

**Good Repair Report:**  
Options for a Permanent State Standard

March 2006

Report to the Governor and Legislature  
**Office of Public School Construction**

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## **Executive Summary**

The case of *Williams, et al vs. State of California* (Williams) focused on three main components: teacher credentials, access to textbooks, and school facilities. In August 2004, a settlement agreement was negotiated between the parties that promoted the passage of five pieces of legislation.<sup>1</sup> The terms of the Williams case settlement and associated funding are intended to ensure that all students have textbooks, qualified teachers, and clean, safe, and functional school facilities.

The Office of Public School Construction (OPSC) is presenting this report to the Legislature and Governor to assist in the development of a permanent State standard for the condition of California's public school facilities in response to one of those resulting laws, Education Code (EC) Section 17002, as amended by Senate Bill 550 (Chapter 900, Statutes of 2004, Vasconcellos). The goal of this report is to provide options for consideration as well as some suggested recommendations from the OPSC Staff and other school facility stakeholders.

The information in this report is a compilation and analysis of options and alternatives to define good repair standards for school facilities based on feedback about the Interim Evaluation Instrument, a review of existing standards used by school districts or other agencies in California, and research on what other states and the federal government have developed. In looking at these other methods of evaluating school facilities, further analysis is conducted on the school components that should be assessed, the level of detail delineated in statute, the format of the standards, the need for a rating and/or scoring system, enforcement of these standards, and the integration of the standards with other facility programs and requirements already in place.

To accomplish this task, the OPSC formed a small workgroup of school facility experts and practitioners to discuss viable options that would be feasible in a school setting. This report was also discussed at the October 2005 State Allocation Board (SAB) Implementation Committee meeting to receive public feedback. The SAB Implementation Committee is made up of members representing various school-related associations, councils, and State departments with a vested interest in policy as it relates to school construction and funding. Meetings are attended by district representatives, consultants, architects, and other members of the public interested in school facilities.

California can develop standards that are very broad in nature or very specific and detailed. In the end, the OPSC's findings suggest that the State standard for good repair should be described in statute in narrative form, of moderate detail, and be composed of

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<sup>1</sup> Senate Bill 6 (Alpert), Chapter 899, Statutes of 2004; Senate Bill 550 (Vasconcellos), Chapter 900, Statutes of 2004; Assembly Bill 1550 (Daucher), Chapter 901, Statutes of 2004; Assembly Bill 3001 (Nunez), Chapter 902, Statutes of 2004; Assembly Bill 2727 (Daucher), Chapter 903, Statutes of 2004

the assessment of more than a dozen school components. Statute should also require that an evaluation tool be developed and maintained by the OPSC or another State agency and it should be designed to accommodate a rating and scoring system. The OPSC believes that there are systems already in place that will ensure adequate enforcement of the standards. Furthermore, the recommendations presented in this report will provide for successful integration with other provisions of the Williams settlement legislation.

The information that follows represents what we believe to be viable options and recommendations that will provide the Governor and Legislature a framework for developing a standard that is flexible for long-term, Statewide use and that fulfills the goal of having clean, safe and functional school facilities in California.

## **Background**

In 2000, a lawsuit was filed against the State of California by the American Civil Liberties Union and other parties on behalf of California's school children, which became known as *Williams, et al vs. State of California* (Williams). The litigation focused on three specific aspects of education: instructional materials, teacher qualifications, and school facility maintenance and overcrowding. At the close of the 2004 Legislative Session, resolution between the parties was reached and several bills were enacted as part of the settlement agreement in the Williams case. With the approval of the legislation by the Legislature and Governor, the Williams lawsuit reached final settlement. The terms of the settlement are aimed to ensure that all of California's pupils have adequate textbooks, qualified teachers, and that their schools are clean, safe, and functional.

The SAB and the OPSC played a role in implementing the elements of legislation impacting school facilities. Specifically, EC Section 17002, modified by Senate Bill 550 (Chapter 900, Statutes of 2004, Vasconcellos), required the OPSC to develop an instrument to be used on an interim basis, which would identify if a school facility is in good repair, meaning it is clean, safe and functional. (See Appendix A for complete statutory language.) This tool, known as the Interim Evaluation Instrument (IEI), was created and made operational by the end of January 2005, and is the current definition of good repair. Good repair had consistently been used in various school facility sections of the EC; however, this is the first time it has been defined in statute.

Furthermore, EC Section 17002 requires the OPSC to make recommendations to the Governor and Legislature regarding options for State standards as an alternative to the IEI. This report begins the second phase of implementation of this statute, adopting a permanent State standard for good repair. Statute specifies that a permanent standard for good repair be adopted by the Governor and the Legislature no later than September 1, 2006.

This report is the culmination of one year of research and discussion. The OPSC began to consider options for the State standard of good repair in September 2004 as part of the development of the IEI. This tool was thoroughly discussed at the SAB Implementation Committee meetings in November 2004, December 2004, and January 2005. It went through several generations as a result of the feedback from a variety of school facility stakeholders. In November 2004, staff was able to use the tool in a practical setting. This experience led to further refinement of the IEI, which has now been in use by school districts and county offices of education for over nine months.

In addition to the IEI, the OPSC reviewed the tools and standards developed by 10 other states and entities. Many of them were the result of litigation; several were extremely prescriptive, with pages of information; and most use a rating or scoring system. The IEI requires the evaluation of all but one of the components specified in the other tools. It is designed for the visual inspection of a school site by a person without

specific knowledge of construction or school facilities and does not include a scoring system.

To assist in preparing this report and the development of options for final State standards, the OPSC formed a workgroup of school facility experts and practitioners. The primary goal of the group was to explore a multitude of practical options for State school facility standards. The foundation of this report consists of input from the workgroup as well as comments received from other interested parties through discussions that occurred during the October 2005 SAB Implementation Committee meeting.

This report contains an analysis of the IEI, research findings of eight evaluations from other states and two instruments developed by other entities in California, considerations for discussion, and recommendations to assist with the development of permanent state standards.



## **Research Analysis and Findings**

The objective of this report differs slightly from the charge OPSC had earlier this year to develop an instrument to measure good repair. This report addresses the criteria that should be considered in developing a permanent State definition of good repair rather than the specific details of the format or means of measuring those standards. As required by statute, we are providing recommendations on options as an alternative to the IEI. This report, therefore, includes an analysis of the current standard, the IEI, a review of existing standards used by various entities, including school districts, other states, the federal government, and options for an alternative definition of good repair.

### **Interim Evaluation Instrument**

#### **Analysis**

The IEI was adopted by the SAB on January 26, 2005 (see Appendix B). The IEI is the current definition of good repair and measures whether a school facility is maintained in a manner that is clean, safe, and functional. The law required that the tool developed by the OPSC be based on existing prototypes. The IEI is largely based upon the Fiscal Crisis Management and Assistance Team (FCMAT) school evaluation form that was created as a monitoring tool for school site conditions (Appendix F). During the development process, each element of the IEI was discussed in depth in a public forum. Thirteen components of a school facility are evaluated as part of the IEI (e.g. interior surfaces, school grounds, fire/life safety, etc). In its current form, the IEI is designed to be a visual inspection by school district staff or other individuals without any formal construction or facilities knowledge and training. The IEI was designed in this manner for two reasons. First, its purpose is to assess whether a learning environment is clean, safe, and functional. This suggests the need for a commonsense, non-technical evaluation tool. Second, there are other more technical evaluations required of a school site, such as the school facilities needs assessment (2003 deciles 1–3 schools only), the school facility inspection system, and the deferred maintenance five-year plan. The following chart provides an overview of the IEI:

#### **State of California Interim Evaluation Instrument**

<b>Basis:</b>	Legislation required the OPSC to develop an interim tool to measure whether or not school facilities are in good repair.
<b>Developed by:</b>	The Office of Public School Construction
<b>Method:</b>	Visual inspection using a checklist.
<b>Description:</b>	Checklist containing 3 broad categories, with descriptive statements that require a “yes” or “no” response from the user. Includes space for specific comments on any deficiencies observed.
<b>Frequency:</b>	As needed basis pursuant to Senate Bill 550, as described below.

