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Review of the Funding Methods for  
**Continuation High,  
Community Day and  
County Community Schools**

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State of California  
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## Executive Summary

### Description and Findings

This report is in response to Assembly Bill (AB) 695, Chapter 858, Statutes of 1999 (Education Code Section 17072.17), which directed the Department of General Services (DGS), in conjunction with the California Department of Education (CDE), the Department of Finance (DOF) and the Legislative Analyst Office (LAO) to review the method of funding the construction and modernization of school facilities for continuation high, county community, county community day, and continuation high school pupils. The Statute also requires the DGS to recommend modifications to the current funding method for these pupils, as it deems appropriate.

In addition, EC Section 17071.25(a)(2)(C) was added that allows the State Allocation Board (SAB) to adopt regulations on or after January 1, 2001 to establish assumed capacity standards (loading standards) for continuation high and community day schools based upon the findings of the DGS's report pursuant to EC Section 17072.17. Any proposed adjustments to the loading standards shall require the approval of DOF prior to implementation.

These schools, commonly referred to as alternative education schools, serve pupils deemed "at risk" of completing their schooling, pupils with discipline problems that have been expelled from the regular school program, and pupils on probation that have been placed in these schools by either the school district or by a parent or guardian.

A review of the current funding methodology under the School Facility Program (SFP) and an analysis of the alternative education program requirements has provided the following findings:

- ▶ Alternative education pupils have unique educational needs that cannot be met in the regular school environment.
- ▶ Alternative education schools should be located on separate sites and serve between 100 to 200 pupils.
- ▶ Alternative education schools typically need multi-purpose type spaces that serve multiple program functions such as cafeteria/kitchen, assembly, physical education, computer lab and library.
- ▶ The funding methodology used under the SFP is appropriate; however, the amount of funding provided should be modified.
- ▶ The current loading standards used under the SFP may not be appropriate for these types of programs, and should be reduced to meet their unique needs.

### Recommendations

- ▶ The SAB should consider changing the classroom loading for alternative education school pupils to between 18 to 20 pupils per classroom at all grade levels.
- ▶ The Legislature should consider increasing the "per pupil" funding for alternative education school pupils in amounts necessary to provide adequate alternative school facilities. Appropriate amounts are contained in the recommendations, page 21 of this report.

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## Introduction

This report contains a summary of the continuation high school, community day school, county community, and county community day school programs; survey results of the existing facilities used for these alternative education programs, survey results of the facilities needed for these programs and an analysis of alternative education school facilities requested under the SFP. The report follows with a conclusion section, which outlines the optimum site size, location/pupil density, classroom loading and funding considerations for these schools. Finally, the report offers recommendations from the DGS regarding the appropriate classroom loading and funding methodologies for these alternative education schools.

### Reason for Report

This report is a result of AB 695, Chapter 858, Statutes of 1999 (Education Code Section 17072.17) which requires the DGS, in conjunction with the CDE, the DOF and the LAO to review the method of funding the construction and modernization of school facilities for the following alternative education programs:

- ▶ Continuation High Schools
- ▶ Community Day Schools
- ▶ County Community Schools
- ▶ County Community Day Schools

AB 695 also requires the DGS, as a result of this review, to recommend modifications to the current method of school facility funding for alternative education schools, as it deems appropriate. The Office of Public School Construction (OPSC), an office within the DGS, has assisted the DGS in preparing this report.

Although AB 695 specifically requires the review of school facility funding methods for the construction and modernization of alternative education schools, an analysis of the funding would not be complete unless an analysis of the classroom loading and facility needs for these types of schools was also made. Therefore, this report also includes a review of the classroom loading and the specific facility needs for alternative education schools.

Since Education Code Section (ECS) 17072.17 is part of the Leroy F. Greene School Facility Act of 1998, commonly referred to as the School Facility Program (SFP) and the State Allocation Board (SAB) is responsible for the administration of the SFP, this review was made based upon the laws that govern the SFP commencing with ECS 17070.10 through ECS 17077.10 and regulations adopted by the SAB for the SFP.

Specific authority to modify the school facility funding for alternative education schools was not granted in AB 695; however, existing laws, under the umbrella of the SFP, could be used by the SAB to increase some of the funding and/or adjust the classroom loading for alternative education schools without further legislation. They are as follows:

- ▶ ECS 17071.25(a)(2)(C) authorizes the SAB to adopt regulations establishing classroom-loading standards specifically for alternative education schools, after consideration of recommendations from the DGS.
- ▶ ECS 17075.10(b)(2) authorizes the SAB to provide additional hardship funding if the district can demonstrate to the SAB that, due to unusual circumstances that are beyond the control of the district, excessive costs will be incurred in the construction or modernization of its school facilities.

