

ALABAMA

State Roles and Responsibilities for PK-12 Public School Facilities



2025 State Profile



**National Center on
School Infrastructure**

AUTHORS & ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Author: 21st Century School Fund

This profile was created as part of the National Center on School Infrastructure (NCSI).

DISCLAIMERS

This state profile represents our best understanding of state policies, standards, and laws governing public PK-12 educational facilities. Any errors or omissions are the responsibility of the authors. This document should not be considered an officially approved statement of state policy.

Contents of this profile were developed under Award #S184R230005 from the U.S. Department of Education. However, the contents do not necessarily represent the policy of the Department of Education, and you should not assume endorsement by the Federal Government.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The authors wish to thank the individuals from each state who reviewed and fact-checked each profile. We are grateful for their expertise and attention to detail.



**National Center on
School Infrastructure**

The National Center on School Infrastructure is a national resource hub that supports states and school districts in the stewardship of America's elementary and secondary public school facilities. <https://school-infrastructure.org/>



CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION.....	3
ALABAMA EXECUTIVE SUMMARY.....	4
ALABAMA ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION	6
CONSTITUTIONAL BASIS.....	6
SCALE OF PUBLIC SCHOOL HOUSING	7
ALABAMA PK-12 PUBLIC EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES GOVERNANCE	8
LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEES AFFECTING FACILITIES.....	8
STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION	9
ALABAMA STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF EDUCATION.....	10
GUBERNATORIAL ROLE IN SCHOOL FACILITIES	10
AD HOC COMMITTEES, BOARDS, AND COMMISSIONS	11
<i>Emergency Task Force on School Safety and Security (2016)</i>	11
<i>Securing Alabama’s Facilities of Education (SAFE) Council (2018)</i>	12
JUDICIAL DECISIONS AFFECTING FACILITIES	12
ALABAMA PK-12 PUBLIC EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES MANAGEMENT.....	13
ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION.....	13
<i>Supporting America’s School Infrastructure (SASI) Initiative</i>	15
ALABAMA DIVISION OF CONSTRUCTION MANAGEMENT	16
ALABAMA PK – 12 SCHOOL FACILITIES DATA MANAGEMENT.....	18
ALABAMA PK – 12 SCHOOL FACILITIES PLANNING.....	21
ALABAMA PK - 12 EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES FUNDING	23
MAINTENANCE AND OPERATIONS FUNDING	24
<i>Alabama Foundation Program</i>	24
FACILITIES CAPITAL FUNDING.....	25
<i>K–12 Capital Grant Program</i>	26
<i>Public School Fund</i>	27



<i>Advancement and Technology Fund</i>	27
FACILITIES FINANCING	27
<i>Public School and College Authority</i>	28
<i>Department of Finance – Division of Risk Management</i>	29
<i>Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs</i>	30
ALABAMA PK – 12 SCHOOL FACILITIES STANDARDS AND ACCOUNTABILITY	30
MAINTENANCE AND OPERATIONS STANDARDS	30
BUILDING STANDARDS	31
EDUCATIONAL ADEQUACY STANDARDS	33
HEALTH AND SAFETY STANDARDS	33
<i>Air Quality Standards</i>	33
<i>Chemical Hazards</i>	34
<i>Extreme Heat</i>	34
<i>Water Quality</i>	34
ENVIRONMENTAL AND ENERGY STANDARDS	35



INTRODUCTION

The governance and management of PK-12 public school facilities are primarily managed at the local level.¹ Local Education Agencies (LEAs) have the authority and responsibility for the day-to-day operations and maintenance of public school facilities, as well as for long-term planning, design, financing, and construction.

States, however, also assume a range of roles and responsibilities regarding the governance and management of school facilities. These include establishing and implementing state policies and practices to support local PK-12 public school facilities planning, facility data collection, capital and maintenance funding for buildings and grounds, facilities management, and facility standards and implementing systems for accountability.



Governance & Decision Making



Management



Data & Information



Planning



Funding



Accountability

State agencies may additionally offer technical assistance and training to help districts meet modern facility standards, mitigate risks, and enhance the overall quality of local stewardship for public school buildings and grounds. The extent of state involvement in public school facilities varies widely across states.

This document provides an overview of the state of Alabama's roles and responsibilities regarding public elementary and secondary (PK12) school facilities. It is part of a National Center on School Infrastructure technical assistance project to document public school facility policy and practice across all U.S. states and territories to help build state capacity for aiding districts in

¹ This is true in all states, except Hawaii, which is a unitary state and local education agency.



their efforts to provide students and staff with healthy, safe, resilient, and educationally adequate public school buildings and grounds.

ALABAMA EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Governance State-level governance of public school facilities in Alabama is distributed across the Legislature, the [Alabama State Board of Education](#) (ALSBE), the [State Superintendent of Education](#), and the [Governor](#). The Legislature holds constitutional authority under [Ala. Const. Art. XIV, § 256](#) to establish public schools and allocate funding. ALSBE, established under [Ala. Code §§ 16-3-1 to 16-3-14](#), sets education policy and adopts rules related to facilities, including minimum site requirements ([Ala. Admin. Code r. 290-2-2-.04](#)). The State Superintendent, appointed by the Board under [§ 16-3-11](#), carries out regulatory functions such as approving sites and construction projects above \$750,000. The Governor, as a voting member of the Board and head of the executive branch, helps shape education infrastructure priorities through the budget process and emergency authority ([Ala. Code § 31-9-1 et seq.](#)).

Management School facility operations, maintenance, and capital project execution are primarily the responsibility of local boards of education. At the state level, the [Alabama State Department of Education](#) (ALSDE) oversees construction compliance through its School Architect section, which reviews project documentation required by [Ala. Admin. Code r. 290-2-2](#). The Division of Construction Management (DCM), within the Department of Finance, conducts code enforcement and plan review for all state-supervised school construction under [Ala. Code §§ 41-4-400 to 41-4-403](#). DCM enforces the State Building Code and manages final construction approvals. The Division of Risk Management oversees property insurance inspections and coordinates corrective actions for unsafe buildings under [Ala. Code § 16-1-2\(4\)](#).

Data In Alabama data are collected primarily at the local level and submitted to state agencies on a project-specific basis for construction review, capital



planning, or insurance purposes. Enrollment and demographic data are collected by ALSDE but are not systematically linked to school facility metrics. Construction cost data are submitted as part of DCM's project approval process but are not compiled into a statewide reporting system. In 2024, Alabama enacted legislation establishing a School Mapping Data Program within the Alabama Law Enforcement Agency to support emergency response, but this program is not a comprehensive facilities database.

Planning The [Annual School Capital Planning Process](#) (ASCPP), administered by ALSDE, requires districts to submit five-year capital plans annually. Although not codified, the ASCPP is mandatory for districts seeking access to state capital funding. Plans must address facility condition, enrollment projections, and programmatic needs and must be developed by a district-appointed Capital Planning Committee. ALSDE provides a standard format, online submission portal, and training for Certified Capital Planners. While the state does not set local capital priorities, submitted plans are reviewed to ensure compliance with construction and funding requirements. DCM also participates by reviewing project plans for building code compliance during the planning process.