**Use of Results:** To ensure compliance with the litigation settlement and to ensure that school facilities are maintained in a manner that is clean, safe, and functional.

**Rater of Qualifications:** Designed for use by anyone, primarily school districts and county offices of education staff, regardless of in-depth knowledge of school facilities construction.

**Rating:** Yes/No

**Scoring** None

**Available at:** Appendix B to this report as well as the OPSC website.

Each school district or county office of education in California will use some version of the IEI at some point. The following chart provides information on the multiple uses of the IEI depending upon the entity:

<b>Entity</b>	<b>Use</b>
School Districts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Assist in completing the school facility section of the School Accountability Report Card (SARC) for all school districts.<sup>2</sup></li> <li>» Serve as a component of a Facilities Inspection System (FIS) after July 1, 2005, for all schools in the district, if participating in the School Facility Program (SFP) or Deferred Maintenance Program (DMP) to ensure each school is maintained in good repair.<sup>3</sup></li> </ul>
County Offices of Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Assist in completing the school facility section of the SARC for all county-operated schools.<sup>2</sup></li> <li>» Serve as a FIS after July 1, 2005, for all county-operated schools, if participating in the SFP or DMP.<sup>3</sup></li> <li>» Assist in meeting oversight responsibilities at schools, including verification of SARC information and identification of health and safety conditions at those schools ranked in deciles of 1-3 on the 2003 Academic Performance Index (API) identified on a listing published by the California Department of Education (CDE).<sup>4</sup></li> </ul>

As the above chart indicates, the information gathered from the IEI is used by different entities to comply with several different Williams settlement requirements. For example, the information a school district gathers by completing an IEI on a specific school site is to be reflected in the facility section of the school's SARC. The information on the SARC is used by parents and other interested parties to make informed decisions about their children's school. If a school was ranked in deciles 1 to 3 on the 2003 API, then the

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<sup>2</sup> EC Section 331126(b)(g)

<sup>3</sup> EC Section 17007.75(e)

<sup>4</sup> EC Section 1240(c)(2)(E)(ii) and (iii)

local county office of education will act as a second layer of review of this information during annual visits to ensure that the SARC information is accurately reported. While at the school sites, county office of education personnel are also looking for health and safety hazards identified on the IEI.

The OPSC is aware that some county offices of education or school districts modified the State's IEI to better suit their individual situation at the local level (see Appendix G for an example). It is the OPSC's premise that the components in the IEI are minimum standards a school facility should meet to be considered in good repair and that as long as the minimum 13 components are included, an alternative tool or instrument is acceptable. Completed IEIs are retained by either the school district or the county office of education and are not provided to the State.

To begin the process of researching alternative standards, it seemed logical to conduct an evaluation of the IEI, which is the current tool. Therefore, the OPSC developed a survey questionnaire for workgroup participants to complete. A complete copy of the survey is provided in Appendix C. The survey contained 13 questions and the goal of the survey was to answer the following questions:

- » What worked with the IEI and what did not?
- » Are any components missing or unnecessary?
- » Should there be an overall rating system?
- » Should it be designed in a manner that allows a person with little or no facility experience to use it?

Survey responses are detailed in the charts provided in Appendix D.<sup>5</sup> At the time of the OPSC survey, the IEI had been in use for eight months by both school districts and county offices of education.

## **Research Findings**

The responses to the survey questions suggest that there are some components of a school facility that are currently not incorporated into the definition of good repair that should be considered in developing final standards, such as overall cleanliness, graffiti, playground safety, and parking lots.

The majority of respondents believe that the IEI is practical to use in a school setting; however, most feel an overall rating system would be helpful in providing definitive results about a school site. Some feel the lack of a rating leaves too much to interpretation with no conclusive measurement or result. The minority feels a rating

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<sup>5</sup> Question number one has not been included as it has no bearing or added value to the research findings.

system would make the assessment too complex and inadvertently place the reviewer in a precarious position and subject to lawsuits.

The results of the IEI are relayed on each school's SARC and a majority of the respondents believe that the IEI is helpful in completing the SARC school facility section. In addition, a majority of the respondents believe that the IEI and the good repair standard should be designed to allow for a visual inspection of a school site by individuals with little or no knowledge of school facilities construction. Those respondents that believe school facility experts should be conducting the assessments feel it would give the evaluation more value, as users with little school facilities background may call into question the integrity of the inspection.

The OSPC gathered additional feedback on the use of the IEI during the October 2005 SAB Implementation Committee meeting. The feedback from the audience echoed the comments made by the workgroup. In addition, school district representatives stated that using the IEI has aided districts in identifying problems and making improvements to school facilities.

Overall, most users felt that the IEI is effective and easy to use, yet comprehensive enough to focus on the important building components and systems. The concerns raised in response to the survey are explored in the Considerations and Recommendations section of this report.

## **Other State Entities**

### **Analysis**

In looking for alternatives, it became apparent that California is not alone in its endeavor to provide school facility standards for its students. Over the past several years, other states and entities have also been developing standards or assessment tools. In our research, we looked at evaluation systems from FCMAT, Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD), the United States Government Accountability Office (formerly known as the General Accounting Office), New York City (NYC) Public Schools, and the following states: Alaska, Connecticut, Illinois, Maryland, Washington and Wisconsin. In some states, similar to California, litigation was the cause of performing a school facility evaluation, while other states used the information to project future capital facility project costs. Some evaluations were extremely detailed, collecting specific facility information, types and age of building components, and providing cost analysis of facility needs. The following charts summarize the research findings based upon specific commonalities found in each evaluation:

### **Fiscal Crisis Management Assistance Team**

<b>Basis:</b>	As part of their charter for fiscal oversight of California school districts, FCMAT developed this tool specifically for Compton Unified School District as a result of litigation.
<b>Developed by:</b>	FCMAT
<b>Method:</b>	“Campus/Facility Review”: Site evaluation performed by FCMAT staff for the specific district.
<b>Description:</b>	Review using nine broad categories with subcategories. Addresses aspects other than those related specifically to school facilities. The review includes definitions.
<b>Frequency:</b>	As needed basis.
<b>Use of Results:</b>	Ensure compliance with the litigation settlement.
<b>Rater of Qualifications:</b>	Designed for use by anyone. Evaluators are provided with guidance prior to conducting the on-site inspections.
<b>Rating:</b>	2-prong (Yes/No)
<b>Scoring</b>	A through F grading
<b>Available at:</b>	A copy is provided in the Appendix F

### **Los Angeles Unified School District**

<b>Basis:</b>	Internal need to monitor school facilities in the district.
<b>Developed by:</b>	LAUSD Office of Environmental Health and Safety (OEHS)
<b>Method:</b>	“School Safety Compliance Checklist”: Site evaluation to be done by OEHS inspectors.
<b>Description:</b>	Checklist developed to assess compliance with federal, State and district requirements. 14 health and safety standards and threshold questions. Includes guidebook of standards.
<b>Frequency:</b>	Ongoing, on a quarterly basis.
<b>Use of Results:</b>	Publish scorecard for parents, media, teachers, and general public consumption.
<b>Rater of Qualifications:</b>	Very technical, designed for use by district personnel.
<b>Rating and Scoring:</b>	2-prong (Yes/No) based on threshold of a compliance score of 1-10. Converted to a percentage and assigned a numerical value of 0-4 which is further converted to an overall rating of “Good, Fair, or Poor.”
<b>Available at:</b>	The Safe School Inspection Guidebook can be viewed at <a href="http://www.lausd-oehs.org/fieldoperations_inspections.asp">http://www.lausd-oehs.org/fieldoperations_inspections.asp</a> . The School Safety Compliance Checklist can be obtained by calling the OEHS at 213.241.3199.

