of the 2023-2024 school year or by December 1, 2023 are given preference. All projects must complete by June 30, 2024.

Community Wealth: Factors in a community's reimbursement rate.

Building Need: Factors in building deficiencies documented in the 2017 statewide assessment, reduced by any subsequent construction work.

Additional Incentives

Districts' seeking LED lighting upgrades (standalone or part of a larger project) will have their local share paid for by the Office of Energy Resource. As a result, **awarded LED lighting projects will be 100% funded by the State**. Applicants interested in funding for LED lighting should fill out the OER section at the end of the application form.

Districts that utilize at least 15% MBE participation will receive an increase of 10 bonus points on their State reimbursement rate, in addition to any other bonuses the project qualifies for.

Balancing the Equation

Rhode Island Acts to Close the Education Equity Gap

THE EQUITY GAP HURTS US ALL: Rhode Island's future depends on how well today's students are prepared to succeed and contribute to our state. In too many communities for too many years, there has been a wide gap between what students need and what they receive.

*Thanks to the commitment of leaders at all levels, a new **\$20 million Facilities Equity Initiative** is closing the gap.*

THE NUMBERS TELL THE STORY

COMMUNITIES IN NEED: The **5** neediest districts in Rhode Island – Central Falls, Woonsocket, Pawtucket, Providence and West Warwick – account for more than **30%** of all statewide school facility needs.

FOCUS ON STUDENTS: These communities enroll **50%** of the state's free and reduced lunch students, **70%** of the state's multilingual learners and **40%** of all differently abled students.

SUPPORTING OPPORTUNITY: Thanks to a partnership with the Division of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, projects with at least **15%** minority business enterprise utilization receive **100%** state reimbursement.

CLIMATE FRIENDLY: RIDE also partnered the Office of Energy Resources to ensure approved green projects receive **100%** state reimbursement.

MORE ON THE WAY: Governor McKee, the General Assembly and RIDE teamed up to ensure that next year's budget includes **\$50 million** to further close the equity gap across the state.



RIDE Rhode Island
Department
of Education

READY TO CLOSE THE EQUITY GAP IN YOUR COMMUNITY?
Email RIDE at SBACapitalFund@ride.ri.gov today!