

K-12 FACILITY CONDITION AND INVENTORY PILOT SYSTEM

SCOPE AND OBJECTIVES

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STATE OF WASHINGTON
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REVIEW COMMITTEE

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Why a JLARC Pilot Study of K-12 Facilities and Condition?

The 2008 Supplemental Capital Budget (ESHB 2765, Sec. 1001) requires JLARC to define and develop a pilot facility condition and inventory system for K-12 public school facilities. This pilot may include data elements such as facility location, facility condition, enrollment and space by grade level, specialized educational spaces, energy efficiency, functionality, original construction, and remodeling information. The pilot will identify data that could inform policymakers on a variety of topics, including classroom capacity and energy efficiency.

Background

K-12 public school facilities are funded by local capital levies and state general-obligation bonds, along with timber trust funds, lottery revenues, and other sources. The state makes construction assistance funds available to school districts that demonstrate a need to expand or remodel their facilities. The state assists local districts with capital costs; however, districts must match the funds through local bonds.

School districts receive an allocated amount of space per student. Remodeling funds may be made available based on the age of the facilities. Over 70 percent of the school facilities in the state were built or remodeled before 1990. However, there is no consistent source of statewide data available to track the number or condition of school facilities. Neither is there a reliable source of data available to calculate the capital costs associated with K-12 education policy initiatives, such as expanding kindergarten programs or reducing class sizes.

Study Scope

The goal of this study is to develop a pilot facility condition and inventory system for K-12 public school facilities in the state. The pilot will include at least ten public school districts, including large and small districts, urban and rural locations, facilities of varying age and condition, diversity in fiscal capacity, and at least one district that hosts a skills center.

The condition and inventory pilot system will include information necessary for facility assessment and maintenance, as well as information about policy options including class size, all-day kindergarten, specialized space (e.g., math and science classrooms and labs), environmental health and safety improvements, joint use of school facilities, high performance buildings, and the use of portables.

In conducting this work JLARC will rely on experience gained from its past studies of higher education facilities as well as input from a variety of stakeholders.

Study Objectives

The study will be divided into two phases.

Phase I: By January 1, 2009, JLARC staff will provide a report to the Legislature about the following questions:

- What is the scope of data to be collected for this pilot?
- What current sources of school district facility information already exist, and where do they reside?
- What criteria can be used to evaluate school facilities?
- Which school districts will participate in the pilot project?
- What is the implementation plan for the pilot?
- How have other states developed and used public school facility condition and inventory information?

Phase II: By January 1, 2010, JLARC staff will provide the following information to the Legislature:

- A summary of the pilot data collected and analyzed for each participating school district and how these data can be used to inform K-12 policy options;
- A comparison of the data reported by school districts to other independent facility assessment(s) and criteria;
- Proposed methods and frequency for collecting, maintaining and sharing facility information and ensuring its efficient transfer, timeliness, and accuracy;
- A model for connecting school facility information to other relevant data sources; and
- A cost/benefit analysis and potential timeline for expanding the pilot statewide.

JLARC may refine or revisit the objectives related to Phase II following the completion of Phase I. A more specific list of objectives related to Phase II will be presented to JLARC in December 2008.

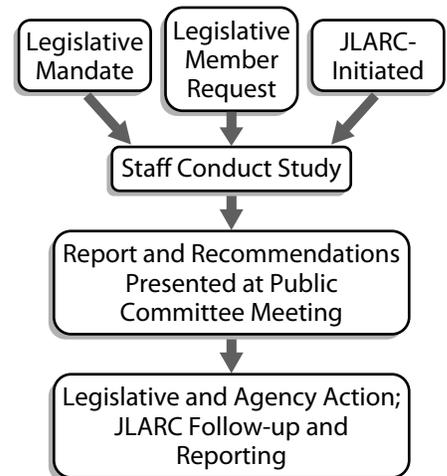
Timeframe for the Study

Staff will present its preliminary report and final reports on Phase I of the study at the JLARC meetings in October and December 2008.

JLARC Staff Contact for the Study

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JLARC Study Process



Criteria for Establishing JLARC Work Program Priorities

- Is study consistent with JLARC mission? Is it mandated?
- Is this an area of significant fiscal or program impact, a major policy issue facing the state, or otherwise of compelling public interest?
- Will there likely be substantive findings and recommendations?
- Is this the best use of JLARC resources? For example:
 - Is JLARC the most appropriate agency to perform the work?
 - Would the study be nonduplicating?
 - Would this study be cost-effective compared to other projects (e.g., larger, more substantive studies take longer and cost more, but might also yield more useful results)?
- Is funding available to carry out the project?