Funding Alabama supports school facility operations and capital improvements through both formula-based and discretionary funding mechanisms. Routine maintenance and operations are supported through the Foundation Program, with funding allocated through the “Other Current Expense” (OCE) component under [Ala. Code § 16-13-230 et seq.](#) Capital funding is provided through several mechanisms: the Public School Fund (PSF), supported by a constitutionally dedicated 3-mill property tax; the K–12 Capital Grant Program ([Ala. Code § 29-4-51](#)), which offers competitive grants; and the Advancement and Technology Fund ([Ala. Code § 29-9-4](#)), which allocates surplus [Education Trust Fund](#) (ETF) revenues for one-time expenditures.

For large-scale projects, Alabama issues bonds through the [Public School and College Authority](#) (PSCA) under [Ala. Code § 16-16-1 et seq.](#) Bond repayment is supported by dedicated sales and use tax revenues ([§ 16-16-11](#)). Bond proceeds are allocated through legislative action and are not repaid by local



districts. Local capital projects are typically financed through voter-approved general obligation bonds or revenue warrants, subject to state oversight.

Accountability Alabama enforces building, safety, and environmental standards through agency-specific oversight mechanisms. DCM enforces adopted model codes, including the 2021 International Building Code, Plumbing Code, Mechanical Code, and Energy Conservation Code. The State Fire Marshal enforces the 2021 International Fire Code, while the Department of Environmental Management oversees compliance with asbestos, lead, hazardous waste, and water quality regulations under [Ala. Code § 22-22A-4](#). Risk Management inspects insured school properties and may order school closures if violations are not addressed.

ALABAMA ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

CONSTITUTIONAL BASIS

Public education is a state responsibility established in the Alabama State Constitution.

[Ala. Const. Art. XIV, § 256](#)

The legislature may, by general law, provide for or authorize the establishment and operation of schools by such persons, municipalities, or other political subdivisions of the state, and at such places, and upon such conditions, as it may prescribe. The legislature may, by general law, provide for or authorize the grant or loan of public funds and the lease, sale, or donation of real or personal property to or for the benefit of citizens of the state for educational purposes under such circumstances and upon such conditions as it may prescribe.

This provision grants the Alabama Legislature broad discretion to regulate the structure and funding of public education, including authority over the allocation of land, property, and capital for educational purposes. While § 256 does not explicitly reference school facilities, it establishes the legal foundation for state statutes that govern the physical infrastructure of public education. The



Legislature’s power to set conditions for the establishment and operation of schools encompasses decisions about school siting, property transactions, and capital investment, which support its role in enacting laws related to school construction, renovation, and facility funding.

The current version of § 256 replaced prior constitutional language, adopted in 1956 through [Amendment 111](#), which stated that nothing in the constitution should be construed as creating or recognizing any right to education at public expense. This language remained in effect for several decades, limiting the scope of judicial interpretation regarding educational entitlements. Its removal in the Alabama Constitution of 2022 clarified the Legislature’s discretion to establish and support public education and provided a more stable legal foundation for policies governing school infrastructure.

SCALE OF PUBLIC SCHOOL HOUSING

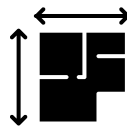
Alabama’s 185 local education agencies (LEAs) (including the 139 regular school districts) reported to the U.S. Census of Governments that they operated 1,507 PK through 12th grade (and adult education) schools in fiscal year 2022. These LEAs enrolled 748,274 students in the 2021-2022 school year and were the workplace for 73,063 staff. The regular district schools operated a reported 125,327,012 gross square feet of building space statewide in 2024.



1,512
Schools



185
Districts



125,327,012
Sq. Ft.

**Reported*



73,063
Staff



748,274
Students

The following sections describe Alabama’s state-level roles and responsibilities for public school facilities.



ALABAMA PK-12 PUBLIC EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES GOVERNANCE

State-level engagement in PK-12 public school facilities is firmly embedded in state systems. State boards of education, state education agencies, state legislatures, governors, and in some cases, independent commissions and facilities authorities make decisions about state roles and responsibilities associated with the quality and delivery of public school facilities. These bodies govern through state codes, regulations, standards, and budgets, which direct and influence local policies and practices regarding public school buildings and grounds. In some states, education finance equity and adequacy court cases have also played a role in defining state responsibilities for public school facilities.

LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEES AFFECTING FACILITIES

The Alabama Legislature exercises primary authority over public education, including decisions related to school facility funding, regulation, and oversight. This authority is grounded in [Ala. Const. Art. XIV, § 256](#), which authorizes the Legislature to prescribe the conditions for the operation of schools and to allocate public funds and property for educational purposes.

Several standing legislative committees influence policy decisions related to school facilities:

- [House Ways and Means Education Committee](#) and [Senate Finance and Taxation Education Committee](#): These committees are responsible for developing and managing the Education Trust Fund (ETF) budget, which is the primary source of state funding for K–12 public schools, public colleges, and universities. They determine appropriations for school operating expenses, capital outlay, facility maintenance, and other infrastructure-related expenditures.
- [House](#) and [Senate](#) Education Policy Committees: These committees consider legislation governing K–12 and higher education, including curriculum standards, school operations, safety requirements, and governance policies. Their responsibilities include



reviewing policy proposals that may affect school facility conditions, safety standards, and long-term facilities planning.

Legislative decisions regarding school construction funding, facility maintenance, and operational standards are shaped annually through the ETF budget process and policy initiatives developed in these committees. Capital investment in school facilities remains subject to legislative priorities and the availability of state resources.

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

The [Alabama State Board of Education](#) (ALSBE) is the governing authority for K–12 public education in the state. It is established under [Ala. Code §§ 16-3-1 through 16-3-14](#). The Board consists of nine members: the Governor, who serves as ex officio president, and eight members elected from single-member districts. Members serve four-year terms, with qualifications, removal procedures, and vacancies addressed in §§ 16-3-3 to 16-3-5. Officers of the Board are selected internally under [§ 16-3-2](#), and meeting procedures are defined in [§ 16-3-7](#).

The ALSBE is authorized to adopt policies and rules for the general administration of the state’s public school system under [§§ 16-3-12 and 16-3-13](#). It also holds authority to standardize and grade public schools under [§ 16-3-14](#). One of its core responsibilities is appointing the State Superintendent of Education ([§ 16-3-11](#)), who serves as the chief executive officer of the Alabama State Department of Education and is charged with implementing Board policies.

Although the ALSBE does not review local construction plans, approve building designs, or manage state capital funding, it has authority to establish facility-related rules through administrative code. Under [Ala. Admin. Code r. 290-2-2-.04](#), the Board sets minimum site requirements for new school construction, including acreage thresholds based on grade level and projected enrollment. These standards apply to new elementary, middle, and high school sites and are derived from the Board’s general rulemaking authority under state law.



ALABAMA STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF EDUCATION

The [Alabama State Superintendent of Education](#) serves as the chief executive officer of the Alabama State Board of Education and is appointed by the Board under [Ala. Code § 16-3-11](#). The Superintendent is responsible for implementing Board policies, directing the operations of the Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE), and providing administrative leadership for the state's K–12 public education system. The Superintendent serves at the discretion of the Board and is tasked with ensuring compliance with applicable laws, regulations, and rules adopted by the Board.