## Introduction...

### **Review of School Facility Program**

The SFP became law in 1998 and provided an entirely new methodology of State funding for the construction and modernization of kindergarten (K) through 12<sup>th</sup> grade public school facilities in California, including alternative education schools. The SFP provides facility funding on a “per pupil basis” depending on the unhoused pupils in the district and the number of pupils that will be housed in the facility. The SFP consists of two major facility construction programs: new construction and modernization.

#### *New Construction*

The amount of the State funding grant for new construction projects, with the exception of special education pupils, includes all the following:

- ▶ A “base” grant of \$5,720 for each elementary school pupil, \$6,050 for each middle school pupil and \$7,920 for each high school pupil that will be housed in the project.
- ▶ Additional funding for site acquisition/development and multi-story construction.
- ▶ Additional funding due to unique construction costs, referred to as excessive cost grants, such as the small size of the project, urban location, new school allowance and geographic location.

One excessive cost grant provided under the new construction program, the new school allowance, provides additional funding for a district to construct a new school when the initial enrollment for the new school will be substantially less than its proposed capacity. This additional allowance is intended to provide adequate funding for the construction of non-classroom facilities such as libraries, multi-purpose rooms and gymnasiums and other basic infrastructure requirements that are needed when the new school is initially opened.

This total State funding under the new construction program is intended to represent 50 percent of the project costs. The other 50 percent is the responsibility of the district and may be made by a cash contribution or by meeting certain financial hardship criteria. If the financial hardship criteria are met, the State will also provide some or all of the district’s 50 percent share.

## Introduction...

### *Modernization*

The amount of the State funding grant for modernization projects, with the exception of special education pupils, includes all of the following:

- ▶ A “base” grant of \$2,471 for each elementary school pupil, \$2,614 for each middle school pupil and \$3,422 for each high school pupil that will be housed in the project.
- ▶ Additional State funding due to unique construction costs of the project such as the small size project, urban location, handicap access/elevators and geographic location is also provided.

This total State funding under the modernization program is intended to represent 80 percent of the project costs. The other 20 percent is the responsibility of the district and may be made by a cash contribution or by meeting certain financial hardship criteria. If the financial hardship criteria are met, the State will also provide some or all of the district’s 20 percent share.

### *Current Loading and Funding of Alternative Education Programs*

For purposes of funding and classroom loading for alternative education schools, the SFP currently uses the same funding methodologies and classroom loading criteria that is used for all other pupils, except special education pupils. At the time the initial SFP program was developed, there was no authority in law to use different classroom loading criteria for alternative education pupils then authorized in law for all other pupils. Classroom loading, as initially authorized in the SFP is:

- ▶ 25 for K–6 grade pupils
- ▶ 27 for 7–12 grade pupils.

Since the law has been amended under AB 695 to allow for a modification of the classroom loading, the SAB now has the authority to change the loading for these types of schools.

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## Analysis of Alternative Education Programs

This section will provide a summary and description of the continuation high school, community day school, county community day school, and county community school programs:

### Continuation High School

Continuation high school programs generally referred to as “continuation education” are established and maintained by either a high school district or unified school district as authorized by ECS 48430 through ECS 48438. Continuation education is a high school diploma program designed to meet the needs of high school pupils between the ages of 16 to 18 who have not yet graduated and not exempt from compulsory school attendance, but deemed at risk of not completing their schooling. The program must provide all the following:

- ▶ An opportunity for pupils to complete the required academic courses necessary to graduate from high school.
- ▶ Emphasizes on occupational orientation and intensive guidance services to meet special needs of the pupils.
- ▶ Meet the educational needs of each pupil including independent study, career counseling and job placement.

Some pupils elect to attend continuation high while others are involuntarily referred by specific procedures and guidelines adopted by the district. A pupil must attend class 180 minutes (i.e., three hours) per day in order to be considered a day of attendance for purposes of the State School Fund apportionment (refer to ECS 46170). Classes are maintained during the district’s regular school hours and, although not required by law, the continuation high facility is generally located on a separate or designated site and has anywhere between 1 to 17 classrooms serving enrollment of up to 300 pupils. The statewide enrollment for continuation high school pupils is approximately 68,000<sup>1</sup> pupils.

