

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE OFFICER  
State Allocation Board Meeting, June 27, 2007

FACILITY INSPECTION TOOL

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To request adoption of the Facility Inspection Tool (FIT) to serve as the permanent evaluation instrument to ensure school facilities are in good repair.

BACKGROUND

Senate Bill 550 (Chapter 900, Statutes of 2004 - Vasconcellos) established the good repair standard in response to the settlement agreement in the case of *Williams vs. California*. A school facility in good repair was defined as "maintained in a manner that assures that it is clean, safe, and functional as determined pursuant to an interim evaluation instrument developed by the Office of Public School Construction (OPSC)." The Interim Evaluation Instrument (IEI) was adopted by the State Allocation Board (SAB) in January 2005, and has been used by school districts and county offices of education (COEs) in assessing school facilities with respect to cleanliness, safety and functionality.

Subsequently, pursuant to Education Code (EC) Section 17002 and with assistance of a stakeholder workgroup, the OPSC drafted the Good Repair Report which made recommendations to the Governor and Legislature regarding options for a permanent State standard to replace the IEI. These recommendations became the foundation for the statutory definition of good repair identified in Assembly Bill (AB) 607 (Chapter 704, Statutes of 2006 – Goldberg). AB 607 provided the statutory definition of good repair and required the OPSC to develop a permanent evaluation instrument for school facilities to incorporate a component ranking and facility scoring. The new instrument will replace the IEI to be used by school districts and county offices of education in ensuring that all California school children have access to clean, safe and functional school facilities.

AUTHORITY

EC Section 17002(d), amended as a result of AB 607, directs the OPSC on or before July 1, 2007 to develop a permanent school facility inspection and evaluation instrument that evaluates facility components on a scale of "good," "fair," or "poor," and provides an overall summary of the conditions at each school on a scale of "exemplary," "good," "fair," or "poor."

STAFF COMMENTS

To assist in the development of the FIT and maximize the opportunity for user input on the rating and scoring system, the OPSC formed a workgroup of experts and practitioners from COEs and school districts across the State as well as public school health advocates.

First, the workgroup developed a list of the characteristics necessary for a user-friendly and functional facility inspection tool. Among these desired characteristics are the following: a tool that is easily understood and easy to use at on-site inspections; a rating system that is simple to calculate and easy to understand and interpret; and a format that allows for maximum flexibility, comments and feedback.

Next, the workgroup evaluated the good repair criteria outlined in law and contained in the IEI. The group noted that, although all of the criteria define clean, safe and functional school facilities, some of the facility conditions are more critical to the health and safety of pupils and staff. If left unmitigated, they could cause severe and immediate injury, illness, or death of the occupants. The group identified such facility conditions based on the items specifically identified in EC Section 17592.72(c) for purposes of Emergency Repair Program funding. When incorporated into the FIT, these items constitute "extreme deficiencies" and indicate that the particular category (system/component) fails in meeting the standard of good repair at the school site being evaluated.

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STAFF COMMENTS (cont.)

To evaluate the relevancy of the ranking and scoring system, the draft evaluation tool was tested in the field. Field testing produced understandable and reasonable results at various school sites, providing a meaningful measure of good repair for individual school sites. Testers affirmed many of the workgroups objectives, including the importance for ease of use and the option to give specific details and comments. In response to testing and testers' comments, the tool was further modified and adapted to users' needs. Upon completion of the workgroup's discussions, the OPSC presented the draft FIT to the Implementation Committee, where it was thoroughly discussed and overwhelmingly supported.

The result of the workgroup's efforts is a balanced facilities inspection tool that appropriately assesses the conditions of schools while being mindful of users' needs and skill levels. The tool provides a means to identify needed repairs by specific area on the site and system type, and allows for school districts to easily transfer the information to the School Accountability Report Card. Although the rating and scoring is limited to the grading specified in law, percentage ranking allows for additional grading within the definitions of exemplary, good, fair, and poor, and the overall facility score can serve as a meaningful measure for improvement of facility conditions. If considered necessary, supplementing the FIT with additional good repair criteria could be undertaken at the local school district or COE level.

RECOMMENDATION

Adopt the attached FIT as a replacement for the IEI.

This Item was approved by the State Allocation Board on June 27, 2007.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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