In the area of school facilities, the State Superintendent has specific responsibilities under [Alabama Administrative Code Chapter 290-2-2](#), which governs school construction and site development. Under [Ala. Admin. Code r. 290-2-2-.01](#), any construction or renovation project submitted by a local board of education with an estimated cost of \$750,000 or more must be submitted to the State Superintendent for review and approval. This includes major maintenance projects such as HVAC replacements, roofing, and structural repairs. Under [r. 290-2-2-.03](#), no new school construction may proceed without prior approval of the site by the Superintendent.

These responsibilities do not include administration of capital funding or project financing. The Superintendent's role is limited to review and approval functions authorized by administrative rule and carried out in coordination with local boards of education.

GUBERNATORIAL ROLE IN SCHOOL FACILITIES

The [Governor of Alabama](#) serves as the ex officio president of the Alabama State Board of Education under [Ala. Code § 16-3-1](#). As a voting member of the Board, the Governor participates in the adoption of statewide education policies, including rules and standards that may relate to school operations and facility requirements. Although the Board's regulatory authority over school facilities is limited, the Governor participates in decisions that may affect site standards and school safety regulations adopted by rule.



Beyond the Board, the Governor plays a central role in the state budget process. Each year, the Governor submits an executive budget proposal to the Legislature, including recommendations for the [Education Trust Fund](#) (ETF). The Legislature retains authority over final appropriations, but the Governor's proposal sets initial funding priorities for each session. The Governor may also support or approve capital funding measures for education-related infrastructure, including bond initiatives or special appropriations, when authorized by the Legislature.

The Governor also holds statutory authority for emergency management under the Alabama Emergency Management Act of 1955, codified at [Ala. Code §§ 31-9-1 et seq.](#) Under this authority, the Governor may declare a state of emergency ([§ 31-9-8](#)), assume operational control of emergency management functions across the state, and issue orders and regulations necessary to respond to emergencies ([§ 31-9-6](#)). These powers apply to all hazards, including those affecting school facilities. Emergency declarations initiate coordination with the Alabama Emergency Management Agency (AEMA), which operates under the Governor's direction and may support schools through emergency planning, resource allocation, and recovery assistance.

Ad Hoc COMMITTEES, BOARDS, AND COMMISSIONS

EMERGENCY TASK FORCE ON SCHOOL SAFETY AND SECURITY (2016)

The Emergency Task Force on School Safety and Security was established by the Alabama Legislature through [House Joint Resolution 19](#) during the 2016 Regular Session. The task force was formed to evaluate school emergency preparedness and assess safety measures in public school facilities. It included representatives from state agencies, education organizations, and public safety entities.

The task force issued the [Final Report of the Emergency Task Force on School Safety and Security](#), which included recommendations such as securing building entrances, installing security hardware in vulnerable areas, and incorporating physical safety measures into emergency operations plans. The report also recommended adopting consistent school facility security standards statewide.



The recommendations informed later school safety policy discussions in Alabama.

SECURING ALABAMA’S FACILITIES OF EDUCATION (SAFE) COUNCIL (2018)

The Securing Alabama’s Facilities of Education (SAFE) Council was established by Governor Kay Ivey through [*Executive Order 713*](#) in March 2018 following national discussions on school security, including the February 2018 school shooting in Parkland, Florida. The Council was tasked with reviewing the physical security of Alabama’s public schools and submitting recommendations.

In April 2018, the SAFE Council submitted the [*SAFE Council Final Report*](#) to the Governor. Recommendations included installing visitor entry systems, monitored exterior access points, classroom door locks, and emergency response technologies. The report also proposed integrating these upgrades into school emergency operations plans, creating a bond issue to support implementation, and designating district safety coordinators. Following the Council’s *report*, Governor Ivey announced the [*Smart on Safety*](#) initiative, which outlined a four-part school safety framework based in part on the Council’s findings.

JUDICIAL DECISIONS AFFECTING FACILITIES

Judicial decisions at both the state and federal levels have addressed issues related to education funding, equity, and the constitutional framework that shapes Alabama’s approach to school facility governance. While these cases have involved questions of school finance, local taxation, and equal protection, no court has established a judicially enforceable right to equitable or adequate school facilities in Alabama.

In [*Alabama Coalition for Equity v. Hunt*](#), filed in 1990, plaintiffs challenged the constitutionality of Alabama’s public school funding system, citing unequal educational opportunities and disparities in school facilities. In 1993, the Montgomery County Circuit Court held that the funding system violated the Alabama Constitution and ordered the development of a remedy. The Legislature revised the foundation program formula in response, but the case continued. In [*Ex parte James*](#) (1997), the Alabama Supreme Court declined to require a specific legislative response. In 2002, the Court dismissed the case,



holding that education policy decisions were within the authority of the Legislature and not subject to further judicial enforcement.

In [Lynch v. State of Alabama](#), filed in 2008, plaintiffs brought a federal equal protection challenge to state constitutional provisions governing property tax limits. They argued that these provisions disproportionately restricted education funding in predominantly Black and rural areas. In 2011, the U.S. District Court ruled that the plaintiffs had not demonstrated intentional discrimination in violation of the U.S. Constitution. The decision was upheld by the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Eleventh Circuit in 2013, and the U.S. Supreme Court declined to review the case in 2014. The litigation did not result in changes to Alabama's education funding system or school facility governance.

ALABAMA PK-12 PUBLIC EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES MANAGEMENT

Local Education Agencies (LEAs) have authority and responsibility for the day-to-day operations and maintenance of public school facilities, as well as for long-term facilities planning, design, financing, and construction. Although PK-12 public school facilities are managed locally, there are state facilities management roles and responsibilities that may involve strategic planning, data collection, state funding programs, standards and systems for accountability. State agencies may also include programs for technical assistance and training that help districts meet standards, mitigate risk, and increase the quality of local district stewardship of public school buildings and grounds. State roles and responsibilities related to elementary and secondary public school facilities vary widely across the U.S. states, with unitary districts in Hawaii and U.S. Territories, where the state agency and the local agency are combined.

ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

The [Alabama State Department of Education](#) (ALSDE) operates under [Ala. Code Title 16, Chapter 2](#) to carry out the laws and policies adopted by the Alabama State Board of Education. The structure of the Department is determined by the Board upon recommendation of the State Superintendent of Education, in accordance with [Ala. Code § 16-2-3](#). While the ownership, operation, and



financing of public school facilities are the responsibility of local school boards, the Department has regulatory responsibilities and provides technical assistance related to facility planning, project documentation, and compliance with state requirements.