### Community Day School and County Community Day School

Community day school programs are established and maintained by a school district or county superintendent of schools as authorized by ECS 48660 through ECS 48667 to provide a program of study that can appropriately accommodate pupils with discipline problems. It is a program designed to meet the needs of pupils in K through the 12<sup>th</sup> grade and must include all the following components:

- ▶ The district must cooperate with the county office of education, law enforcement, probation and human services agencies that work with “at-risk” pupils.
- ▶ Low pupil-teacher ratio.
- ▶ Individualized instruction and assessment.
- ▶ Maximum use of the district’s support services such as school counselors, psychologists, academic counselors and pupil discipline personnel.

<sup>1</sup> Data provided by the CDE School Facilities Planning Division.

## Analysis of Alternative Education Programs . . .

The pupils are involuntarily transferred to a community day school when they meet any of the following criteria:

- ▶ The pupil is expelled for any reason.
- ▶ The pupil is “probation referred” pursuant to the Welfare and Institutions Code.
- ▶ The pupil is “referred” by a school district’s attendance review board or other district referral process.

A pupil must attend classroom a minimum of 360 minutes (i.e., six hours) per day. Classes are maintained during the district’s regular school hours and, and as required by law, the community day school facility are located on a separate site and has anywhere between 1 to 5 classrooms serving enrollment of up to 100 pupils. The statewide enrollment for community day schools is approximately 8,300<sup>2</sup> pupils.

### County Community School

County community school programs are established and maintained by a county superintendent of schools as authorized by ECS 1980 through ECS 1986 to provide programs of study deemed most appropriate for reinforcing or reestablishing basic educational development for pupils with discipline problems. The program is designed to meet the needs of pupils in K through the 12<sup>th</sup> grade and emphasizes on-the-job training, tutorial assistance, independent study, individual guidance activities and an individually planned educational program for each pupil.

The county superintendent of schools may enroll the following pupils in this program:

- ▶ Pupils expelled from a school district.
- ▶ The pupil is “referred” by a school district’s attendance review board.
- ▶ The pupil is “referred” at the request of a parent or guardian.
- ▶ The pupil is “probation referred” pursuant to the Welfare and Institutions Code.
- ▶ The pupil is homeless.

A pupil must attend class a minimum of 240 minutes (i.e., four hours) per day. Classes are maintained during regular school hours and, although not required by law, the county community school is usually located on a separate site and has anywhere between 1 to 5 classrooms serving enrollment of up to 100 pupils. Statewide enrollment for county community schools is estimated at 2,800; however, this number has not been validated and could be much higher.

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<sup>2</sup>Based upon 1 day CBEDS enrollment in October 2000, provided by the CDE Educational Options Unit.

## Survey Data

In December 2000, an ad hoc committee was formed by the OPSC within the DGS comprised of individuals representing school districts, county superintendent of schools, staff from the OPSC, the CDE, the DOF and the LAO. This committee was created to assist the DGS in meeting the requirements of ECS 17072.17. In order to determine the types of facilities currently available and the facilities needed for the alternative education programs, the committee members visited several sites that offered alternative education programs and recommended a survey be conducted to gather salient facility data about these alternative education programs.

### Basis for Survey

The survey focused on current practices regarding the classroom loading, the types of facilities available and the facilities requested for the alternative education schools. It was intended to provide background on the specific alternative education programs offered and a statewide perspective of the facility needs for these types of schools. This survey was developed and conducted by the CDE with assistance from the OPSC.

### How Survey was Conducted

A total of 91 surveys were mailed to 33 school districts that administer alternative education programs and to all 58 county superintendents of schools.

### Data Requested

The survey gathered information on existing space/uses and facility needs. The survey addressed current classroom loading, the square footage of existing facilities and how the existing spaces are used for the alternative education programs. The survey also addressed alternative education facility needs and/or desires such as space requirements and types of specialized classrooms and non-classroom facilities needed in order to conduct a quality alternative education program.

The data was differentiated by type of alternative educational program (i.e., continuation high, community day and county community schools) in order to compare and contrast the needs of each type of program.

### Timelines

The survey was mailed in May 2001 and all responses were due to the CDE by June 2001. The survey results were compiled and distributed to the committee members in August 2001 and a final report of the survey findings was completed in November 2001.

## Survey Data...

### Survey Respondents

A total of 58 surveys (i.e., 52 percent of those sent) were completed and returned to the State. Chart A identifies the type of respondent and the alternative education programs served.

**Chart A: Respondent Profile**

RESPONDENT	RESPONSES	Type of Alternative Education School		
		CONTINUATION HIGH	COMMUNITY DAY	COUNTY COMMUNITY
County Superintendent of Schools	35	0	8	27
School Districts	23*	13	9	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>28</b>

\*County and school district are the same entity.

