

January 28, 2022

California Congressional Delegation
U.S. House of Representatives
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C.

Subject: California K-12 Educational Leaders in Support of ARP Timeline Extension

Dear California Congressional Delegation,

On behalf of the *undersigned California school districts, county superintendents, and statewide educational associations serving California's 6 million public school students*, we write to request your support for a change to the American Rescue Plan (ARP) that would extend the timeline school districts have to expend funding for school construction and capital projects until December 2026.

Congress has played an unprecedented role in supporting school districts throughout this pandemic, and it is in every student and American taxpayer's interest to ensure that the federal funding can be spent in the most effective way possible. Because ARP is one-time funding, updating school facilities to ensure healthier and safer environments and the best possible utilization of classroom space is among the wisest and most consequential investment decisions districts can make. However, if the timeline for ARP funding is not extended, then critical school facility upgrades and major capital improvements may not be a possibility for many districts across California.

This extension is needed for several reasons. First, districts in our state have not yet received all of their American Rescue Plan funding. Second, given the various procurement requirements in ARP and within the state, expenditure approval is not always immediate. Third, the limited number of contractors, architects, and engineers means that it is difficult to even get estimates for these projects in a timely manner. Finally, because of current delays in materials and inflated costs of goods and services, having more time to buy and pay for these materials could lead to lower project costs for districts

Action to extend the ARP timeline is critical as districts continue to finalize spending plans and make final procurement decisions, which is why the forthcoming FY22 appropriations package must extend through December 2026 the timeline for school districts to complete capital construction and improvements using ARP funds. This deadline aligns with the ARP spending deadline for facilities that pertain to local governments.

Our request has no budgetary impact on the federal government, but it does enable districts to invest ARP funding in a way that will benefit children and their communities for years into the future. School buildings are not just used to educate K-12 students. In California, they support Transitional Kindergarten, State Preschool and Regional Special Education Programs. Additionally they are used as voting sites, clinics, and serve many other community purposes. Improved school facilities will not only assist in improving learning and teaching conditions for students and educators, but also allow our schools to continue to be the hub of community life.

We urge you to consider this budgetary request that will further the success of federal investments in K-12 schools.

Sincerely,

Association of California School Administrators
California Association of Black School Educators
California Association of School Business Officials
California School Boards Association
California County Superintendents Educational Services Association
Coalition for Adequate School Housing
Small School Districts' Association

Dr. Mary Barlow, Kern County Superintendent of Schools
Dr. Mary Ann Dewan, Santa Clara County Superintendent of Schools
Dr. Debra Duardo, Los Angeles County Superintendent of Schools
Dr. Edwin Gomez, Riverside County Superintendent of Schools

Compton Unified School District
Elk Grove Unified School District
Fresno Unified School District
Los Angeles Unified School District
Merced City School District
Natomas Unified School District
Oak Park Unified School District
Twin Rivers Unified School District

cc: Honorable Miguel Cardona, Secretary of Education