The [School Architect](#) section of ALSDE is responsible for reviewing public school construction and renovation projects that meet thresholds established in [Alabama Administrative Code Chapter 290-2-2](#). Under r. 290-2-2-.01, any project submitted by a local board of education with an estimated cost of \$750,000 or more must be submitted to the State Superintendent for review and approval. The School Architect section conducts these reviews on behalf of the Superintendent. It also reviews proposed school site submittals under r. 290-2-2-.03, and evaluates compliance with minimum site requirements as set forth in r. 290-2-2-.04. The section reviews and approves Owner-Architect/Engineer Agreements and Construction Contracts for qualifying projects and confirms adherence to administrative documentation requirements. While ALSDE does not oversee capital project funding, manage construction projects, or approve design plans beyond those governed by administrative rule, the School Architect section may provide technical assistance to districts related to construction timelines, bid procedures, and coordination of review documents.

In addition to the School Architect section, several other ALSDE divisions provide support that intersects with school facility planning and operation:

- [Support Services Division](#) – Offers guidance related to school safety, emergency operations planning, and health-related building considerations that affect day-to-day facility use and readiness.
- [Educational Technology Division](#) – Provides assistance with planning technology infrastructure in school facilities, including classroom connectivity, cybersecurity, and digital learning implementation. Facility modifications may be required to support these technology initiatives.



- [Career and Technical Education \(CTE\) Division](#) – Supports districts in planning and equipping instructional facilities for vocational and technical programs, particularly in connection with federal Perkins V funding. This includes review of program-aligned space needs for labs, shops, and other specialized instructional environments.

ALSDE's technical assistance functions are authorized under [Ala. Code § 16-6B-3](#), which directs the Department to support local education agencies in complying with state education laws and policies. In the context of school facilities, technical assistance is provided through regulatory review processes established in [Ala. Admin. Code r. 290-2-2](#) and through broader programmatic support delivered by relevant divisions. These functions are advisory in nature and may include guidance on construction planning, documentation procedures, safety and technology integration, and alignment of facilities with educational program requirements.

SUPPORTING AMERICA'S SCHOOL INFRASTRUCTURE (SASI) INITIATIVE

The [Supporting America's School Infrastructure](#) (SASI) grant program, administered by the U.S. Department of Education, is designed to help state education agencies build internal capacity to support high-need school districts in addressing deficiencies in public school buildings and grounds. Funds awarded through the SASI program may not be used for direct construction or renovation. Instead, they are intended to strengthen state-level administrative infrastructure, including data systems, technical assistance networks, and cross-agency coordination to support local efforts.

Alabama's SASI grant-funded initiative, titled the [Rural Assistance for Infrastructure and School Enhancement](#) (RAISE) project, is focused on 21 high-need districts with identified facility-related challenges. According to project documentation, the average age of school buildings in these districts is 43 years. RAISE activities include conducting third-party assessments of existing school facility conditions to assist districts in identifying needs and prioritizing capital planning efforts. The project also provides planning support to seven districts that do not currently issue bonds, including assistance in understanding



state and local funding mechanisms. All 21 districts receive support in exploring available financing options for future facility improvements.

The RAISE project includes training and support for district personnel in areas related to maintenance and operations. Project components include guidance on preventative maintenance practices and facility management procedures. These activities are structured to support the state's administrative capacity to assist districts with facility planning and compliance using strategies consistent with the SASI program's objectives.

ALABAMA DIVISION OF CONSTRUCTION MANAGEMENT

The [Alabama Division of Construction Management](#) (DCM), located within the Department of Finance's Real Property Management Division, is responsible for enforcing building code compliance and managing design and construction oversight for public facilities, including K–12 public school buildings. DCM was established by [Act 2015-435](#), which dissolved the former Alabama Building Commission and transferred its responsibilities to DCM. The Division's statutory authority is codified in [Ala. Code §§ 41-4-400 through 41-4-403](#), which direct DCM to establish and enforce procedures for the design, construction, renovation, and improvement of state-owned buildings and properties. Oversight of public schoolhouses is specifically included under DCM's jurisdiction pursuant to [Ala. Code §§ 41-9-160 through 41-9-166](#). In accordance with [Ala. Code § 16-1-2.4](#), DCM is also responsible for developing and distributing standard forms for public school construction projects, in consultation with the Alabama State Department of Education.

DCM serves as the state-level enforcement authority for the [State Building Code](#). DCM is responsible for reviewing construction documents for compliance with code, life safety, energy efficiency, and accessibility requirements. Its review process is structured around multiple required plan submittals—schematic, preliminary, and final—each of which is reviewed and documented through DCM's project comment process. No construction may proceed until DCM has approved the final plans and authorized the project to bid. DCM inspectors conduct periodic and final site inspections to verify that construction



is executed in accordance with approved plans and applicable codes. Upon completion, DCM participates in final inspections and must approve and sign the Certificate of Substantial Completion before a school may be occupied.

DCM's responsibilities include oversight of projects funded through the [Public School and College Authority](#) (PSCA). These projects require additional coordination with the State Department of Education and DCM to ensure alignment with project scopes, funding authorization, and state procurement requirements. For PSCA-funded projects, DCM conducts full plan reviews, oversees the contract approval and bidding process, monitors construction activities, and certifies final project completion.

DCM's management structure includes the following core operational units:

- **Plan Review** – Reviews design documents at multiple stages to confirm compliance with the State Building Code, including fire and life safety provisions, structural requirements, and accessibility standards.
- **Contract Administration** – Reviews and approves owner-architect agreements, construction contracts, amendments, and change orders to ensure conformity with DCM procedures and state law.
- **Project Inspection** – Assigns inspectors to school construction projects, conducts on-site inspections throughout the construction process, and participates in final inspections and certification of project completion.
- **Project Management** – Oversees assigned state projects, ensuring adherence to procedural and regulatory requirements through all phases of design and construction.

In addition to its regulatory responsibilities, DCM provides technical assistance to local education agencies. This includes consultation on building code compliance, use of standardized documents, coordination of project timelines, and interpretation of inspection and documentation requirements. DCM



publishes and maintains a [Manual of Procedures](#) that outlines submission standards, review processes, documentation protocols, and contractor responsibilities. It also develops standardized forms and contract templates for use by school districts, architects, and contractors. DCM provides project-specific guidance during required pre-construction conferences and plan reviews, and responds to inquiries from local boards and design professionals throughout the duration of construction projects. DCM may also enter into service agreements with local entities to provide additional review or inspection services, when requested, for projects outside its standard scope.

DCM's jurisdiction includes all public K–12 school construction and renovation projects in Alabama, regardless of funding source, unless explicitly exempted by statute. It also holds limited responsibilities related to municipal and county construction projects for accessibility compliance. Through its regulatory oversight and technical support, DCM ensures that school facilities are planned and built in accordance with uniform standards adopted under Alabama law.

ALABAMA PK – 12 SCHOOL FACILITIES DATA MANAGEMENT

Extensive data and information are needed for educational facility planning, decision making, and oversight. Relevant data helps stakeholders understand the broad impacts of their PK -12 infrastructure spending and investments on health, education, community and beyond. Facilities data falls into five major categories: ([NCES Forum Guide to Facilities Information Management](#)).

Inventory: Data include addresses, geo-codes, building areas, site acreage, and year of construction.

Design: Data include space descriptions, number of stories, designed-for purposes (i.e., elementary school, performance center).

Utilization: Data includes school capacity for enrollment based on the educational programs provided, spaces that are shared, and the gross square footage per enrolled student.