The number of school districts that responded to the survey represents less than three percent of the school districts in the State. Even though the survey was targeted to school districts that operate alternative educational programs, the results may not be representative of all school districts. Additionally, some of the school districts with continuation high schools were selected from a list of districts with continuation high schools recently recognized as “Model Continuation Schools” by the CDE and, therefore, the results may not be representative of all continuation high schools in the State.

The survey results indicated the following trends:

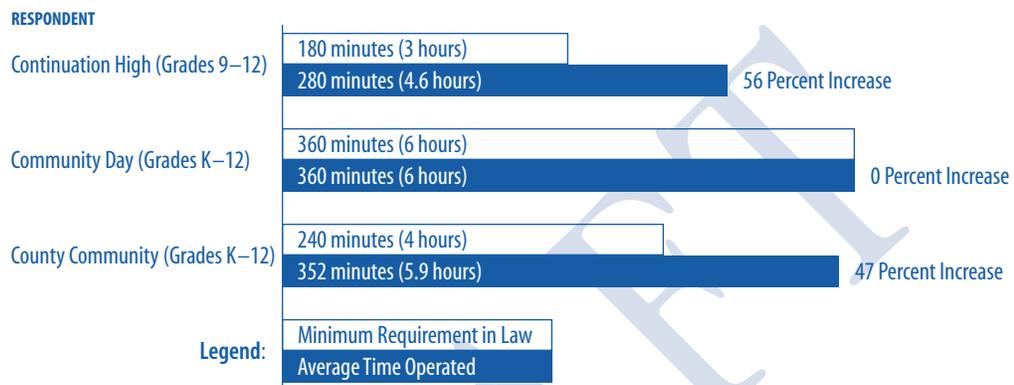
- ▶ Continuation high schools were exclusively operated by school districts.
- ▶ Community day schools were operated mostly by school districts but included some county superintendent of schools.
- ▶ County community schools were almost exclusively operated by county superintendent of schools.
- ▶ Fifty-three percent of the county superintendent of schools surveyed responded.
- ▶ Seventy-nine percent of the school districts surveyed responded.

## Results of Survey

### Instructional Minutes Per Day

Chart B indicates the minimum number of instructional minutes/hours required by law and the average instructional minutes/hours actually operated by the respondents.

**Chart B: Instructional Minutes Per Day**



The majority of community day and county community school respondents serve grades K–12, but most of their schools are at the middle and high school level. Because of the minimum instructional hours required and the actual instructional hours operated, it is not feasible to conduct any of these programs on a double-session calendar. Any consideration for classroom loading based on two sessions per day is not recommended as the majority of the alternative educational pupils are attending class five to six hours per day.

### Types of Educational Programs Operated

In order to determine the types of non-classroom facilities needed to assure a quality instructional program at a school site, Chart C indicates the percentage of respondents that are currently operating physical educational programs (either indoor or outdoors) and if breakfast and/or lunch meals are served.

**Chart C: Educational Programs Operated**

RESPONDENT	Physical Education			MEALS SERVED
	OPERATE INDOOR FACILITIES	OPERATE OUTDOOR FACILITIES	NO FACILITIES AVAILABLE	
Continuation High	50%	93%	7%	73%
Community Day	12%	50%	41%	92%
County Community	11%	38%	48%	90%

## Results of Survey . . .

Available physical education facilities reported were mostly outdoor playground types such as basketball courts, handball courts, etc. Indoor facilities such as a gymnasium were rare and if available, were shared with other schools. Many respondents indicated they had no physical education programs due to limited space/facilities. Continuation high school programs reported having more access to indoor and outdoor physical education facilities than other alternative educational programs as many continuation high schools are physically located adjacent to existing high schools.

In most cases, when indoor physical education facilities are available, they are used for weight room activities. Most outdoor facilities are used for basketball and handball activities. Since all alternative education schools offer and serve breakfast and/or lunch meals and there appears to be a need for limited indoor physical educational activities, an assembly area such as a multi-purpose room for these types of non-classroom functions seems appropriate.

The survey results indicated the following:

- ▶ Fifty percent of the continuation high school programs had indoor facilities, but most were weight rooms.
- ▶ Fifty percent of the community day and county community schools have no physical education programs because of the lack of facilities or access to facilities since most of these schools are on separate sites not adjacent to existing schools. The majority of outdoor facilities are shared with other schools or governmental agencies.
- ▶ Only 10 percent of the community day and county community schools had indoor facilities and most were weight rooms shared with other schools or governmental agencies.
- ▶ Less than 50 percent of the community day and county community schools had outdoor facilities.
- ▶ Eighty-five percent (average) of continuation high, community day and county community schools serve meals.

