



**DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES
Office of School Construction Grants**

**School Construction – Guidelines for Eligibility:
Renovate as New; New as an Alternative to Renovation**

REIMBURSEMENT RATE

Sec. 10-285a of the Connecticut General Statutes (C.G.S.) defines the percentage reimbursement rate for school building project grants... for which application is made on or after July 1, 2011, (A) ...be ranked in descending order from one to one hundred sixty-nine according to such town's adjusted equalized net grand list per capita, as defined in section 10-261; and (B) based upon such ranking, *a percentage of not less than ten nor more than seventy shall be determined for new construction or replacement of a school building* for each town on a continuous scale, and (ii) *a percentage of not less than twenty nor more than eighty shall be determined for renovations, extensions, code violations, roof replacements and major alterations of an existing school building and the new construction or replacement of a school building when a town or regional school district can demonstrate that a new construction or replacement is less expensive than a renovation...*

RENOVATION STATUS

Section 10-282 (18) of the C.G.S. defines “Renovation” as *“a school building project to totally refurbish an existing building (A) which results in the renovated facility taking on a useful life comparable to that of a new facility and which will cost less than building a new facility as determined by the department... (B) which was not renovated in accordance with this subdivision during the 20-year period ending on the date of application, and (C) of which not less than 75 per cent of the facility to be renovated is at least 30 years old.”*

PURPOSE

The purpose of the above referenced statutes are to support local decisions to “renovate,” build “new,” or “replace” existing school facilities based on the cost effectiveness of a project. To acquire designation as a “Renovation” project, or to demonstrate that “New” or “Replacement” construction will cost less than renovation and, therefore, qualify for the increased reimbursement rate, a school district must prepare a feasibility study and a detailed cost estimate for an existing school facility. The feasibility study and detailed cost estimate needs to be completed by an independent licensed architect and the architect will need to present his/her findings to the department prior to final plan approval.

GUIDELINES FOR ELIGIBILITY:

The Department will use these guidelines to conduct a comparative analysis of project types and determine the cost effectiveness of a project.

GUIDELINES FOR ELIGIBILITY – RENOVATION STATUS

Please be advised that the following items should be submitted, and approval obtained, prior to the submission of a school construction grant application in order to more accurately establish the total project cost, the amount of local funding required for the application, the amount of the state share for the school construction project, and to more accurately establish ineligible project cost prior to the start of construction.

To be considered a “Renovation” project, the following conditions must be met:

1. The project applicant must write a formal letter of request for:
 - (a) “Renovation” designation (as defined under C.G.S. 10-282 (18));
2. The site of the proposed “Renovation” facility must be central to the area served and adequate to provide the educational programs offered.
3. The applicant must go through a process of evaluating the proposed project cost for a new vs. renovation facility by:
 - (a) Providing a feasibility study and cost analysis.
 - (b) Providing a cost estimate from an independent licensed architect documenting that the renovated facility will cost less than building a new facility as determined by the DAS. The total cost of a new construction project is the product of the base standard maximum cost per square foot as established by DAS, presently \$450 a square foot, multiplied by the State Standard Space Specification for a school construction project as defined under the Regulations of the School Construction Grant Program, Section 10-287c-15 (a).
 - (c) Providing a detailed report on all existing building systems including finishes, roofing, plumbing, water supply, fire protection, HVAC, electrical systems, energy monitoring, communications and security systems. If the project is to be designated as a “Renovation” project, then the project applicant must provide signed professional opinions that all systems will have a useful life of 20 years (or that comparable to a new system if less than 20 years) following construction project completion.
4. If the project is to be designated as “Renovation,” the entire facility must be brought into 100 percent compliance with all applicable codes (including handicapped accessibility) upon completion. Partial renovations of an entire facility or complete renovations of a wing of a facility do not qualify for “Renovation” status.
5. If the project is to be designated as “Renovation,” it must incorporate education technology capability throughout the facility, as recommended in the *Guidelines for Technology Infrastructure in Connecticut Schools* (or other current Technology Infrastructure standards).
6. If the project is to be designated as “Renovation,” a structural engineer must determine that the structural integrity of the original building has not been compromised. The original facility must be adequate to provide for continued occupancy for a period of time comparable to that of a new facility.
7. All new and replacement windows must be energy efficient.
8. Any other analysis deemed necessary by the Department to properly evaluate the request must be provided.

DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY:

Upon review of the materials submitted, the Office of School Construction Grants will make a recommendation to the Commissioner of DAS as to the project's eligibility for renovation status (allow 30 days).

The school district shall be notified in writing of the Commissioner's determination.

Note: Statements of compliance with requirement Nos. 3 through 7 must be signed and stamped by design professionals. Requirement No. 8 must be signed by the Superintendent of Schools.

ROOF REPLACEMENT

The roof on a Renovate as New project must have a life cycle of at least 20 years. If a renovate as new project has a roof or a portion of a roof that has been replaced as part of another school construction project and is not being fully replaced, the district must show that the roof has a life of 20 years either through testing or through an extended warranty. If the district decides to replace the roof in its entirety, the district must conduct a cost analysis to show whether it is less expensive to repair the roof sufficient to obtain a twenty year warranty or replace the roof. The lesser option will be the total amount eligible for reimbursement.

GUIDELINES FOR ELIGIBILITY – NEW AS AN ALTERNATIVE TO RENOVATION

To justify qualifying for the increased reimbursement rate for a “New” or “Replacement” project, the district must show that the “New” or “Replacement” project is as a less expensive alternative to “Renovation,” by meeting the following conditions:

1. The project applicant must write a formal letter of request for:
 - (a) Demonstrating “New” construction is less expensive (as defined under C.G.S. 10-285a (B)(ii)) than renovation when renovation may be a viable option.
2. The site of the proposed “New” facility must be central to the area served and adequate to provide the educational programs offered.
3. The applicant must go through a process of evaluating the proposed project cost for a new vs. renovation facility by:
 - (a) Providing a feasibility study and cost analysis.
 - (b) Providing cost estimates from an independent licensed architect that document significant cost savings.
 - (c) Providing a detailed report on all existing building systems including finishes, roofing, plumbing, water supply, fire protection, HVAC, electrical systems, energy monitoring, communications and security systems. If the project is to be designated as a “Renovation” project, then the project applicant must provide signed professional opinions that all systems will have a useful life of 20 years (or that comparable to a new system if less than 20 years) following construction project completion.
4. Any other analysis deemed necessary by the Department to properly evaluate the request must be provided