



The proposed Downtown San Diego Central Library would be a joint-use facility housing a charter high school.

Innovative Ideas

The state of the economy has diminished the OPSC’s ability to fund projects, creating many concerns for school districts. Yet the challenges that have been presented to us provide a great opportunity for us to partner with our customers to explore innovative ideas; together we can play a key role in putting Californians back to work....

[read more](#)

IN THIS ISSUE

Click on headline to view the article.

Innovative Ideas

Farewell to Rob Cook

Tips for Maximizing Site Development Funding

Bond Sale Watch

Reminder: Impact of 2008-2009 Budget on the Emergency Repair Program

Bond Proceeds Release Continues

Regulations Update

OPSC Deadlines and Key Dates

Building Blocks

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“To enrich the lives of California’s school children as stewards of the taxpayers’ commitment to education”

ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER
Governor, State of California

RON DIEDRICH
Acting Director, Department of General Services



Office of Public School Construction
STAFF TO THE STATE ALLOCATION BOARD

Innovative Ideas



Lisa Silverman
Acting Executive Officer

After more than three years in the Office of Public School Construction's (OPSC) Fiscal Services division, I am excited about the opportunities and challenges presented by my new role as acting Executive Officer. The state of the economy has diminished the OPSC's ability to fund projects, creating many concerns for school districts. Yet the challenges that have been presented to us provide a great opportunity for us to partner with our customers to explore innovative ideas; together we can play a key role in putting Californians back to work.

The OPSC's goals include continuing to provide outstanding service, achieving fair and equitable results, and ensuring accountability. These factors are all essential to the success of our current and future bond programs. One aspect of providing outstanding service is to make our processes as efficient as possible. I have a strong commitment to improving the organization and streamlining its processes. For this reason, I am reviewing our current processes and exploring opportunities in information technology that can be adopted into our organization.

Another crucial component in providing outstanding service is outreach. On February 17, 2010, OPSC audit staff presented tips on planning for an audit at the Santa Clara County Office of Education meeting. Our goal is to educate our customers on how to plan for a successful audit. This month, the OPSC and its sister agency, the Division of the State Architect, are hosting **Town Halls** in various locations throughout the state. OPSC workshops at these Town Halls will include "Expediting the Application Review Process" and "Audit Process and Tips." In order to benefit as many school districts as possible, this information will also be available via webcast. The success of our programs depends upon customer service. In these difficult times, we encourage our customers to take advantage of our free services by attending the regional outreach opportunities or viewing them via webcast.

Please send comments and suggestions for future editions of Building Blocks to opscnews@dgs.ca.gov.

IN THIS ISSUE

Click on headline to view the article.

- Innovative Ideas
- Farewell to Rob Cook
- Tips for Maximizing Site Development Funding
- Bond Sale Watch
- Reminder: Impact of 2008-2009 Budget on the Emergency Repair Program
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State Allocation Board/OPSC
lisa.silverman@dgs.ca.gov

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Assistant Executive Officer
State Allocation Board
lisa.kaplan@dgs.ca.gov



Office of Public School Construction
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Farewell to Rob Cook

Rob Cook served as Executive Officer of the Office of Public School Construction (OPSC) from June 2007 through January 2010. He is now employed as acting Deputy Director of the Interagency Support Division within the Department of General Services. In this capacity, Rob is responsible for direct departmental oversight of the OPSC, the Office of Fleet and Asset Management, and the Office of State Publishing.

While Rob still plays a role in the operations of the OPSC, he will be missed at the OPSC for his many contributions as Executive Officer. Despite budget and cash flow challenges, the OPSC achieved a great amount of productivity under Rob's leadership.

From June 2007-January 2010:

- Amount of Funds Released by the OPSC/State Allocation Board (SAB): **\$6,747,373,736**
- Number of Unfunded Approvals in All School Facility Program (SFP) Programs: **396**
- Amount of Unfunded Approvals in All Programs: **\$1,932,407,249**
- Total Number of Applications Received by the OPSC: **6,655**
- Number of SAB Meetings: **31**
- Number of SAB Special Items Prepared by the OPSC: **412**
- Number of Implementation Committee Meetings: **27**
- Number of Items Presented to the Implementation Committee: **39**
- Number of Regulation Changes that became Effective: **26**
- Number of New Publications Introduced by the OPSC: **3**
- Number of Internal OPSC Process Improvement Workgroups (Kaizens): **6**

IN THIS ISSUE

Click on headline to view the article.