### Existing Space

Chart D provides typical spaces used for alternative educational programs and the percentage of the respondents that actually had these types of facilities.

**Chart D: Typical Space Actually Used by Respondents for Alternative Education Schools**

RESPONDENT	CLASSROOMS	SMALL GROUP AREAS	RESTROOMS	STORAGE	KITCHEN AREA	MULTI-PURPOSE
Continuation High	100%	43%	100%	71%	36%	57%
Community Day	100%	56%	100%	56%	33%	28%
County Community	100%	61%	100%	71%	46%	11%

## Results of Survey . . .

The survey found that Continuation high school classroom size averaged about 775 square feet while community day schools averaged 1,235 square feet and county community schools were about 1,035 square feet. The larger classroom size for community day and county community schools is a result of team teaching, computer labs, and vocational educational activities such as shops, art and crafts, and other support space. Continuation high schools tend to have more non-classroom facilities such as multi-purpose rooms.

Based on current practice, most alternative education schools have somewhat larger classroom size (i.e., between 800–1,200 square feet), standard restroom area and storage facilities. Non-classroom area is centered on small multi-purposes rooms and kitchen areas. Larger non-classroom areas such as full-size gymnasiums, libraries and multi-purpose rooms are not typically available.

Existing sites used for alternative education schools are typically less than one acre to 10 acres with the continuation high school sites being larger than community day and county community school sites. Some of the sites were owned by the district while others were leased or shared with other schools. Approximately 35 percent of the respondents had no or extremely small sites, most of which are storefronts.

In the survey, but not included in the Chart D above, respondents were asked to identify “other” space used for alternative education programs. Approximately 75 percent did not identify any space. The other 25 percent identified space used for administration purposes.

### Facilities Requested by Respondent

Chart E provides the percentages of respondents that indicated the types of non-classroom space it would use in their alternative education schools if there were no funding constraints on the facilities constructed.

**Chart E: Non-Classroom Space Requested Assuming No Funding Constraints**

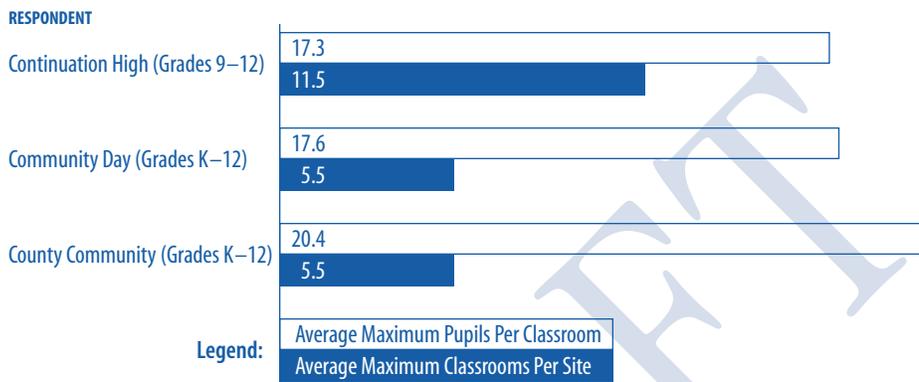
RESPONDENT	SMALL GROUP AREA	PREPARATION KITCHEN	FULL KITCHEN	MULTI-PURPOSE ROOM	PHYSICAL EDUCATION SPACE	LIBRARY OR MEDIA
Continuation High	50%	36%	29%	71%	64%	85%
Community Day	55%	56%	6%	56%	61%	56%
County Community	78%	57%	11%	61%	71%	57%

Respondents strongly supported the use of non-classroom space for all alternative education schools. The spaces mostly requested were small group instruction, storage, counseling offices, physical education, computer science, art rooms, library and multi-purpose rooms. Physical education space could be smaller than needed in regular schools and many physical education and multi-purposes functions could be combined. Most respondents needed preparation kitchens and restroom facilities spaces were similar to those on regular school sites.

## Results of Survey . . .

Chart F identifies the average classroom loading and the average number of classrooms that would be located at a single location if there were no funding constraints on the facilities constructed.

**Chart F: Classroom Loading Criteria**



For purposes of pupil classroom loading, all respondents requested average maximum pupil loading per classroom between 18 and 20 pupils; however, since as many as 25 percent<sup>3</sup> of the pupils are absent on any given day, any recommended change to current classroom loading standards under the SFP should consider this issue.