### **State of Alaska**

<b>Basis:</b>	An established guide for the convenience of schools to ensure school facility compliance with codes/regulations/guidelines. Assumes no liability for its use.
<b>Developed by:</b>	Alaska Department of Education (tool is not mandatory)
<b>Method:</b>	“School Facility Condition Survey”: very long survey, yet not intended to be exhaustive and cover all areas of compliance.
<b>Description:</b>	Survey focuses on four main sections: building envelope/structure, interior spaces, mechanical, and electrical. Rates each element as a stand-alone.
<b>Frequency:</b>	Unknown (tool not mandatory).
<b>Use of Results:</b>	Intended to provide recommendations for discrepancies observed, including repair cost information for school district.
<b>Rater of Qualifications:</b>	Professional/tradesperson, or those trained in school maintenance.
<b>Rating:</b>	Combination: 2-prong (Yes/No) and 3-prong (Good, Fair, Poor)
<b>Scoring</b>	Same as the rating system.
<b>Available at:</b>	<a href="http://www.educ.state.ak.us/facilities/publication.html">http://www.educ.state.ak.us/facilities/publication.html</a>

### **State of Connecticut**

<b>Basis:</b>	Internal need to monitor school facilities.
<b>Developed by:</b>	Connecticut Department of Education – Office of School Facilities
<b>Method:</b>	“School Facilities Survey”: Evaluates broad facility categories and individual building ratings.
<b>Description:</b>	Two-section survey requesting general site information, rates buildings and systems on numerical rating scale but includes definitions on how to rate, and requests information on planning and maintenance of the facilities. Internal database.
<b>Frequency:</b>	On-going
<b>Rater of Qualifications:</b>	Unknown
<b>Users:</b>	School districts and School Facilities Unit of the State Department of Education
<b>Rating:</b>	0-4; 0=lowest, 4=highest. Includes definition of each rating.
<b>Scoring</b>	Ratings are translated to “Excellent, Good, Fair, Poor, Missing”
<b>Available at:</b>	<a href="http://www.state.ct.us/sde/dgm/formsinst/ed050/ed050frm.pdf">http://www.state.ct.us/sde/dgm/formsinst/ed050/ed050frm.pdf</a>

## **United States Government Accountability Office**

<b>Basis:</b>	A report, School Facilities: America's School Report Differing Conditions, was addressed to Congressional requestors, which focused on the "differences in the (1) condition of schools, (2) amount of funding needed to repair upgrade facilities, and (3) number of students attending schools in inadequate condition by the following: location (state and region), community type, percentage of minority and poor students, and school level and size.
<b>Developed by:</b>	General Accounting Office (now known as the Government Accountability Office)
<b>Method:</b>	"GAO Questionnaire for Local Education Agencies." Surveyed 10,000 schools with 10 site visits, including some the audits where necessary.
<b>Description:</b>	The study looked at broad categories like "inadequate building" or "inadequate features" and focused on physical environmental conditions by state, region, and "other characteristics." Finally, the report focused on the number of students learning under "inadequate conditions."
<b>Frequency:</b>	One-time
<b>Use of Results:</b>	In a report to Congress, generally provided a sense of the nature of school facilities nationwide. Available for public consumption.
<b>Rater of Qualifications:</b>	School officials at the local level.
<b>Rating:</b>	For facilities aspect only: 6-prong (Excellent – Replacement); A few Yes/No ratings in regards to the existence of, for instance, an air conditioner system (i.e., whether one is present or not).
<b>Scoring</b>	Based on amount of inadequate or "unsatisfactory" findings at schools. Percentages in three categories: At least one inadequate building, at least on adequate building feature, and at least one inadequate building and building feature. Additionally, the results were broken down by specific inadequacies, the number of students at inadequate schools, including student demographics, and other presentations of the numbers.
<b>Available at:</b>	<a href="http://www.gao.gov/archive/1996/he996103.pdf">http://www.gao.gov/archive/1996/he996103.pdf</a>

### **State of Illinois**

<b>Basis:</b>	The Illinois “Health/Life Safety Handbook” was designed to offer guidelines and minimum standards that region superintendents are to ensure that their schools are meeting.
<b>Developed by:</b>	Illinois Association of Regional Superintendents of Schools and Illinois State Board of Education.
<b>Method:</b>	“Health/Life Safety Annual Inspection Checklist” and a “Ten-year Survey Report” are to be completed by the regional superintendents.
<b>Description:</b>	The annual inspection is focused only on health/safety with regard to facility usage. For instance, all rooms should have a fire detection system and chemical labs should be properly equipped with eye protection. The ten-year survey is for ensuring proper upkeep of the facilities according to minimum standards.
<b>Frequency:</b>	On-going
<b>Use of Results:</b>	Compliance with minimum standards, and to call upon state officials in the case of findings of unsafe, unsanitary, or unfit for occupancy.
<b>Rater of Qualifications:</b>	State Superintendent of Education, Board of Education
<b>Rating:</b>	5-prong: A through E (In Full Compliance – Non-Compliance (D) / Continued Use of Temporary Facility (E)
<b>Scoring</b>	No scoring of facilities. Purpose is to find problems, fix problems, and to provide notice.
<b>Available at:</b>	<a href="http://www.isbe.state.il.us/sbss/publiccations_brochures.htm">http://www.isbe.state.il.us/sbss/publiccations_brochures.htm</a>

### **State of Maryland**

<b>Basis:</b>	Legislation established a taskforce to oversee school facilities and determine whether or not the facilities were adequate to support educational programs in the state.
<b>Developed by:</b>	A workgroup, developed under the auspices of the taskforce of state and local school and general facilities officials.
<b>Method:</b>	School superintendents and facility planners were to enter their school’s information into an online database. The survey tool was developed by the workgroup.
<b>Description:</b>	The tool included 31 fundamental standards based on current, federal, stand and local standards, and a survey instrument. The survey included basic questions pertaining to the condition of schools, but also included information about capacity and a school’s “functional adequacy to support its educational programs” (p. 3, Presentation of Data, Facility Assessment Survey Maryland Public Schools)
<b>Frequency:</b>	One-time



## *Good Repair Report: Options for a Permanent State Standard*

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**Use of Results:** Report to the state entities charged with overseeing the condition of their public schools.

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**Rater of Qualifications:** Maryland State Department of Education

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**Rating:** Performance standards and local standards, whether or not the standards were met.

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**Scoring** Percentages of schools meeting standards.

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**Available at:** [http://mlis.state.md.us/other/education/public\\_school\\_facilities\\_2003/Final\\_Report.pdf](http://mlis.state.md.us/other/education/public_school_facilities_2003/Final_Report.pdf)

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### **New York City**

**Basis:** NYC School Construction Authority contracted with three entities to provide this information to the Board of Education for their five-year capital plan.