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- Farewell to Rob Cook
- Tips for Maximizing Site Development Funding
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- Reminder: Impact of 2008-2009 Budget on the Emergency Repair Program
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Tips for Maximizing Site Development Funding

By Ian Knutilla

The additional grants for site development can be a considerable source of funding for many new construction projects. In order to ensure that eligible districts are receiving these additional grants, the Office of Public School Construction's (OPSC) Plan Verification Team (PVT) would like to offer a few tips and guidelines for submitting new construction cost estimates to the OPSC. Districts and their architects are encouraged to utilize the preformatted [Site Development Worksheet for Additional Grants](#) as their submitted cost estimate. The worksheet can be found on the OPSC website under the "Forms" tab. In order to maximize your funding, reduce review time, and simplify reviews, please provide the following on all new construction cost estimates:

- Reference the plan page number where the requested work can be found.
- Reference the Saylor Number for the work requested. If construction activity is not found in Saylor, then provide additional information as to where the requested cost was obtained.
- Provide detailed calculations for grading and fill in the "Remarks" section, as opposed to only providing quantity and unit cost for requested work.
- Provide comments in the "Remarks" section of the cost estimate to clarify any requested costs that may need further explanation.
- Provide back-up documentation when submitting a cost estimate, including the geotechnical report and any applicable utility company connection fee information to support requested costs.

If you have any questions when developing or submitting a cost estimate, please feel free to contact the PVT. For more information, you may also contact:

Ian Knutilla at (916) 324-9643 or ian.knutilla@dgs.ca.gov

IN THIS ISSUE

Click on headline to view the article.

- Innovative Ideas
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Bond Sale Watch

The OPSC continues to monitor the California State Treasurer’s website for news regarding future bond sales. Currently, the Treasurer’s website reports that the next General Obligation (GO) Bond sale will occur during the week of March 8th, 2010 – in a sale of up to \$2 billion! The Treasurer also intends to hold an additional GO Bond sale soon, but the sale amount and date have yet to be determined.

On February 24, 2010, Mr. Blake Fowler, a representative from the Treasurer’s Office Public Finance Division, [presented information](#) to the State Allocation Board. Mr. Fowler reminded Board members, stakeholders, and the OPSC that although his office sells bonds, the Department of Finance determines which agencies receive bond sale funding. Additionally, he stated that the Treasurer’s Office plans to sell \$4 to \$7 billion of GO Bonds in the first six months of 2010, and up to \$7 billion in the latter half of the year.

Stay tuned to future Building Blocks editions for further bond sale updates, or check the [Treasurer’s website](#) at www.treasurer.ca.gov/bonds/calendar.asp. This website has the latest bond sale calendar information available.

Did you know?

The Little Hoover Commission issued a January 2010 report on [Building California: Infrastructure Choices and Strategy](#). The report’s recommendations include a statewide infrastructure strategic plan, which would prioritize statewide infrastructure needs and combine information provided by State agencies across the infrastructure spectrum (transportation, housing, education, etc.). Another recommendation in the report encourages the use of public/private partnerships to expedite the delivery of and save money on the State’s infrastructure projects.

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Click on headline to view the article.

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Reminder:

Impact of 2008-2009 Budget on the Emergency Repair Program

By Ngozi Pruettt and Jesse Mendez

The [June 2009](#) edition of Building Blocks featured an article on Budget Act Impacts to the Emergency Repair Program (ERP). This article explained that the provisions of Senate Bill (SB) X3 4 "waive the Deferred Maintenance local matching deposit required to participate in the ERP for the 2008-09 through 2012-13 fiscal years. The ERP statute, however, still requires that ERP dollars supplement, not supplant funds available for maintenance."

The Office of Public School Construction (OPSC) has received many questions from school districts participating in the ERP regarding the provisions contained in SBX3 4 that are applicable to the ERP.

SBX3 4 enacted numerous significant changes to law, allowing flexibility between categorical funds. The California Department of Finance has confirmed that ERP funds are not included in the categorical relief/flexibility provisions identified in the law.

ERP Regulations and the Education Code provisions governing the program require that ERP funds allocated by the State Allocation Board be spent on the projects identified in the school district's application for funds. Any funds not used for the ERP project, including interest earned, must be returned to the State to be used to apportion funds for other districts with approved applications.

Should you have any questions concerning this matter, please contact:

Marie Ramos at (916) 324-4686 or marie.ramos@dgs.ca.gov

Ngozi Pruettt at (916) 327-0297 or ngozi.pruett@dgs.ca.gov

Jesse Mendez at (916) 322-5850 or jesse.mendez@dgs.ca.gov

IN THIS ISSUE

Click on headline to view the article.