The average maximum number of classrooms per site is a function of the type and the number of pupils that can reasonably be provided a quality education at the same setting. Since community day and county community pupils generally are considered to be high risk youth and have either been expelled, on probation or “referred” by a district or a parent, consideration for optimum school size must consider these issues.

The survey did not request information regarding the necessary site size needed for the various alternative education schools; however, in its *Guide to School Site Analysis and Development* (2000 Edition), the CDE has recommended guidelines regarding the appropriate acres needed for the various alternative education schools sites.

<sup>3</sup> Data provided by the CDE School Facilities Planning Division

## Analysis of Historical Data

In preparing the analyses of historical data of the various alternative education school projects where the school districts or the county superintendent of schools requested funding for the project under the provisions of the SFP, the DGS relied upon the OPSC to gather and compile this data. Charts G and H provide specific information about each project including square footage and types of facilities requested.

**Chart G: Community School SFP Projects**

PROJECT	NUMBER OF CLASSROOMS	TOTAL SQUARE FOOTAGE IN PROJECT	CLASSROOMS SQUARE FOOTAGE	MULTI-PURPOSE SQUARE FOOTAGE*	GYMNASIUM SQUARE FOOTAGE	LIBRARY SQUARE FOOTAGE	OTHER SQUARE FOOTAGE†
A	12	18,690	11,250	3,400	—	800	3,240
B	4	10,500	3,929	2,184	—	1,200	3,187
C	5	10,512	5,120	3,244	—	—	2,148
D	5	10,512	5,120	3,244	—	—	2,148
E	3	7,632	3,072	3,200	—	—	1,360
F	5	10,512	5,120	3,244	—	—	2,148
G	3	7,632	3,072	3,200	—	—	1,360
H	3	7,632	3,072	3,200	—	—	1,360
I	5	10,512	5,120	3,244	—	—	2,148
J	5	10,512	5,120	3,244	—	—	2,148
K	5	10,512	5,120	3,244	—	—	2,148
L	3	7,632	3,072	3,200	—	—	1,360
M	3	13,489	3,090	—	6,351	1,040	3,008
N	3	15,056	3,252	—	6,006	1,365	4,433
O	2	12,294	4,012	5,664	—	—	2,618

\*Includes preparation kitchen area.

†Includes space such as restrooms, storage, mechanical, and school administration.

Some interesting facts about the plans submitted for these community day and county community school projects are as follows:

- ▶ All projects were designed to serve pupils in grades 7–12.
- ▶ Most projects qualified for a new school excessive cost allowance; therefore, the design of the projects was influenced more by specific needs of the alternative education school programs rather than cost.
- ▶ There is an average of 4.5 classrooms per school site. This supports the need for a small school type learning environment that will serve pupils deemed “at risk” of completing their educational requirements.
- ▶ The average classroom size was 1,040 square feet. This is slightly larger than an average regular school classroom of 960 square feet.
- ▶ Almost all (about 85 percent) of the projects include space for multi-purpose rooms, but no space for gymnasiums. The other 15 percent have gymnasiums, but no multi-purpose rooms. Since the design of the gymnasiums

## Analysis of Historical Data . . .

included multi-purpose functions such as preparation kitchen space and cafeteria seating, it is reasonable to conclude that multi-purpose space is critical to these educational programs. The average size of the multi-purpose spaces designed (including gymnasium space) is about 3,725 square feet per site.

- ▶ All projects included other spaces such as restrooms, storage and administration area. Only 25 percent of the projects included specific library space; however, some of the other spaces were designed to be used for library activities. The average size of the other spaces designed (including library space) is about 2,615 square feet per site.
- ▶ The average size of the community schools designed was approximately 10,900 square feet.

Although the sample of continuation high school projects is somewhat small, interesting facts about these projects are as follows:

**Chart H: Continuation High School School Facility Program Projects**

PROJECT	NUMBER OF CLASSROOMS	TOTAL SQUARE FOOTAGE IN PROJECT	CLASSROOMS SQUARE FOOTAGE	MULTI-PURPOSE SQUARE FOOTAGE*	GYMNASIUM SQUARE FOOTAGE	LIBRARY SQUARE FOOTAGE	OTHER SQUARE FOOTAGE†
A	8	12,480	7,330	2,400	—	350	2,400
B	8	16,873	8,160	8,713	—	—	—
C	2	6,725	1,815	—	—	—	4,910
D	13	24,426	12,480	6,746	—	1,360	3,840
E	11	13,920	13,440	—	—	500	480

\*Includes preparation kitchen area.