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**Developed by:** 3 consulting firms under contract with NYC School Construction Authority

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**Method:** Computerized assessment called a Building Condition Assessment Survey (BCAS)

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**Description:** "Survey results, obtained mostly via objective rating criteria, provide 'baseline' measurements of the individual building conditions, the school system as a whole or any part thereof." "One question regarding an overall system such as 'exteriors'... then extend down to four levels—interior, classroom, doors, and wood."

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**Frequency:** One-time

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**Use of Results:** To implement the five-year capital plan. "It provides a sound basis for long-range capital planning, a realistic and defensible estimate of 'cost of good repair' and objective building condition information that designers can use to develop scopes of work."

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**Rater of Qualifications:** Facility experts, such as architects, electrical and mechanical engineers.

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**Rating:** 5-prong (Good, Fair to Good, Fair, Fair to Poor, and Poor)

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**Scoring** Deficiency is attached to a recommended action, which is attached to a "Purpose of Action": Life Safety, Structural, Regulation/Code, Security, Betterment, Cost Avoidance, Operations/Maintenance Savings, Aesthetics and Community. In the above coding system, certain repairs are considered betterment, whereas others would be safety and take precedence. This system allows planners to distinguish between and prioritize available resources. Additionally, five urgency codes: 1) fail now, 2) fail within six months, 3) fail within 24 months, 4) no fail within 24 months and 5) no urgency. Weights are assigned to systems and their components.

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**Available at:** Survey results can be viewed at  
<http://www.nycsa.org/pdf/BCASratings.pdf>

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### **State of Washington**

**Basis:** Response to legislation passed in 1991.

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**Developed by:** Washington State Department of Education & Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction

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**Method:** “Building Condition Evaluation Manual,” which is comprised of checklists of building components to be rated.

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**Description:** This manual provides checklists and requires individuals to rate building components as a whole (e.g. electrical, floors, restrooms) as well as characteristics of each specific component. Provides a rating for each component as well as an overall school rating. Washing State later developed the “Health and Safety Guide for K-12 Schools.” The entire document is a health and safety guide. Included within are the protocols for health officials to follow when conducting an “assessment” (not an “inspection” because it states that “inspection” connotes the presence of sanctions, which are not included in the state’s sanctions) of a school. The protocols include areas of inspection to assess.

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**Frequency:** Originally intended to be annual, but now it is periodic.

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**Use of Results:** For the purpose of monitoring school facilities and to alert school officials of needed repairs.

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**Rater of Qualifications:** School district board of directors and school district superintendents.

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**Rating:** 4-prong rating system including Good, Fair, Poor, and Unsatisfactory.

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**Scoring** Converts individual ratings of system characteristics to an overall system score based on built-in tolerance levels.

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**Available at:** A handbook for school administrators is available at  
<http://www.k12.wa.us/SchFacilities/HealthSafetyGuide.aspx>

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### **State of Wisconsin**

**Basis:** In response to legislative action—Section 15.33(4), Wisconsin, Statutes of 1998—requiring a “study of the physical condition and capacity of the public schools and their suitability for use as public schools.”

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**Developed by:** Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction

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**Method:** “Wisconsin’s School Facility Survey”, (Part A – Physical Structure and Mechanical Features): questionnaire mailed to school districts to be answered on a school-by-school basis.

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**Description:** Somewhat subjective assessment, but includes definitions. Rates

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building components as a whole (e.g. electrical, floors, restrooms) versus characteristics of each specific component. Gathers facility information as well as preliminary costs estimates on repairs needed.

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<b>Frequency:</b>	One-time
<b>Use of Results:</b>	Included in a report to the Wisconsin Legislature entitled School Facilities Report: The Results of a Statewide Survey to Determine the Physical Condition & Capacity of Wisconsin's Public Schools to determine future costs of repairs.
<b>Rater of Qualifications:</b>	School district personnel, administrators, and maintenance and operations employees.
<b>Rating:</b>	7-prong: Excellent, Good, Adequate, Fair, Poor, Replace, and Not Applicable
<b>Scoring</b>	Same as the rating system.
<b>Available at:</b>	<a href="http://www2.dpi.state.wi.us/facsrvy/pdf/faclsrvy.pdf">http://www2.dpi.state.wi.us/facsrvy/pdf/faclsrvy.pdf</a>

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Another evaluation system explored was the United States Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Healthy School Environments Assessment Tool (Healthy SEAT). The EPA is completing the development of the Healthy SEAT which will be available on-line and accessible to all school districts in the nation at no cost. This tool integrates all of the EPA programs for schools and addresses such environmental issues as chemical management, hazardous materials, and indoor air quality among many others. The tool also provides information on health, safety, and injury prevention programs of several other agencies including Occupational Safety and Health Administration, National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, Center for Disease Control/Division of Adolescent and School Health, and others. The tool is designed to assist school districts with regulatory compliance and improve the health of students and staff by ensuring that all potential environmental hazards in schools are being properly managed.

The Healthy SEAT will be a completely voluntary tool and will contain the following elements: software and updates to be downloaded from the EPA Web Page, user's manual, and a database file that runs on Microsoft Access. The database file will include checklists and guidebooks to use in the assessments that can be customized to fit the needs of individual school districts by allowing the school district officials to select the items to be included in the review. The components of the Healthy SEAT can also be customized to reflect state requirements.

While the information collected in EPA's tool exceeds the level of information required in defining standards for California's schools, it might be of assistance to school districts in monitoring the condition of their school facilities and complying with other Williams requirements.

## **Research Findings**

Through the collection of the data, the following general categories were identified as

the reason(s) why individual states/entities performed an evaluation of school facilities: On-going Internal Monitoring, Response to Legislation/ Litigation, Determination of Facility Condition and Cost Estimates, and Component of a Capital Facilities Plan. This information is useful in order to weigh the purpose of one evaluation against another when considering options.

**Purpose of the Evaluation**

	Ongoing Internal Monitoring	Response to Legislation or Litigation	Determination of Future Costs or Condition of Facilities	Component of Capital Facility Plan
<b>Other States/Entities</b>				
California's IEI		X		X
Fiscal Crisis Management and Assistance Team	X	X		
Los Angeles Unified School District	X			
Alaska	X			
Connecticut	X			
Government Accountability Office			X	
Illinois	X			
Maryland		X	X	
New York City	X		X	X
Washington	X			
Wisconsin		X	X	
<b>Totals</b> (Not including California's IEI)	<b>7</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>

To analyze the data with regard to the components contained within each entity's evaluation, the data was categorized into five broad categories: Exterior Building Conditions, Mechanical Systems, Interior Building Conditions, Safety Building Codes, and Other. The following chart summarizes the categories that were considered for general school site facility condition evaluations. Findings for NYC are not included as specific component information was unavailable. Many states have guidelines or categories within evaluations that go farther than the categories listed below. For instance, Maryland and the United States Government Accountability Office include capacity, comfort, and educational adequacy components. Those categories are outside of the statutory parameters set for California, and, therefore, are not included. The Williams case settlement legislation specifically requires that a facility be clean, safe, and functional (EC Section 17002 (d)). Therefore, the following chart includes only

categories that relate to clean, safe, and functional in pursuit of a permanent standard of good repair.