Condition: Data includes facility condition assessment data on the age and condition of major components, systems, and finishes.



Budget and Finance: Data elements include the district expenditures for maintenance, operations, and capital improvements.

Beyond these standard data sets, an increasing amount of data is also being collected and analyzed on building performance. This includes data on building performance metrics for energy efficiency, indoor air quality, lead levels in water, and the presence of hazardous materials like asbestos, mold, or PCBs.

Alabama does not maintain a centralized or comprehensive database that captures condition, age, utilization, or inventory data for all public school facilities. Data collection related to school facilities occurs primarily at the district level and is submitted to state agencies only when required for specific regulatory or programmatic purposes. There is no unified reporting system that aggregates facility data across districts for ongoing monitoring or public use.

Under [Ala. Code § 16-1-2](#), school superintendents are required to notify the State Superintendent of Education of all new construction projects and to request inspections. This provision is limited to construction compliance and does not mandate the ongoing collection or submission of data related to existing facilities, such as building age, maintenance needs, or system conditions.

Some school facility data is collected as part of program-specific oversight. Districts participating in projects funded by the Public School and College Authority (PSCA) are required to submit documentation to the Alabama State Department of Education and the Division of Construction Management (DCM), including project descriptions, estimated costs, and plan approvals. These submissions are limited to individual capital projects and do not contribute to a statewide inventory of facility characteristics or needs.

Alabama does not require districts to submit or maintain standardized condition assessment data for all school buildings. There is no statewide facility condition inventory or assessment program in place. Condition assessments may be conducted locally or submitted on a project-by-project basis in connection with construction or renovation approvals. Basic school information, such as site



names, addresses, and administrative contacts, is publicly available through resources like the [Alabama Education Directory](#).

Construction cost data is collected in connection with projects that fall under DCM's oversight, including PSCA-funded school construction. Districts must submit detailed cost estimates and budgets during the plan review process. These documents are reviewed for compliance with design standards and budget constraints but are not compiled into a statewide, searchable construction cost database.

The Alabama State Department of Education collects and maintains [enrollment and demographic](#) data for all public schools. This data is used internally for multiple purposes, including capacity-related considerations, but it is not systematically linked to school facility condition or utilization reporting. Public access is limited to general school listings and enrollment totals through the Alabama Education Directory and other reporting tools.

In 2024, the state enacted legislation establishing the [School Mapping Data Program](#) within the Alabama Law Enforcement Agency. The law requires the development of site-specific school maps that align with aerial imagery and include true north orientation, structural labeling, and verification through physical walkthroughs. The mapping data is to be provided in a format usable by emergency response agencies. This program is designed to support emergency preparedness and is not part of a general-purpose facility data system.

Most detailed data regarding the age, condition, or use of public school buildings remains managed locally by school districts. The state does not require submission of this information except where tied to construction, insurance, or compliance-related processes.



ALABAMA PK – 12 SCHOOL FACILITIES PLANNING

School facilities require planning at many different levels to meet educational and community purposes. Educational facilities planning is needed for facilities operations, maintenance, and capital projects. Planning PK-12 public school facilities enables states, districts, and communities to align their resources to their needs, ensure that priorities are met fairly, and that facilities are operated, managed, and built to modern health, safety, educational, and environmental standards.

The Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE) administers the state's school facilities planning process through the [Annual School Capital Planning Process](#) (ASCPP). This process was established under the 1995 Alabama Accountability Law and is a prerequisite for districts seeking access to certain state funding mechanisms, including the Public School Fund (PSF). While the ASCPP is not codified in statute, it is implemented as a standard administrative requirement by the ALSDE. District participation in the process is required annually.

Under the ASCPP, each district must develop a five-year capital plan. To do so, the district appoints a Certified Capital Planner, trained and certified by the ALSDE, who coordinates the development of the plan. The planner leads a Capital Planning Committee, which must include the local superintendent (serving as chair), a school board member, a parent, a community member, classroom teachers, and professionals with relevant expertise (such as facilities managers or financial advisors). This committee is responsible for assessing facility needs and developing project priorities. Final plans must be approved by the local board of education before submission to the ALSDE.

ALSDE requires districts to structure their capital plans around three primary categories of information:

- **Facility condition assessments:** Districts must evaluate more than 20 building components—including roofing, HVAC systems, windows, and structural elements—and rate each as being in good, moderate, or



severe condition. Items rated as severe must be addressed in the first year of the five-year plan.

- **Enrollment and demographic trends:** ALSDE provides enrollment data and demographic reports to districts on an annual basis. Districts are required to incorporate these projections to align facility needs with current and anticipated capacity requirements.
- **Educational program requirements:** Facility planning must reflect the space needs associated with educational programming, including specialized instructional areas, extracurricular activities, and compliance with curricular requirements.

Capital plans are submitted to ALSDE via a centralized online platform maintained by the state. ALSDE provides guidance materials and annual training sessions to Certified Capital Planners on plan development, data interpretation, and the use of planning tools. Plans submitted to the state are used for administrative review and may inform funding decisions, but detailed plan content remains the responsibility of the local district.

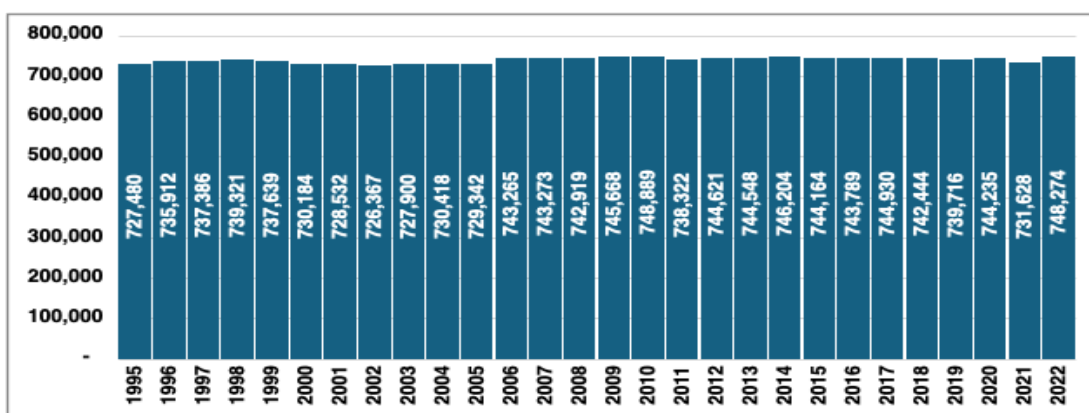
While the ASCPP process itself is administrative, several statutory provisions govern the allowable use of state funds in connection with capital projects. Under [Ala. Code § 16-13-234](#), expenditures from the Public School Fund for capital outlay must be used for school construction, reconstruction, improvement, renovation, or related planning activities. Compliance with these requirements is necessary for districts to receive state-authorized funding support.

The Division of Construction Management (DCM) also participates in the planning process through project-level oversight. For any project that meets state oversight thresholds, DCM reviews plans to ensure compliance with the State Building Code and other regulatory requirements related to energy, accessibility, and fire and life safety. While DCM is not involved in capital priority setting or long-range enrollment planning, its regulatory reviews are required for state construction approvals.