†Includes space such as restrooms, storage, mechanical, and school administration.

- ▶ The design of the projects was influenced more by specific needs of the alternative education school programs rather than cost.
- ▶ There is an average of 8.5 classrooms per school site. Since continuation high pupils are generally not considered severe discipline problems, a larger school type learning environment is appropriate.
- ▶ The average classroom size was 1,030 square feet. This is slightly larger than an average regular school classroom of 960 square feet.
- ▶ Most of the projects include space for multi-purpose rooms, but none had space for gymnasiums. The average size of the multi-purposes space designed at each site is about 3,570 square feet.
- ▶ All projects included other space such as restrooms, storage and administration area. Only 40 percent included specific library space; however, the other space was designed so it could also be used for library activities. The average size of the other space designed (including library space) at each site is about 2,670 square feet.
- ▶ The average size of the schools designed was about 14,900 square feet.

## Conclusions

### Community Day and County Community Schools

Community day schools and county community schools (including county community day schools) should be treated the same for purposes of capital outlay needs since the types of facilities they need, their cost and their square footage requirements are similar.

Because of requirements in law and the specific capital facility needs of the educational community, small single session community day and county community schools that consist of five classrooms and house about 100 pupils are appropriate due to the unique discipline problems of these pupils. The educational community supports classroom loading between 18 to 20 pupils (based upon survey results). Due to the 25 percent dropout rate and the fact that many of these pupils transfer “in and out” of the regular school environment, classroom loading of 18 to 20 pupils is appropriate for all grades. If classroom loading for community day and county community school pupils was changed, consideration should be made to house these pupils in adequate existing facilities of the district not needed for its other pupils.

A review of the survey results and the current SFP community day and county community day school projects suggest that each community day and county community school site should include adequate classroom space, multi-purpose space that could also substitute for limited physical educational program activities and other space for restrooms, storage, library and administration. The analysis of the survey results and the current SFP projects do not support space for full gymnasiums and libraries. If the averages of the spaces identified in the analysis of community day school projects requesting funding under the SFP were used, an average community day school would include the following typical square feet:

Classroom Space (5 × 1,030)	5,200
Multi-Purpose Space	3,725
Other	2,615
<b>Total</b>	<b>11,540</b>

Assuming appropriate classroom loading at 20 pupils each, the capacity of a typical community day or county community school would be 100 pupils (5 classrooms × 20 pupils per classroom) and the average square feet needed per pupil would be 115 square feet (11,540 sq. ft./100 pupils).

To provide adequate funding under the SFP for a typical community day or county community school, an increase in the new construction base grant amount for a community day school pupil would be needed. Under the SFP, a high school pupil is currently provided \$7,920 as a new construction base grant to provide the State's 50 percent share of the estimated cost to house the pupil. This amount assumes that approximately 80 to 90 square feet of building area can be constructed for each pupil, depending on the size of the school. For purposes of this analysis, the lesser amount of 80 square feet is used because of the small size of the alternative schools. Assuming about 80 square feet can be constructed with the State's grant and the district's matching share, it would take about \$99 (\$7,920/80 sq. ft.) of the State's new construction base grant to construct the State's share of each square foot of building area. Since 115 square feet is needed to adequately house a community day or county community school pupil, the new construction base grant for a community day or county community school pupil should be increased to \$11,385 (\$99 × 115 sq. ft.). Additional allowances for site acquisition/development, multi-story construction, excessive cost grants for geographic, small size of project and urban location are still appropriate.

## Conclusions...

Because of the need for limited non-classroom space and the small size of a new community day or county community school, the new school excessive cost grant currently provided for regular new schools are not appropriate for community day schools. To assure appropriate State funding for a new community day school or county community school is available to provide these limited non-classroom facilities at initial construction, a separate new school allowance should be developed solely for this purpose.

Although the survey and the analysis contained in this report did not specifically address classroom loading and funding needs for the modernization of community day or county community schools, any change in classroom loading and/or funding for new community day or county community school projects should apply proportionally to modernization community day and county community school projects. For example, the current modernization base grant amount for a high school pupil is \$3,422 or 43.2 percent of the new construction base grant for a high school pupil (\$3,422/\$7920). Applying this percentage, the modernization grant for a community day school pupil should be increased to \$4,918 ( $\$11,385 \times 43.2\%$ ) if the new construction grant for community day school pupils was increased to \$11,385. Additional allowances for excessive cost grants for geographic location, small size of project, handicap access/elevators and urban location are still appropriate

### Continuation High Schools

Based on the results of the survey regarding existing continuation high school facilities, the facilities requested by respondents and the analysis of current SFP continuation high school projects, larger continuation high schools operating on single session with 10 classrooms that house about 200 pupils are appropriate due to the unique educational needs of these pupils. The educational community supports classroom loading between 18 to 20 pupils. Due to the high dropout rate and the fact that many of these pupils transfer “in and out” of the regular school environment, a classroom loading of 18 to 20 pupils is appropriate for these schools. If the classroom loading for continuation high school pupils was changed, consideration should be made to house these pupils in adequate existing facilities of the district not needed for its other pupils. For example, if a unified district or high school district had excess space at an existing high school, that space should be considered as available for use as a continuation high school, if practical.