**Comparison of Building Component Evaluations**

<b>Other States/ Entities</b>	<b>California's IEI</b>	<b>Fiscal Crisis Management and Assistance Team</b>	<b>Los Angeles Unified School District</b>	<b>Alaska</b>	<b>Connecticut</b>	<b>Government Accountability Office</b>	<b>Illinois</b>	<b>Maryland</b>	<b>New York City<sup>6</sup></b>	<b>Washington</b>	<b>Wisconsin</b>	<b>TOTALS (not including California's IEI)</b>
A. Foundation/Structure	X			X		X	X	X	-	X	X	<b>6</b>
A. Walls				X		X	X	X	-	X	X	<b>6</b>
A. Roof			X	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	X	<b>7</b>
A. Windows/Doors	X	X		X		X	X		-	X	X	<b>7</b>
A. Trim				X		X			-	X	X	<b>4</b>
B. Heating & Cooling	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	-	X	X	<b>8</b>
B. Plumbing	X			X	X	X	X	X	-	X	X	<b>7</b>
B. Electrical (Power)	X	X		X		X	X	X	-	X	X	<b>7</b>
B. Electrical (Lighting)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	X	<b>9</b>
B. Ventilation	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	X	<b>9</b>
C. Flooring, Walls, Ceiling	X		X	X	X	X	X		-	X	X	<b>7</b>
C. Restrooms	X	X	X	X	X			X	-	X		<b>6</b>
C. Paint	X		X	X		X			-		X	<b>4</b>
C. Fixed Equipment			X	X					-	X		<b>3</b>
C. Cleanliness	X		X		X				-	X		<b>3</b>
D. Fire/Life Safety	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	-	X	X	<b>8</b>
D. ADA Compliance				X	X	X		X	-	X	X	<b>6</b>
D. Hazardous Materials (asbestos, lead, etc.)	X		X		X	X	X	X	-	X		<b>6</b>
E. Functionality	X							X	-	X		<b>2</b>
E. Potable Water	X	X	X	X	X			X	-	X		<b>6</b>
E. Graffiti		X	X		X				-		X	<b>4</b>
E. Playground Equipment	X	X		X					-	X		<b>3</b>
E. Landscape/Litter	X	X	X	X	X				-			<b>4</b>
E. Roadways/Walkways			X	X	X		X		-			<b>4</b>

<sup>6</sup> Specific component information not available.

**Notes for Chart Above:**

- (A) Exterior Building Conditions
- (B) Mechanical Systems
- (C) Interior Building
- (D) Safety/Building Code
- (E) Other

To summarize the last chart, following is a list of the eight specific building components that were of importance to a majority of states/entities:

- » Roofs
- » Windows/Doors
- » Heating/Cooling/Ventilation
- » Plumbing
- » Electrical Power
- » Electrical Lighting
- » Floors/Walls/Ceilings
- » Fire/Life Safety

The IEI contains all but roofing. This aspect was considered during the development of the IEI but was excluded as it does not lend itself to a basic visual observation by untrained inspectors.

After looking at the specific facility categories, an important aspect of assessing a condition of a school is how the individual evaluator rates the condition of the building. Is the building adequate? Yes or No? Or is it a degree of adequacy? Very Satisfactory, Satisfactory, Unsatisfactory, or Very Unsatisfactory? One of the important aspects with regard to the usefulness of the rating system is the definition of “satisfactory” or “adequate.” Some states use handbooks of standards or guidelines based on building and safety codes and/or best practices. Others simply outline parameters or definitions to guide the individual in making appropriate ratings. In summary:

- » Three states/entities utilize a Yes/No rating system based on definitions of adequacy or functionality, and Maryland’s is based on existing standards. While this basic rating mechanism is useful in these defined instances, California is seeking to use this evaluation/assessment to assist in establishing standards that do not currently exist for the State.
- » Seven states/entities require the individual to rate the condition of individual components in a descriptive manner. The complexity of rating scales ranged from 3-pronged (Good, Fair, Poor) up to 7-pronged (Excellent, Good, Adequate, Fair, Poor, Replace, Not Applicable).
- » Descriptors ranged from Good-Poor, Excellent-Replace, Full Compliance-Not in Compliance, and Satisfactory-Unsatisfactory.

## **Considerations and Recommendations**

The findings from the research suggest that there are many different ways to approach the development of permanent State standards for good repair in California. Developing State standards should include considerations of the following:

- » Components of the school;
- » Level of detail to be included;
- » Format of the standards;
- » Use of a rating and scoring mechanism;
- » Possibilities for enforcement; and
- » Integration of the standards with other requirements of the Williams settlement.

Many of these are policy decisions that will need further discussion. The outcomes to these policy questions will have an impact on the meaningfulness of the standards and whether they will be widely used, be able to measure improvement, be adhered to, and accomplish the goal of improving California’s school facilities.

## **Components**

The current definition of good repair includes an evaluation of the cleanliness, functionality, and safety of 13 various components of a school facility. Eight of which are items that, under the Williams settlement, are health and safety issues considered emergency facility needs. The IEI survey results and a review of other entities and states raise the possibility that additional items should be considered when developing standards. The following chart provides a current list of each area covered under the IEI and also items to consider:

### **Options**

<b>Existing Components</b>	<b>Potential Additions</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Gas System*</li> <li>» Mechanical Systems*</li> <li>» Windows/Doors/Gates* (interior and exterior)</li> <li>» Interior Surfaces (walls, floors, ceilings)</li> <li>» Hazardous Materials*</li> <li>» Structural Damage*</li> <li>» Fire Safety</li> <li>» Electrical* (interior and exterior)</li> <li>» Pest/Vermin*</li> <li>» Drinking Fountains (interior and exterior)</li> <li>» Restrooms</li> <li>» Sewers*</li> <li>» Playground/School Grounds</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Graffiti</li> <li>» Parking lot surfaces and walkways</li> <li>» Site drainage</li> <li>» Exterior lighting</li> <li>» Overall cleanliness</li> </ul>

\*Examples of Emergency Facilities Needs per Williams legislation

Workgroup participants suggested that the components be organized by commonly known building systems, such as exterior envelope, structural, plumbing, electrical, etc. The additional categories suggested above received ample discussion by the SAB Implementation Committee. Committee members and participants agreed that parking lot surfaces and walkways, site drainage, and graffiti should be included and overall cleanliness should receive greater emphasis as part of the permanent standard. Staff believes this can be accomplished by the reorganization of the existing components into commonly known buildings systems. The addition of a category for exterior surfaces would address many of these items.

There was no consensus on the issues of exterior lighting or roofing. While many agreed that exterior lighting should be in working order when present on a school site, there was concern that its inclusion would necessitate evening inspections by school district staff. Similarly, roofing is an important part of a facility that should not be overlooked. However, a roof cannot be evaluated by an untrained eye. It was suggested that the evaluation of roofing be limited to visible evidence of disrepair, such as interior or exterior indications of roof leaks.

### **Recommendation**

The minimum components of good repair should include the 13 standards, which are contained within the IEI. In addition, the good repair standards should include roofing, provided the evaluation of roofing is limited to visual evaluation by an untrained eye and not a technical up-close inspection. In addition to these items, any inspection guidelines developed by individual school districts may incorporate evaluation of exterior surfaces, such as parking lots, walkways, and site drainage. Additional guidelines may also include exterior lighting, and emphasize the overall cleanliness of the school site, at the discretion of the school district performing evaluations of its schools.