Innovative Ideas

Farewell to Rob Cook

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Bond Sale Watch

Reminder: Impact of 2008-2009 Budget on the Emergency Repair Program

Bond Proceeds Release Continues

Regulations Update

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STAFF TO THE STATE ALLOCATION BOARD

Bond Proceeds Release Continues

By Veronica Kaldani and Michael Watanabe

The Office of Public School Construction (OPSC) continues to release bond sale proceeds for school facility projects that received an apportionment from the State Allocation Board, but received no funds due to the freeze placed on disbursements from the Pooled Money Investment Board. The OPSC has processed the following fund releases from the 2009 bond sales as of February 1, 2010:

March 2009 Bond Sale:

Total funds released: \$547.9 million of \$548 million - 99 percent of bond funds

Total projects: 234 projects have received funds

April 2009 Bond Sale:

Total funds released: \$1.246 billion of \$1.439 billion - 87 percent of bond funds

Total projects: 314 projects have received funds

October 2009 Bond Sale and November 2009 Commercial Paper:

Total funds released: \$87.1 million of \$528.9 million - 16 percent of funds

Total projects: 20 projects have received funds

The School Facility Program

Since the inception of the School Facility Program in 1998, voters have authorized \$35.5 billion in bond funds, and the State Allocation Board (SAB) has apportioned 9,510 projects for a total of...



Following conversions of some unfunded approved projects to apportionments at the February SAB meeting, there are 371 total remaining unfunded approved projects for a total of...



IN THIS ISSUE

Click on headline to view the article.

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Bond Sale Watch

Reminder: Impact of 2008-2009 Budget on the Emergency Repair Program

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Regulations Update:

Implementation of Senate Bill 1556

- Adopted at the May 27, 2009, State Allocation Board (SAB) meeting.
- Regulatory changes allow elementary school districts that meet specific criteria to report enrollment on a High School Attendance Area basis.
- Effective date February 24, 2010.

One-Year Extension of General Site Development Grant

- Adopted at the November 4, 2009, SAB meeting.
- Proposed to extend the grant until no later than January 1, 2011.
- Public comment period ended on February 22, 2010.

Overcrowding Relief Grant (ORG) Regulations

- Adopted at the January 27, 2010, SAB meeting.
- Proposed to add a funding cycle for ORG applications received by July 30, 2010 and to authorize the SAB to establish additional future funding cycles.
- Public comment period upcoming.

Implementation of Senate Bill 592

- Adopted at the February 24, 2010 SAB meeting.
- Proposed regulatory changes implement Senate Bill 592, which allows local governmental entities and charter schools to hold title to charter school projects receiving funds under the Charter School Facilities Program.

Note: Regulations become effective upon review and approval of the Office of Administrative Law

IN THIS ISSUE

Click on headline to view the article.

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Regulations Update

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Upcoming Meetings

State Allocation Board

[View SAB calendar](#)

- March 24, 2010 (Wed.) 4:00 p.m.
- April 28, 2010 (Wed.) 4:00 p.m.
- May 26, 2010 (Wed.) 4:00 p.m.

[Webcasts of previous SAB meetings](#)

Implementation Committee

[View IMP calendar](#)

- April 1, 2010
- June 3, 2010
- August 1, 2010

[Webcasts of previous IMP meetings](#)

OPSC/DSA Town Hall Meetings [View flyer](#)

March 5, 2010

Butte County Office of Education (Board Room)
1859 Bird Street Oroville, CA 95965

March 12, 2010

Merced County Office of Education (Clark/Newbold Rooms)
632 West 13th Street Merced, CA 95341

March 19, 2010

Orange County Office of Education (Room D, 1004-6)
200 Kalmus Drive Costa Mesa, CA 92626

Additional meeting in the Inland Empire area TBD

Program Application Deadlines

Career Technical Education Facilities Program – Third Cycle

- Application for Funding (Form SAB 50-10) due April 1, 2010

Did you know?

The Office of Public School Construction (OPSC) recently made a [presentation](#) at the Santa Clara County Office of Education Facility Planners’ meeting. The goal was to alleviate the fears school districts have when they hear the word “audit” and to assist school districts with successfully navigating an audit. Staff outlined the audit process, highlighting what to expect when a school district has been notified that an audit of a school district’s projects has commenced.

IN THIS ISSUE

Click on headline to view the article.

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Bond Proceeds Release Continues

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