

## SAB approves final seismic regulations

By Allen Young

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In an effort to spur earthquake-related facility upgrades in dozens of schools across California, the State Allocation Board took final steps this week to ease restrictions on eligibility criteria for the Seismic Mitigation Program.

Under new regulations approved by the board Wednesday, school districts can apply for nearly \$200 million in available state seismic repair funds if a licensed structural engineer reports that a school or district building is vulnerable to earthquake-related collapse. The report must then be validated by officials at the Division of the State Architect.

The new regulations are now on route to the Office of Administrative Law, which must give final approval before they become effective. According to the Department of General Services, a timeline is not yet available.

Buildings are still only eligible for seismic funding if they are designed to house students and staff. They must also be constructed with building materials that fall under the "Category 2" classification of a [2002 report](#) by the Department of General Services.

The new regulations move away from former criteria that based program eligibility on the degree to which a building is expected to shake during an earthquake, a measurement known as the "spectral response acceleration."

But under those former rules, only two school districts have accessed funding from the Seismic Mitigation Program since its inception in 2006. Thus the board has been under increasing pressure from facility operators in recent months to overhaul the program.

To read more about the new regulations and building types eligible for seismic retrofits, [click here](#) and flip to page 220 under the "action items" section of the glossary.