### **Level of Detail**

In creating standards, the level of detail in which to address each school facility component is one of the most important considerations in developing State standards that will impact the success or failure of meeting the goal of improving California's schools. To ensure consistent application throughout the State, it is important that the standards developed provide clear guidance for the evaluators. The following chart reflects three approaches to consider including the benefits and drawbacks of each:



Options

	<b>Highly Comprehensive</b>	<b>Moderately Detailed</b>	<b>Less Prescriptive</b>
<b>Level of Detail</b>	Reference State and local building codes, regulations, and provide prescriptive examples and information.	Provide a single statement for each element/item followed by examples and information with an option for more narrative/comments.	Single statements about the components without examples; allow each locality to elaborate on the details.
<b>Benefits</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Clear guidance for evaluations</li> <li>» Statewide uniformity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Provides guidance for evaluators</li> <li>» Some local control</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Significant local control</li> <li>» Simple implementation at the State level</li> </ul>
<b>Drawbacks</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Significant resources required at the State and local level to implement and update</li> <li>» Requires extensive school facility construction knowledge</li> <li>» Would be difficult to account for uniqueness in the districts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Some subjectivity is involved</li> <li>» Would not require school facility construction knowledge</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» May be difficult for small school districts without resources to implement</li> <li>» Very subjective and lacks consistency</li> </ul>
<b>Example</b>	Water from drinking fountains shall clear the nozzle to allow safe and healthy drinking access. School shall follow cross-connection and backflow prevention methods outlined in the State Rules. (Source: Health and Safety Guide, the State of Washington)	Plumbing systems including sinks, toilets, and drinking fountains are clean, functioning, and unobstructed.	Plumbing is functioning

There are several underlying issues that will impact this particular policy decision. Many participants in the workgroup expressed their belief that a high level of detail, if any, is not needed for the various components and should not go beyond the examples currently included in the IEI, as overly prescriptive standards would be difficult to implement and enforce and, therefore, become meaningless. Likewise, developing standards that provide little or no guidance would leave too much open for interpretation and again be meaningless. Without resources or assistance, the standards would

simply not be further developed at the local level. A moderately detailed approach would allow a variety of individuals to monitor standards. Furthermore, it would not require specific school facility knowledge to complete but rather rely on basic reasoning skills of the evaluators. It appears that a moderately-detailed inspection will address the most common concerns in regards to cleanliness, safety and functionality of school facilities, which will be consistent with the spirit of the Williams settlement.

## Recommendation

Implement standards that are moderately detailed and that include examples or definitions of items in order to strike a balance between the two schools of thought while still accomplishing the goal of improving California’s school facilities.

## Format of Standards

Some states use handbooks of standards or guidelines based on building and safety codes and/or best practices. Others simply outline parameters or definitions to guide the individual in making appropriate ratings. The manner in which the standards are conveyed may have a significant bearing on the likelihood of conformity. If legislation prescribes that the standards are to be in the form of a tool (similar to the IEI), consideration should be made regarding the objectiveness of the tool. Developing a system for an evaluator that is as objective as possible to determine whether or not a specific component meets the standards would be important to the success of the tool. The following chart provides a summary of possible formatting options:

**Options**

<b>Format</b>	<b>Benefits</b>	<b>Drawbacks</b>
Evaluation Tool (similar to IEI)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Uniformity</li> <li>» Helps small school districts without staff available to create their own evaluation tools</li> <li>» Allows for Statewide data collection</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Not flexible, may not be suitable for all types of schools</li> <li>» Difficult to include in statute</li> <li>» Unnecessary for many school districts that already have a tool</li> </ul>
Narrative Description of Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Flexibility</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» May not be implemented as intended</li> <li>» Does not allow for uniform application of standards</li> <li>» May be difficult to make meaningful comparison between two school districts</li> </ul>
Narrative description as well as providing an optional tool (IEI or similar)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Flexibility</li> <li>» Helps smaller school districts without resources needed to create a customized evaluation tool</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» If the tool is not used by everyone then there are the same drawbacks listed above under the narrative format</li> </ul>

<b>Format</b>	<b>Benefits</b>	<b>Drawbacks</b>
Narrative description as well as requiring a mandatory tool (like the IEI or similar)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>» Uniformity</li><li>» Allows for Statewide data collection</li><li>» Helps smaller school districts without available staff to create their own evaluation tool</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>» Not flexible, may not be suitable for all types of schools</li><li>» Unnecessary for many school districts that already have a tool</li></ul>

In order to determine the format of future standards, as the above chart indicates, the need for uniformity across the State must be considered. A uniform evaluation tool will allow for consistency in evaluation of standards across the State. First, there are many school districts that do not have a facility evaluation tool of any kind. Secondly, there are school districts in California that have developed facility inspection tools and would like to continue to use those local instruments provided they can incorporate the State standards into their instruments. Lastly, there are those that have customized the existing IEI to better suit their local needs and methods of inspection. An example of this is the School Facility Conditions Evaluation Instrument developed and used by the Los Angeles County Office of Education. A copy of a sample evaluation using this tool is contained in Appendix G.

Based on feedback received from the use of the IEI, some respondents desire to continue to have checklist-type tools with instructions for evaluators to use, as it would provide the means to later rate the school. Others felt that a State-mandated checklist may be cumbersome as well as overly-prescriptive and provide little flexibility.

Most workgroup participants expressed a desire to see the standard developed in accordance with the third option, narrative descriptions in statute with an optional tool or checklist, which would provide a balance for school districts large and small. Additionally, a best practices handbook should be provided to assist school districts with incorporating the standards into the other Williams case settlement requirements.

## **Recommendation**

The analysis suggests that the good repair standards should be provided in statute in narrative form. The statute should further direct one or more State agencies to develop a revised school facilities evaluation tool. The tool would be available for use in its exact form or to be modified and adapted for local use as long as the minimum standards contained in the tool are included. As an example, the tool developed by the Los Angeles County Office of Education is a customized version of the IEI and includes other components in addition to the standards contained in the IEI.

## **Rating and Scoring Mechanism**

This report recommends the development of a uniform evaluation tool as discussed in the above section. If the permanent State standard includes a requirement for such a tool, then it must be considered whether it should include a rating of each facility

component and provide the means to assign a score to the facility. The component specific rating would indicate whether a particular component is clean and/or safe and/or functional; while the overall score would indicate whether the school campus is in good repair or not.

The following chart includes a comparison of the benefits and drawbacks to utilizing a rating mechanism or a scoring mechanism:

<b>Options</b>		
	<b>Component Specific Rating</b>	<b>Overall Score</b>
<b>Description</b>	Each component would be evaluated in the form of yes/no, good/fair/poor, or a numerical value.	In an overall evaluation of the condition of the school, each deficiency would be assigned a weight of measurement based upon the number of occurrences and the severity.
<b>Benefits</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Uniformity</li> <li>» Accountability – Provides a means of measurement against other schools.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Takes into account the severity of the deficiencies found at a particular school site.</li> <li>» Accountability – Provides a means of measurement against other schools.</li> </ul>
<b>Drawbacks</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Definitions</li> <li>» Subjectivity of the user</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Scoring may create unforeseen conflicts at the local level by providing an explicit measure of school conditions (in case of poor or inadequate condition of a school).</li> </ul>

A rating and scoring system can provide a meaningful measure of individual school sites, whether good or bad, and also allow for school districts to easily transfer the information to the SARC. The overall facility score can also be a meaningful measure for improvement of facility conditions.

The research findings included in this report indicate that there is a variety of rating and scoring mechanisms that could be implemented to evaluate specific components as well as the overall condition of a facility. The more complex mechanisms can present a challenge for the developers of the tool, but limit the potential liability concerns of some of the evaluators. Rather than requiring the evaluators to decide whether the facility is in good repair or not, the evaluation can include a scoring system with more than two variables, such as Good, Fair, Poor, Unsatisfactory.

Each component included in the IEI is evaluated using a rating mechanism (Yes/No); however, the current version of the IEI is not designed to provide an overall facility score. There was not an overwhelming consensus by the workgroup or the SAB Implementation Committee that a more complex rating system should be part of the standards. However, the need for a scoring system was thoroughly discussed and a majority of the participants were in favor of it.