Alabama's school facility planning process is decentralized in practice but structured through an annual, state-administered process that requires uniform plan submission and incorporates condition, enrollment, and instructional need criteria. The state's role is limited to oversight, data provision, and regulatory compliance, while local districts are responsible for assessing needs and developing project priorities.

CHART 1: STUDENT ENROLLMENT SCHOOL YEARS 1994-1995 THROUGH 2021-2022



Source: Data from the U.S. Census of Governments Fiscal Survey; www.school-infrastructure.org Data Dashboard, of the National Center on School Infrastructure (NCSI).

ALABAMA PK - 12 EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES FUNDING

School facilities are funded with annually budgeted operating funds for utilities, cleaning, groundskeeping, maintenance and repairs; and periodically budgeted, and usually bond financed, capital funds, for school design, construction, renovation and major repair projects. State laws define how districts get access to local financing for school construction capital projects and whether or how states distribute state school construction funding. Federal funding for school construction is minimal—before pandemic funding—it was less than 2% of what districts paid for school construction capital outlay, with a major share of federal funding for rebuilding schools post weather related disasters.

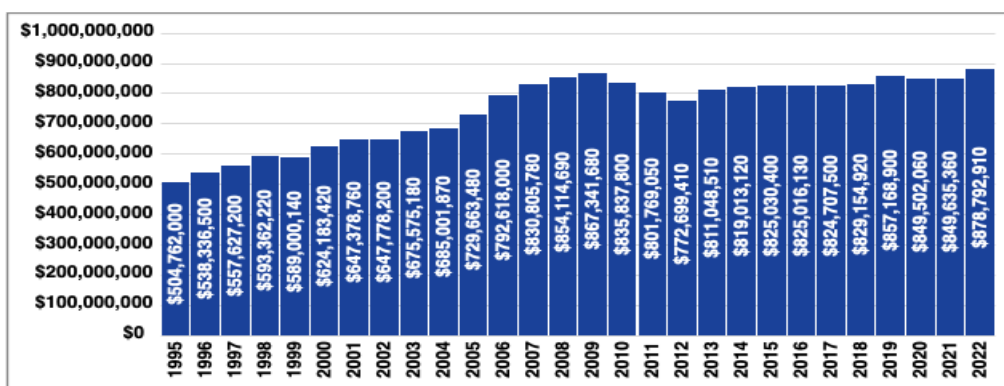


MAINTENANCE AND OPERATIONS FUNDING

Maintenance and Operations expenditures include payment for utilities, in-house custodial, groundskeeping, and maintenance staff and benefits, and related supplies, materials, equipment, and contracts, as well as spending for security personnel, contracts, materials, and services.

Chart 2 shows Alabama school districts annual facilities maintenance and operation expenditures, adjusted with the Consumer Price Index for fiscal years 1995 to 2022. In fiscal year 2022, Alabama local education agencies spent \$880 million for M&O, an average of 1,174 per student.

CHART 2: M&O SPENDING, FY1995-FY2022 (INFLATION-ADJUSTED 2024 DOLLARS)



Source: Data from the U.S. Census of Governments Fiscal Survey; actual M&O spending data available at www.school-infrastructure.org Data Dashboard, of the National Center on School Infrastructure (NCSI).

ALABAMA FOUNDATION PROGRAM

Maintenance and operational expenditures are funded through the general allocation provided under the OCE component of the Foundation Program. [Alabama's Foundation Program](#), authorized under [Ala. Code § 16-13-230 et seq.](#), provides the primary state funding mechanism for school operations, including facility maintenance and custodial services. Within the program, the "Other Current Expense" (OCE) allocation supports non-instructional costs such as utilities, repairs, maintenance, and other general operations. The OCE amount is determined by multiplying a set per-unit value by the number of



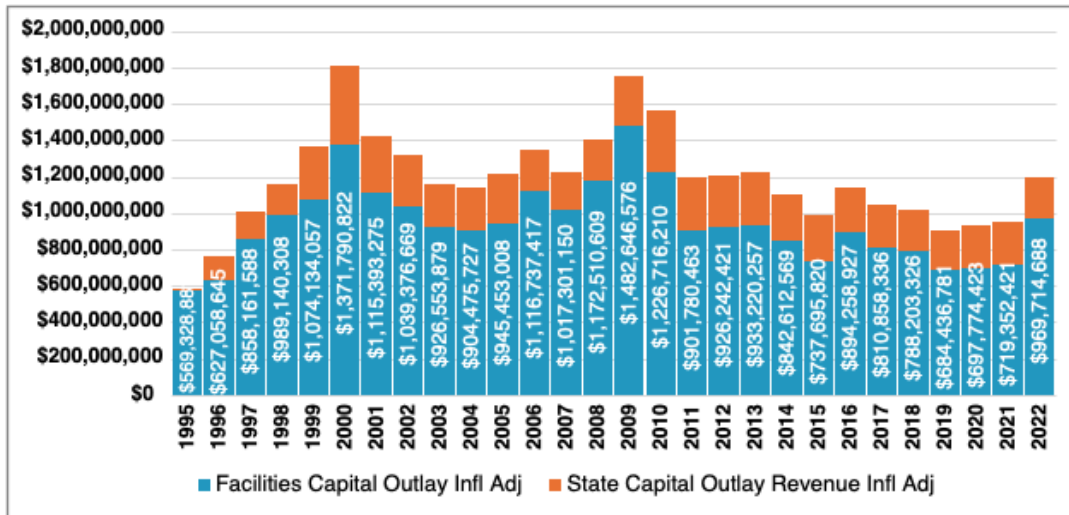
earned Foundation Program units in each district. In Fiscal Year 2024, the OCE allocation was set at \$25,225 per unit.

FACILITIES CAPITAL FUNDING

In addition to annual operating funds for facilities, school districts are responsible for the long-range planning, design, financing, construction, and major renovation and systems renewals of public school buildings and grounds. These capital outlay expenditures are used for new school construction, as well as for such items as roof replacements and upgrades to mechanical systems. In 2022, the facilities capital outlay for school construction and other equipment expended by Alabama local school districts was nearly \$970 million (inflation-adjusted dollars). This excludes the capital costs of land, existing structures, and instructional equipment reported as part of the total capital outlay by school districts to the U.S. Census of Governments. Chart 3 shows inflation-adjusted school construction and other equipment capital expenditures from 1995 through fiscal year 2022 and the revenue that the districts reported from the State for capital outlay and debt service to support their school construction and renovation projects.



CHART 3: CAPITAL OUTLAY FOR SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION AND OTHER EQUIPMENT FY 1995 – FY 2002 (IN 2024\$)



Source: Data from the U.S. Census of Governments Fiscal Survey; actual Capital Outlay spending data available at www.school-infrastructure.org Data Dashboard, of the National Center on School Infrastructure (NCSI).