The survey results and the analysis of current SFP continuation high school projects support adequate classroom space, multi-purpose space that could also substitute for limited physical education program activities and other space for restrooms, storage, library and administration at each site. This analysis did not support space for full gymnasiums or libraries. If the averages of the spaces identified in the analysis of projects requesting funding under the SFP were used, an average continuation high school would include the following typical square feet:

Classroom Space (10 × 1,030)	10,300
Multi-purpose Space	3,570
Other	2,670
<b>Total</b>	<b>16,540</b>

## Conclusions...

Assuming appropriate classroom loading at 20 pupils each, the capacity of a typical continuation high school would be 200 pupils (10 classrooms  $\times$  20 pupils per classroom) and the average square feet needed per pupil would be approximately 83 square feet (16,540 sq. ft./200 pupils).

To provide adequate funding under the SFP for a typical continuation high school, an increase in the new construction base grant for a continuation high school pupil would be needed similar to that explained for community day or county community school pupils. Since 83 square feet is needed to adequately house a continuation high school pupil, the base grant for a continuation high school pupil should be increased to \$8,217 ( $\$99 \times 83$  sq.ft.). Additional allowances for site acquisition/development, excessive cost grants for geographic location, small size of project and urban location are still appropriate.

Because of the need for limited non-classroom space, the new school excessive cost grant currently provided for regular new schools may not be appropriate for new continuation high schools. To assure appropriate State funding is available to provide these limited non-classroom facilities for a new continuation high school at initial construction, a separate new school allowance should be developed solely for this purpose.

The survey and the analysis contained in this report did not specifically address classroom loading and funding needs for the modernization of continuation high schools; however, any change in classroom loading and/or funding for new construction continuation high school projects should apply proportionally to modernization continuation high school projects. The current modernization base grant amount for a high school pupil is \$3,422 or 43.2 percent of the new construction base grant for a high school pupil ( $\$3,422/\$7920$ ). Applying this percentage, the modernization grant for a continuation high school pupil should be increased to \$3,550 ( $\$8,217 \times 43.2\%$ ) if the new construction grant for continuation high school pupils was increased to \$8,217. Additional allowances for excessive cost grants for geographic location, small size of project, handicap access/elevators and urban location are still appropriate.

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## Recommendations

The following recommendations are prepared by the DGS regarding the appropriate classroom loading and funding methodologies for these alternative education schools:

1. Recognize that alternative education schools have unique educational requirements and capital outlay facility needs that cannot be met in the regular school environment.
2. Consider community day school, county community, and county community day school capital outlay facility needs the same for purposes of State funding.
3. The SAB should consider changing the classroom loading for community day school, county community, county community day school and continuation high school pupils to 18 to 20 pupils per classroom for all grade levels. Request the SAB adopt regulations modifying these classroom loading standards by authority granted in ECS 17071.25(a)(2)(C).
4. Any regulations adopted by the SAB regarding classroom loading for continuation high school pupils should consider existing excess available space in the district or county superintendent that could reasonably be used to adequately house these pupils.
5. The Legislature should consider increasing the current per pupil new construction base grant for community day school and county community day school pupils to \$11,385 for all grade levels.
6. The Legislature should consider increasing the current per pupil modernization base grant for community day school and county community school pupils to \$4,918 for all grade levels.
7. The Legislature should consider increasing the current per pupil new construction base grant for continuation high school pupils to \$8,217 for all grade levels.
8. The Legislature should consider increasing the current per pupil modernization base grant for continuation high school pupils to \$3,550 for all grade levels.
9. The SAB should consider developing a separate new school allowance for new continuation high schools.
10. The SAB should consider developing a separate new school allowance for new community day and county community schools.
11. Continue to utilize the CDE site acreage guidelines for community day, county community day and continuation high schools.

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### Resources

The DGS relied on the California Department of Education School Facilities Planning Division to administer the survey and for additional statistical data on alternative education programs in preparing this report.