## **Recommendation**

In the process of developing a model evaluation tool for adoption by school districts, flexibility of the tool should be considered. A flexible tool would allow school districts to implement rating and scoring systems, if desired, provided that the locally adopted tool and evaluation systems are publicly disclosed, easily understood by constituents and applied consistently throughout the district.

## **Enforcement of Standards**

A logical question to ask in creating State standards for school facility conditions is how standards will be enforced. While there may be concern that these standards are enforced at the local level, there are various mechanisms built into the several pieces of legislation implementing the Williams settlement that will assist in the enforcement of standards, for example:

- » Modifications to the Uniform Complaint Process administered by the CDE allow individuals to file complaints regarding school facility conditions not meeting specific requirements.<sup>7</sup>
- » School districts and county offices of education must report annually on the condition of school facilities in the SARC using these standards as a basis.<sup>8</sup>
- » County offices of education are responsible for monitoring all school sites, including the verification of SARC information and identification of emergency facilities needs at school sites ranked in deciles 1-3 on the 2003 API. The results of the county office of education site visits are then reported to the school board.<sup>9</sup>
- » To access State school facility funding under the SFP or the DMP, school districts or county offices of education certify that they have a plan in place to ensure their schools are in good repair.<sup>10</sup>

Taking into account all of the above mechanisms, sufficient oversight and penalties for school districts exist as a result of the changes put into place as part of the Williams settlement. Workgroup participants echoed this sentiment as well. It is important to note that if a rating and scoring system is developed, the enforcement of standards could also evolve to the point of self-enforcement as schools and districts are held accountable and, therefore, strive to attain higher goals.

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<sup>7</sup> EC Section 35186(e)(3)

<sup>8</sup> EC Section 33126(b)(9)

<sup>9</sup> EC Section 1240(c)(2)(E)(ii) and (iii)

<sup>10</sup> EC Section 17070.75(e)

## **Recommendation**

Existing mechanisms appear to be sufficient to ensure enforcement and accountability. At this time, we recommend that no additional measures be taken in this area.

## **Integration with Other Williams Requirements**

Another consideration is the impact that these standards will have on other Williams case settlement requirements. There are several different areas of the EC with references to the term “good repair” that have bearing on all schools in the State and upon the ability of school districts and county offices of education to participate in State school facility programs. The standards developed must be able to merge with those existing requirements and be useful for school districts and county offices of education in completing the SARC and assist the county offices of education in their school site oversight responsibilities.

## **School Facility Inspection System**

Senate Bill 550 added a provision to the State’s SFP and the DMP by requiring that school districts and county offices of education establish a facilities inspection system to ensure that each of their schools, irrespective of the API rating, is maintained in good repair. Out of the 1,047 public school districts in California, 930 school districts participate in the SFP and most districts receive an annual apportionment under the DMP. Since the majority of California school districts are subject to the requirement and will have to implement facilities inspection systems that incorporate good repair standards, these standards must be flexible enough to allow for some local control and easily adaptable to various assessment systems developed at a local level. In addition, the burden on local resources must be considered. Most likely, the definition of good repair that is moderately detailed and requires simple observations rather than professional assessments will have the least impact on district’s resources. In most instances, the school districts will be able to comply with the requirement with resources already available without having to contract for services.

## **The Uniform Complaint Process**

This mechanism allows individuals to file complaints regarding the poor conditions of school facilities and provides students, teachers, and parents with a means of addressing school administrators when a particular facility is not meeting the standards of good repair. The complaint and resolution process can become more meaningful and efficient if the definition of good repair is easily understood by everyone. Good repair standards that are spelled out in a handbook will help to eliminate unreasonable complaints which may be based on individual expectations rather than widely-accepted norms.

## **School Accountability Report Card**

As previously mentioned, the revised SARC template (see Attachment E) adopted by the State Board of Education requires a disclosure of the condition of school facilities and information on needed repairs in accordance with good repair standards. Thus, it provides an accountability mechanism that is tied to a specific definition rather than a free-form description of facility conditions prepared by the school administration as practiced in the past. Since the IEI has been available, the SARC template was amended to include a disclosure of facility components identified on the IEI. The availability of a model evaluation tool, such as the IEI, can provide a meaningful comparison mechanism for SARC users and, at the same time, allow districts to include other relevant information in the annual report of facility conditions.

### **The County Offices of Education Inspections**

The development of a permanent good repair standard will impact the role of county offices of education in their oversight responsibilities. The level of subjectivity involved in making the decision of whether a particular facility meets the standard of good repair is directly proportionate to the degree of inconsistency and the level of responsibility on each individual staff member performing the inspections. It is important that the county offices of education are provided with clear guidelines so that staff is able to make a determination on facility conditions based on objective criteria. Therefore, it will benefit the county offices of education to have the Statewide standards conveyed in a handbook and provide an inspection tool such as an IEI with a comments section.

### **Recommendation**

The development of permanent State standards for good repair must take into account the integration of the standards with other requirements put in place as a result of the Williams settlement. We believe that all of the earlier recommendations made in this report will help achieve a successful integration of the standards with other programs and requirements.

## **Conclusion**

This report purposefully did not result in the development of a specific instrument for California's school districts and county offices of education to use to evaluate and assess whether a particular school facility meets a State definition of good repair. Instead, as required by statute, this report addressed the criteria and options to be considered with recommendations on those options for a permanent State definition of good repair.

Developing a permanent good repair standard for school facilities is a challenging endeavor that must take into account a multitude of issues that exist due to the regional and economic diversity of California. In considering the various aspects of developing a standard that will be meaningful and lasting, it is important to strike a balance given the range of resources available to school districts. The research that led to this report suggests that this balance can be achieved by taking the following measures:

- » Define the goal as having school facilities and educational environment that are clean, safe, and functional; conducive to learning and equally shared by the children of California;
- » Incorporate into statute the standards in narrative form by delineating the components that must be clean, safe, and functional and provide a moderately detailed explanation on what constitutes clean, safe, and functional;
- » Request a development of a model evaluation tool to be used in evaluating the school facility components with sufficient flexibility for adding components and/or rating and scoring system(s) at the discretion of individual school districts and county offices of education;
- » Affirm that sufficient enforcement of standards exist; and
- » Ensure standards coincide with all the Williams settlement requirements.



## **Appendix A: Pertinent Text from the Education Code**

### **EC Section 17002**

(d)(1) “Good repair” means the facility is 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. The instrument shall not require capital enhancements beyond the standards to which the facility was designed and constructed.

(2) By January 25, 2005, the Office of Public School Construction shall develop the interim evaluation instrument based on existing prototypes and shall consult with county superintendents of schools and school districts during the development of the instrument. The Office of Public School Construction shall report and make recommendations to the Legislature and Governor not later than December 31, 2005, regarding options for state standards as an alternative to the interim evaluation instrument developed pursuant to paragraph (1). By September 1, 2006, the Legislature and Governor shall, by statute, determine the state standard that shall apply for subsequent fiscal years.”

## **Appendix B: Interim Evaluation Instrument**

[Note: Appendix B was removed on 12/13/2019 due to the poor quality of the exhibit.  
The original Appendix B can be made available upon request.]