K-12 CAPITAL GRANT PROGRAM

The [K-12 Capital Grant Program](#) was established in 2023 under [Act 2023-389](#) and is codified in [Ala. Code § 29-4-51](#). The program is administered by the Office of the Lieutenant Governor and provides competitive grants for capital improvement purposes in Alabama's K-12 public education system. Eligible entities include city and county school districts, charter schools, the Alabama School of Fine Arts, the Alabama School of Math and Science, the Alabama School for Cyber Technology and Engineering, the Alabama Institute for the Deaf and Blind, and the Department of Youth Services. Grants may be awarded for the construction or renovation of permanent facilities, assistance with debt service related to capital improvements, deferred maintenance, safety and security improvements, and technology or equipment upgrades. In fiscal year 2024, \$15 million was appropriated to the fund, with an additional \$20 million allocated through a supplemental appropriation.



PUBLIC SCHOOL FUND

The Public School Fund (PSF) provides annual capital allocations to public school districts for use on school facility improvements. The program is administered by the Alabama State Department of Education and is governed by [Ala. Code § 16-13-234](#), [Ala. Admin. Code r. 290-2-1-.04](#), and [Alabama Legislative Act No. 2011-163](#). PSF capital funds are distributed based on a guaranteed tax yield formula, which takes into account a district's local property wealth and average daily membership. Each district is required to contribute a local match, and state funding is allocated to equalize per-pupil capital support across districts.

Eligible uses for PSF capital funds include new construction, major renovation, building enlargement, and other capital improvements defined in statute. Routine maintenance and operational expenses are not allowable uses. Districts may also use local matching funds to support debt service on eligible capital projects. Annual PSF capital appropriations are funded through proceeds from the constitutionally dedicated statewide 3-mill ad valorem property tax for public education.

ADVANCEMENT AND TECHNOLOGY FUND

The Advancement and Technology Fund was established under [Ala. Code § 29-9-4](#) to support one-time expenditures for capital projects and education technology in Alabama's public schools. After the Education Trust Fund reserve requirements are met, surplus revenues are deposited into the fund and appropriated by the Legislature. Allowable uses include deferred maintenance, facility repair or improvement, school transportation, education technology, and insurance for public education facilities. In fiscal year 2023, the Legislature appropriated \$360 million from the fund to school districts, allocated based on enrollment and previous capital funding distributions.

FACILITIES FINANCING

State support for elementary and secondary public school capital improvements are provided through a combination of state general obligation bond financing, annual capital allocations from dedicated taxes, and targeted programmatic



funding. All state-level financing for school facilities originates from the [Education Trust Fund](#) (ETF), which was established in 1927 and is supported by earmarked portions of the state's income and sales taxes. State law also dedicates the proceeds of a constitutionally mandated 3-mill ad valorem property tax for public education to the Public School Fund, which is used to support capital outlay through formula-based allocations.

Alabama uses bond financing for major capital construction. State education bonds are issued by the Alabama Public School and College Authority (PSCA). The bond proceeds are repaid using **dedicated revenues**, including pledged portions of the state's sales and use taxes as defined in [Ala. Code § 16-16-11](#). Bond authorizations are enacted through separate legislative acts, and bond proceeds may be allocated by formula or for specific projects identified in authorizing legislation. Districts do not repay state-issued bonds but receive an allocation of proceeds to support eligible capital projects.

Outside of state programs, school districts rely on locally raised revenue to fund facilities. Local boards of education may not levy taxes independently and must rely on county or municipal governments to impose property or sales taxes with statutory authority and voter approval. Capital projects are frequently financed through the issuance of general obligation bonds or revenue warrants. General obligation bonds require voter authorization, while warrants may be issued without a referendum if structured within statutory limits. All local school district debt related to school capital projects is subject to approval by the State Superintendent of Education. In Alabama local districts had nearly \$5.8 billion of long-term debt outstanding at the end of FY2022--\$7,704 per student. Districts paid a total of \$161 million in interest on this debt in FY2022. The level of debt, and how districts access the bond markets is defined in state law.

PUBLIC SCHOOL AND COLLEGE AUTHORITY

The Alabama [Public School and College Authority](#) (PSCA) is a public corporation created under Ala. Code §§ 16-16-1 through 16-16-14 to finance capital improvement projects for public K–12 schools and public higher education institutions. The Authority is composed of the Governor, the State



Superintendent of Education, and the Director of Finance, pursuant to [Ala. Code § 16-16-6](#). It is authorized to issue bonds in amounts and for purposes established by specific legislative acts, as outlined in [Ala. Code § 16-16-8](#).

Bonds issued by PSCA are designated as limited obligations and do not constitute general obligations of the state under [Ala. Code § 16-16-9\(j\)](#). They are repaid from **dedicated revenues**, including pledged portions of state sales and use tax receipts, as provided in [Ala. Code § 16-16-11](#). The Governor must approve the final terms and conditions of each bond issuance, pursuant to [Ala. Code § 16-16-7](#). Bond proceeds are distributed to school districts based on formulas or allocations defined in the enabling legislation. PSCA coordinates with the Division of Construction Management for project-level compliance, procurement oversight, and certification of construction completion.

DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE – DIVISION OF RISK MANAGEMENT

The [Division of Risk Management](#) (DORM), a division of the Alabama Department of Finance, administers the [State Insurance Fund](#) (SIF), which provides property insurance coverage for state-owned facilities, including public K–12 school buildings. The SIF is established and governed under [Ala. Code §§ 41-15-1 through 41-15-12](#). All premiums paid into the fund are maintained as a separate trust account and may be used only for the payment of claims, administrative expenses, and fund management, as specified in [Ala. Code § 41-15-10](#).

Under [Ala. Code § 41-15-4\(a\)](#), all insured property is required to be covered on a replacement cost basis. The fund provides coverage for damage caused by fire, natural disasters, and other perils designated by the Director of Finance. Participation in the SIF is optional, but the vast majority of public school districts insure their facilities through the program. Coverage terms, deductibles, and limitations are defined by administrative policies and annually published guidelines.

The Risk Manager, appointed under [Ala. Code § 41-15-2](#), oversees claims adjustment, loss prevention efforts, and the financial administration of the fund.



When school facilities are damaged due to a covered event, DORM processes claims for repair or replacement based on the insured property's assessed value and the terms of coverage. DORM also offers optional supplemental coverage programs, such as "gap" and "gap plus" policies, which provide additional coverage to assist schools with recovery in the event of severe loss.

ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY AFFAIRS

The [Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs](#) (ADECA), through its [Energy Division](#), administers federally funded programs that support energy-related capital improvements in public K–12 schools. ADECA manages the [State Energy Program](#) (SEP) under the federal Energy Policy and Conservation Act (42 U.S.C. § 6321 et seq.), providing grants for projects such as HVAC upgrades, lighting retrofits, and building envelope improvements. Projects must typically meet cost-effectiveness thresholds, including defined payback periods.

ADECA also promotes energy performance contracting, a financing mechanism that allows districts to fund upgrades through guaranteed energy savings.

ADECA provides procurement guidance and technical assistance but does not administer general construction or renovation funding. Its programs serve as a supplemental resource for energy-related facility improvements.

ALABAMA PK – 12 SCHOOL FACILITIES STANDARDS AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Accountability systems for facilities involve facility standards, assessments, and reporting on the health, safety, education, and other factors associated with PK – 12 public school buildings and grounds. It involves systems for measuring and communicating conditions, and the authority to encourage or enforce changes in school design, construction, operations and maintenance.

