

District gets \$19.7M construction grant - Funding will help ease overcrowding at Roosevelt Elementary

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The Long Beach Unified School District will receive about \$19.7 million to relieve overcrowding at Roosevelt Elementary School, state officials announced this week.

The State Allocation Board will disburse more than \$372 million to 105 school construction and modernization projects across 43 school districts, including the Roosevelt project.

The district expects to receive the funding in the next few weeks, according to Tova Corman, executive director of LBUSD's Facilities Department.

"We're excited. We're thrilled," Corman said.

Roosevelt Elementary has been under construction since the last school year, but the state funding will help the district offset some of the costs related to the \$38.7 million overhaul of the school.

The overcrowding relief grant will help Long Beach Unified eliminate the portable classrooms on Roosevelt's campus, which is currently unoccupied. Roosevelt students have attended school at the now-defunct Mary Butler School for the past two school years. The district plans to reopen Roosevelt in 2015.

There are 23 portable classrooms at Roosevelt, and removing them by constructing a two-story building at the school will allow for more "green space" on campus, Corman said.

State funding for the construction projects in the 43 school districts is made possible with bonds authorized under Propositions 1A, 1D, 47, and 55, according to the state board.

"These additional resources can go a long way toward creating facilities that meet today's needs and, in the process, help our schools save money and put Californians to work," Tom Torlakson, state superintendent of public instruction, said in a statement. "Our students deserve every opportunity to learn in schools that are designed for the 21st century."

Corman said she also anticipates receiving \$16 million from the state to relieve overcrowding at Newcomb K-8 School. She said the state will likely announce that disbursement in the next few months.