## **Appendix C: Interim Evaluation Instrument Survey**

### **SB 550 Workgroup – School Facility Standards Interim Evaluation Instrument Survey**

Your responses to the following survey will help assist the Office of Public School Construction in evaluating the effectiveness of the Interim Evaluation Instrument (IEI) as part of developing options for state standards required pursuant to Senate Bill 550, Chapter 900, Statutes 2004 (Vasconcellos). If possible, please complete and return the survey prior to Wednesday, September 7th via e-mail or fax (916.445.5526) to Melissa Ley. Your responses will be compiled and used at our meeting on September 8th.

Name of Person Completing this Survey:

Representing:

Number of Schools in district (if applicable):

Number of Deciles 1-3 schools (if applicable):

1. How many times have you utilized the IEI?
2. When using the IEI, were there any good repair items missing that you believe should be included? If so, please list and describe those items.
3. When using the IEI, were there any good repair items that did not seem to be necessary or relevant? If so, please list those items.
4. Was the IEI feasible to use in a school setting? Please explain.
5. Should the IEI have a rating system? If yes, please provide a suggested rating system?
6. Is the IEI helpful in completing the School Accountability Report Card? If no, why not?
7. Do you believe the IEI should be a tool that can be used by any individual with little or no experience in school facility maintenance and construction (i.e. focus is on a visual inspection) or designed for school facilities experts?
8. What do you like about the IEI?
9. What do you dislike about the IEI?
10. Please provide any other comments/feedback regarding the IEI.
11. When evaluating a school campus, would it be easier to evaluate by building or room (i.e. classroom, gym)?

12. Does your district/county office of education utilize the IEI or create its own evaluation tool? If the district/ county office of education created its own tool, please explain why and attach a copy of the tool.
  
13. Do you know of any other school facility evaluation tools besides the IEI or an adaptation of one created by your district/county office of education that might be a useful alternative for us to consider? If so, please describe and provide a copy.

## Appendix D: Interim Evaluation Instrument Survey Results

Survey Questions	Survey Responses	Comments
2. Good repair items missing from the IEI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Cleanliness of the school</li> <li>» Graffiti</li> <li>» Extension cords used as a permanent power source</li> <li>» Playground surface and equipment (more detail than IEI)</li> <li>» Site exterior (more detail than IEI, such as lighting, signage, etc.)</li> <li>» Parking lot surface</li> </ul>	
3. Unnecessary/Irrelevant good repair items on the IEI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Sewer</li> </ul>	
4. Is the IEI feasible to use in a school setting?	<p>Yes: 57%</p> <p>No: 43%</p>	<p>“Yes” Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Simple enough to be used by a principal or head custodian.</li> <li>» It was simple to use, however the questions were worded awkwardly in some cases.</li> <li>» It addressed the relevant building components and mechanical systems.</li> <li>» Very easy to follow.</li> </ul> <p>“No” Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Cumbersome and unwieldy.</li> <li>» After the visit, the data has to be compiled and then entered onto the IEI. Using a classroom checklist is easier.</li> </ul>

Survey Questions	Survey Responses	Comments
<p>5. Should the IEI have a rating system?</p>	<p>Yes: 57% No: 43%</p>	<p>“Yes” Comments:                      » Rating makes the inspection much easier.                      » A 1-6 rating system is currently used. 1 represents an immediate repair need and the 2-6 represents subsequent fiscal years, which then ties to the 5-year plan for Deferred maintenance.                      » Help school site staff know where their school fits—possibly a 10 point scale giving each question a numerical grade.</p> <p>“No” Comments:                      » Process may become more complex.</p>
<p>6. Is the IEI helpful in completing the SARC?</p>	<p>Yes: 43% No: 14% N/A: 43%</p>	<p>“Yes” Comments:                      » Identifies clearly the needed areas for improvement.</p> <p>“No” Comments:                      » Add a SARC verification line.</p>
<p>7. Should the IEI be designed for a visual inspection by individual with little or no experience, or school facility experts?</p>	<p>Visual Inspection: 72% School Facilities Experts: 14% No Response/Response Not Valid: 14%</p>	<p>» Individuals who use the IEI should have a basic understanding of facilities systems, but does not need to be an expert.                      » Having the inspection done by someone familiar with facilities and/or construction gives the inspection value. Having someone do an inspection without this background calls to question the integrity of the inspection.</p>

<b>Survey Questions</b>	<b>Survey Responses</b>	<b>Comments</b>
8. What do you like about the IEI?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Content</li> <li>» Simple to read and fill out</li> <li>» Simplicity</li> <li>» It was easy to understand, comprehensive, and focused on the important building components and mechanical systems</li> </ul>	
9. What do you dislike about the IEI?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» It is not conducive for a walking inspection.</li> <li>» Strangely worded sentences.</li> <li>» Double negatives are confusing.</li> <li>» Format</li> <li>» There was not enough room to write comments in the building/classroom and comment space.</li> <li>» No numerical values- open to too much interpretation/scale of a problem might not be captured appropriately.</li> </ul>	» Notes
10. Any other comments/ feedback?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Change format.</li> <li>» Add a rating system.</li> <li>» Needs to be more user friendly.</li> <li>» The IEI offers easy monitoring for continued improvement.</li> <li>» Not sure it provides valuable information.</li> </ul>	» Notes

<b>Survey Questions</b>	<b>Survey Responses</b>	<b>Comments</b>
11. IEI Format: by building or room?	Room: 71% Building: 29%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Rooms are easier to monitor on follow-up repairs.</li> <li>» By room: usually the facility inspection is done jointly with textbook adequacy survey.</li> <li>» Room by room could get very repetitive and cumbersome in many situations.</li> </ul>
12. Does your district/ county office of education utilize the IEI or create its own evaluation tool?	IEI: 57% Other: 43%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Our evaluation tool contains the items on the IEI, but additional risk management issues were added. In addition, it was made to more closely tie with the Routine Restricted Maintenance and Deferred Maintenance Programs.</li> <li>» The IEI was too difficult to fill out and there was no section to indicate whether the school was in good repair.</li> </ul>



## Appendix E: School Accountability Report Card

The following is an excerpt from the School Accountability Report Card Template for year 2004-05 as published by the California Department of Education.

### IV. School Facilities

#### School Facility Conditions – General Information

Information about the safety, cleanliness, and adequacy of school facilities, including the condition and cleanliness of the school grounds, buildings, and restrooms. Additional information about the condition of the school's facilities may be obtained by speaking with the school principal.

*[Narrative to be provided by the LEA]*

#### School Facility Conditions – Results of Inspection and Evaluation

Data reported are the determination of good repair as documented in a completed Interim Evaluation Instrument, including the school site inspection date, the Interim Evaluation Instrument completion date, and the date of any remedial action taken or planned. Additional information about the condition of the school's facilities may be obtained by speaking with the school principal.

Interim Evaluation Instrument Part	Facility in Good Repair (Yes or No)	Deficiency and Remedial Action Taken or Planned
Gas Leaks		
Mechanical Systems		
Windows/Doors/Gates (interior and exterior)		
Interior Surfaces (walls, floors, and ceilings)		
Hazardous Materials (interior and exterior)		
Structural Damage		
Fire Safety		
Electrical (interior and exterior)		
Pest/Vermin Infestation		
Drinking Fountains (inside and outside)		
Restrooms		
Sewer		
Playground/School Grounds		
Other		

## **Appendix F: Fiscal Crisis Management and Assistance Team Campus/Facilities Review**

[Note: Appendix F was removed on 12/13/2019 due to the poor quality of the exhibit.  
The original Appendix F can be made available upon request.]

## **Appendix G: Los Angeles County Office of Education Evaluation Tool**

[Note: Appendix G was removed on 12/13/2019 due to the poor quality of the exhibit.  
The original Appendix G can be made available upon request.]