MAINTENANCE AND OPERATIONS STANDARDS

In Alabama, maintenance and operations responsibilities for public school facilities are established at the local level. County boards of education are authorized under [Ala. Code § 16-8-8](#) to manage and preserve the buildings and



grounds under their control. City boards of education are granted similar authority under [Ala. Code § 16-11-9](#). These statutes assign local boards general responsibility for the upkeep, repair, and use of school property.

The Alabama State Department of Education may provide technical assistance to districts related to maintenance through its general oversight authority under [Ala. Code § 16-6B-3](#). This assistance may include planning guidance and advisory materials but does not establish enforceable maintenance requirements.

There are no statewide regulations or codified minimum standards for preventive maintenance, staffing ratios, or facility operations budgets. School districts develop and implement maintenance practices according to local policies and available resources.

BUILDING STANDARDS

Building standards for Alabama public K–12 schools are governed by state statute, administrative rule, and adopted national model codes. The Alabama Division of Construction Management (DCM), under [Ala. Code §§ 41-4-400 through 41-4-402](#) and [§§ 41-9-160 through 41-9-166](#), serves as the state’s building code enforcement authority for public school construction and renovation. All state-funded or state-supervised K–12 school facility projects are subject to DCM plan review, permitting, and inspection.

The Alabama State Building Code incorporates nationally recognized model codes adopted by DCM. As of 2024, the applicable codes for K–12 school facilities include:

- 2021 International Building Code (IBC)
- 2021 International Plumbing Code (IPC)
- 2021 International Mechanical Code (IMC)
- 2021 International Energy Conservation Code (IECC)
- 2021 International Existing Building Code (IEBC)
- 2020 National Electrical Code (NEC)



- 2021 International Fire Code (IFC), enforced by the State Fire Marshall.

Education-specific requirements are further defined in the Alabama Administrative Code and DCM implementation protocols. Minimum site size requirements are codified in [Ala. Admin. Code r. 290-2-2-.04](#). New elementary schools must have at least five acres plus one additional acre for every 100 students; new secondary schools must have at least 30 acres plus one additional acre per 100 students. These siting standards apply to all new school construction and are enforced during the site review process.

The [Manual of Procedures](#) issued by DCM contains additional technical standards and mandatory specifications for K–12 school construction. This includes:

- **Storm shelters:** Required under Chapter 10, Section 10-1 of the Manual. New K–12 schools must comply with the 2020 ICC/NSSA-500 Standard for Storm Shelters when required by project scope, hazard classification, or funding source.
- **Roofing systems:** Detailed in Chapter 5 of the Manual. Requirements include minimum slope, approved membrane and flashing assemblies, required manufacturer warranties, and inspection protocols during installation.
- **Submittal and review requirements:** Chapters 1 and 2 of the Manual outline mandatory schematic, preliminary, and final plan submittals for all public K–12 projects, including timelines and documentation checklists.

DCM enforces these standards through phased plan reviews and site inspections. Construction cannot proceed without written DCM approval, and all projects must obtain a signed Certificate of Substantial Completion before occupancy.

The Department of Risk Management is also responsible for conducting facility inspections for all properties insured by the State Insurance Fund. [Ala. Code §](#)



[41-15-3](#) authorizes the Director of Finance to inspect any property insured under the SIF to determine the adequacy of coverage and assess exposure to loss. For public K–12 schools, [Ala. Code § 16-1-2\(4\)](#) requires that inspection reports identifying fire hazards or unsafe structural conditions be submitted to the local board of education, the State Superintendent of Education, and the Director of Finance. If hazards are found and not addressed, the facility may be declared unsafe and closed until corrective action is taken.

EDUCATIONAL ADEQUACY STANDARDS

Alabama’s educational adequacy standards for public school facilities are limited to minimum site requirements established in administrative rule. These standards are set by the Alabama State Board of Education and codified at [Ala. Admin. Code r. 290-2-2-.04](#). They apply to new school construction and are intended to ensure sufficient land for instructional, physical education, and support functions.

Under the rule, minimum site sizes vary by school type and are calculated based on projected student enrollment. A new elementary school must have a base of five acres plus one additional acre for every 100 students. A new middle or junior high school must have at least 10 acres plus one additional acre for every 100 students, and a new senior high school must have at least 30 acres plus one additional acre for every 100 students. Site plans must also account for setbacks, parking, service access, and space for future expansion.

HEALTH AND SAFETY STANDARDS

AIR QUALITY STANDARDS

There are no codified minimum indoor air quality (IAQ) standards specific to K–12 public school facilities in Alabama. The Alabama Department of Public Health (ADPH) and the Alabama Department of Environmental Management (ADEM) may provide consultation or support to districts regarding air quality concerns, but no state regulation requires routine indoor air testing or the use of specific HVAC filtration or ventilation benchmarks in schools. Ventilation and



mechanical system standards applicable during construction or renovation are enforced through the 2021 International Mechanical Code (IMC), adopted as part of the State Building Code by the Alabama Division of Construction Management (DCM).

CHEMICAL HAZARDS

The Alabama Department of Environmental Management (ADEM) enforces federal hazardous materials regulations under authority granted by [Ala. Code § 22-22A-4](#). This includes oversight of asbestos management under the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA), lead-based paint standards under the Toxic Substances Control Act, and hazardous waste disposal regulations under the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA). Schools must maintain asbestos management plans and may be subject to inspection by ADEM or federal agencies. There are no additional state-specific statutes requiring testing or mitigation for radon, mold, or PCBs in public school facilities.

EXTREME HEAT

Alabama does not maintain any codified standards related to thermal comfort, temperature limits, or operational heat thresholds for public school buildings. Mechanical system requirements, including heating and air conditioning, are governed through the adoption of the 2021 International Mechanical Code and the 2021 International Energy Conservation Code as part of the State Building Code. These codes apply during construction and renovation but do not establish operating temperature limits for occupied schools. There is no state policy addressing school closures or instructional changes in response to excessive heat.

WATER QUALITY

Under [Ala. Code § 22-3-5](#), county health officers are required to inspect school premises at least annually. These inspections must confirm that the school is supplied with potable water, that the grounds are sanitary, and that appropriate waste disposal systems are in place. The statute does not require laboratory testing of drinking water for contaminants such as lead or copper. However, ADPH has issued non-codified guidance recommending that schools voluntarily



test drinking water outlets used by students and staff, particularly for lead. Compliance with this recommendation is not mandatory, and there is no statewide reporting or enforcement mechanism tied to school drinking water quality.

ENVIRONMENTAL AND ENERGY STANDARDS

All new school construction and major renovations subject to DCM oversight must comply with the **2021 International Energy Conservation Code (IECC)**. This code establishes minimum requirements for the building envelope, mechanical systems, lighting, and energy controls to improve energy efficiency in new and modified buildings. Compliance is reviewed as part of the schematic, preliminary, and final plan approval process. These requirements apply only at the time of construction or substantial renovation and are not enforced as ongoing building performance standards.