

CRITERIA AND GUIDELINES FOR DEVELOPMENT, REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF CAPITAL PROJECT APPLICATIONS

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I. Criteria upon which a Capital Project application will be reviewed for approval:

- A. Applications will be accepted if they provide for the correction of health and safety issues that affect students and/or staff. Such health safety issues must be confirmed or verified in writing by a licensed professional such as an architect or engineer who has been retained by the school to render professional services but who has no vested interest in the school such as an officer or board member thereof. Such licensed professional will need to demonstrate, in writing, citing statutory or regulatory references (i.e., building codes), where appropriate, that such condition(s) in fact constitute health and safety issues as described in such statute or regulation. Letters or reports from local building inspectors citing the facility's health and safety issues may be acceptable providing the cited deficiency relates directly to the area of jurisdiction or authority of such inspector or fire marshal.

Or

- B. Applications will be accepted if they provide for the correction of serious conditions that would negatively impact on the ability of a school to provide required educational services, based on appropriate documentation. Examples of such serious conditions may include:

- An existing physical plant that is not appropriate for the current number of students enrolled at the school at the current approved staffing ratio due to the student's type of disability, (e.g., classroom space not appropriate for wheelchair bound students or classroom space not adequate for severely emotionally disturbed students which is contribution to class disruption, student/staff injury, etc.)/ Specific documentation of such deficiencies must be provided in the form of site visit citations, incidence reports, etc.
- An existing physical plant that is not accessible under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and no other reasonable accommodation would address the accessibility issues. Documentation must be provided that states the accessibility issue and the alternatives considered by the school. Documentation must clearly demonstrate the rationale, including confirming opinions from independent sources as cited above, used by the school to reach the conclusion that the project is the only acceptable option. Also, specific non-complying ADA citations must be part of the submitted documentation.

In addition to the above criteria, the following guidelines for State review of applications must also be met when applying for capital project approval.

II. Guidelines for State review of applications accepted under the criteria in Section I for new construction, major renovation and acquisition

- Before capital projects¹ are approved for education funding for students with disabilities, it must be determined that current education space is not being reallocated to non-education programs causing a lack of appropriate space for the education programs.
- Administrative space may be approved in buildings to be constructed or renovated.
- Existing education areas may also be converted to administrative space when new education facilities are being constructed.

Note: Where another state agency also has oversight responsibility for the applying program, the Department will confer with such other supervising agency prior to approving any application to construct administrative and/or other shared space.

¹ Capital projects refer to construction, renovation and acquisition of real property for educational purposes, including administrative and ancillary space and facilities used to support educational functions.

A) Room Sizes for Special Education Classrooms

15:1 – approximately 770 square feet

12:1+1 – approximately 770 square feet

8:1+1 – approximately 550 square feet

6:1+1 – approximately 450 square feet

12:1+4 – approximately 900 square feet

Resource Room – Approximately 300 square feet

Preschool Classrooms – approximately 50 sq. ft. per ambulatory student or 60 sq. ft. per non-ambulatory student

Note: For classrooms planned for use by more than one class, size should accommodate the largest requirement.

B) Specialized Areas

- Physical Education Space

While Department requirements are applicable, physical education space for secondary level students recommended for a building with an enrollment of 500 or less may be exceeded based on the programmatic needs of the students to be served and the physical education and recreation program planned by the school. These dimensions may also be exceeded for schools involved in interscholastic sports.

The construction of swimming pools may be considered only in those instances where the development of a pool is necessary to meet the programmatic needs of the population served. This relates to programs serving students with multiple disabilities who are unable to access community pools, unable to adequately utilize other recreational areas, and require the pool for therapeutic purposes.

- Library

For secondary level students, a library or media center of up to 1,500 feet may be developed. Dimensions are based on the projected enrollment and the number of students to use this room at any one time. This guideline may be exceeded based on the specialized needs of the population to be served. For elementary level students, library space of up to 900 square feet may be developed based on enrollment and planned use of space.

- Art

Art rooms of 800 to 900 square feet may be developed for use by classes of 15:1, 12:1+1 or 12:1+4, Dimensions of 500 to 700 square feet are recommended for classes of 8:1+1 and 6:1+1. Additional classrooms may be needed based on enrollment.

- Technology

Technology rooms of between 800 and 1,500 square feet may be developed based on the proposed purpose of the space (e.g., an automotive shop normally requires more area than an electrical shop).

- Home and Careers

Home and Careers rooms of 800 to 1,000 square feet may be developed for use by classes of 15:1, 12:1+1 or 12:1+4. Dimensions for Home and Careers classrooms for 8:1+1 and 6:1+1 classes may have less square footage based on planned use of space.

- Science (Laboratory Rooms)

Science rooms for laboratory instruction of approximately 900 square feet in addition to classroom space may be developed for classes of between 12 and 15 students. Dimensions for laboratory space for classes of 6 to 8 students is recommended at approximately 600-700 square feet.

- Music

Music rooms of 770 square feet for classes of 15:1, 12:1+1 and 8:1+1 or 450 square feet for classes of 6:1+1 and 900 square feet for classes of 12:1+4 may be developed.

- Storage

A reasonable amount of storage space may be included in school building plans for general storage areas and storage within classrooms such as Art, Home Economics, Music, Science Laboratory and Industrial Arts.

- Related Services

A determination on the amount of space allocated for related services should be based on the number of staff and students using the room, activities to be conducted (group or individual speech therapy, counseling, physical therapy, etc.) and equipment to be used.

- Multi-Purpose Rooms

Other spaces may be developed. However, consideration must be given to using the following areas for multiple purposes (e.g., gym with stage for use as auditorium, cafeteria with stage for use as auditorium, etc.). Size is based on student enrollment and/or the proposed use of the space, such as Auditorium, Cafeteria, Remedial rooms or Music practice rooms.

- Administration Space

Administration space is determined based on the functions required to be conducted in the school building and the amount of staff using the space.

- Final Determination

In determining the appropriate number of classrooms to be included in the school building, the following factors should be considered:

- Student enrollment;
- Number of class size configurations and the number of students in each class;
- Proposed scheduling of classroom use;
- Number of staff for school building;
- Multiple use of classroom space and specialty area space.

An overview of the entire plan should be reviewed to assure consistency among all of the above factors.