

GET THE FACTS:

FACILITIES FUNDING & NEW YORK'S PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOLS



Right now, **tens of thousands of public school students in some of the most underserved communities are being denied access to facilities funding** as public charter schools continue to be shut out of state funds for school facilities.

Charter schools are the **only NY public schools** that do not have access to building aid.

No student should ever have to choose between a quality educational program that prepares them for a successful future and a safe, up-to-date learning environment. **The time has come to provide facilities funding for ALL public schools in New York.**

All students deserve to learn and grow in safe, up-to-date school facilities. And that basic right should not come at the expense of educational opportunities. Unfortunately, that is exactly what is happening at hundreds of public charter schools throughout New York **as they are the only public schools in the state that do not have access to building aid.** And while some schools in New York City qualify for rental assistance (*see back page*), this number is limited and **no schools outside of NYC are eligible**, creating even more funding inequity among New York's public schools.

What is the impact on kids?

Without access to building aid, school leaders need to make necessary, and often costly, repairs to school buildings at the expense of programming. Ultimately, this is **shortchanging our state's 182,000+ public charter school students**, as they do not have equal access to well-maintained, safe school buildings without sacrificing classroom and extracurricular opportunities. This is unsustainable and has to change.

How can NY address this funding crisis for public charter schools?

Charter schools are public schools. And students in public charter schools deserve the same opportunities as their district public school counterparts--without having to sacrifice their teachers, extracurriculars and supplies. **No public school student in New York should have to trade books for boilers.** State leaders need to enact and update state policies to help offset the cost of leasing, purchasing, and maintaining public charter school facilities. **The time has come for the state to provide recurring funding in the state budget for public charter facilities.**

Facilities funding for district public schools



Facilities funding for public charter schools

New York provides building aid to district public schools to support the construction, renovation, and maintenance of school facilities. Costs are paid for through state and local funds, many of which are sourced through bonds. Here are just some of the types of building aid that district public schools receive through state funds:

Building Aid for Capital Projects: This includes funding for the construction of new school buildings or the renovation and expansion of existing facilities. Schools may receive aid based on eligible capital project costs.

Rebuilding Schools to Learn Grant: This program supports the reconstruction of schools damaged by natural disasters, such as hurricanes or floods. It aims to help schools rebuild and create better learning environments.

Smart Schools Bond Act: This is a state initiative that provides funding for educational technology and infrastructure improvements. It includes funds for the enhancement of high-speed broadband and wireless connectivity, as well as other technology-related upgrades.

Emergency Capital Project Aid: Schools facing emergency situations, such as building failures or other unforeseen circumstances, may receive aid to address immediate capital needs.

High-Tech Security Grant Program: This program focuses on providing funds to improve school security measures, including the installation of security infrastructure and technology.

When it comes to public charter schools, the only facilities aid currently available is in the form of rental assistance for certain schools located within New York City. According to Education Law passed in March 2014, only those schools authorized within New York City after 2014 or those expanding grade levels/seats are eligible for state facilities funding. The law formalized the process for securing public charter school space by providing either co-located space in a DOE-owned building, private building space provided at no cost through the DOE, or funding to cover rental costs incurred by the charter school (rental assistance).

Public charter schools outside of New York City—as well as schools authorized within NYC prior to the 2014-15 school year who have not expanded—receive no public facilities funds for their public school students.

Unlike district public schools, public charter schools are not eligible for any type of local funding—making it critical that necessary funding come from the state.

ALL public school students in New York deserve access to public funding for well-built, well-maintained and safe schools.

#BooksNotBoilers

