



Shaping Tomorrow's
Built Environment Today

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November 22, 2021

The Honorable Miguel A. Cardona
Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave SW
Washington, DC 20202

Dear Secretary Cardona:

I am writing regarding implementation of Section 40541 of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act that was signed into law on November 15, 2021. Section 40541 of the bill authorizes the Secretary of Education to award competitive grants to make energy improvements to school facilities. In carrying out this program, the Secretary is to develop and publish guidelines and best practices for schools' energy improvements.

As a non-profit technical and professional society with over 125 years of experience in building heating, ventilation, air conditioning and refrigeration, and with a focus on health and sustainability, ASHRAE offers its technical expertise to the Department of Education in developing the guidance and best practices required for this important program. With more than 51,000 professional members, ASHRAE's develops standards, conducts research, produces hundreds of publications, offers six professional certifications, and provides continuing education and training.

Grants from Section 40541 can be used to make energy improvements to a school's "building envelope, air conditioning system, ventilation system, heating system, domestic hot water heating system, compressed air system, distribution system, lighting system, power system, and controls of a building." These are all areas for which ASHRAE has considerable expertise and can help the Department in developing guidelines and best practices so that the grant funds have the greatest impact on energy improvements. ASHRAE also focuses on improving indoor environmental quality and creating healthy indoor environments for students, teachers and staff.

These indoor air quality goals can go hand-in-hand with energy efficiency improvements. Below is sampling of ASHRAE resources that would be useful to reference in the department's guidelines and best practices. We would also be happy to provide more specific technical information or answer any questions you might have.

- [ANSI/ASHRAE/IES Standard 90.1](#), *Energy Standard for Buildings Except Low-Rise Residential Buildings*, is the benchmark for building energy codes in the United States and has been a key basis for codes and standards around the world for more than 45 years. Compared to a building built using ASHRAE Standard 90-1980, a building built to ASHRAE Standard 90.1-2019 will use less than half the energy.
- [Advanced Energy Design Guide for K-12 School Buildings](#) is a free zero-energy guide that has been developed through the collaboration of ASHRAE, the American Institute of Architects (AIA), the Illuminating Engineering Society (IES), and the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC), with support from the Department of Energy (DOE). For school buildings which may not be ready for zero energy, an Advanced Energy Design Guide that provides recommendations to reduce energy usage by 50% is also available.
- [ASHRAE's Guidance for Reopening Schools and Universities](#) was developed by ASHRAE's Epidemic Task Force (ETF) with the goal of protecting the health, safety and welfare of the world's students from the spread of SARS-Cov-2 (the virus that causes COVID-19 disease).
- [ANSI/ASHRAE Standards 62.1 & 62.2](#) specify minimum ventilation rates and other measures intended to provide indoor air quality that is acceptable to human occupants and minimizes adverse health effects, such as breathing difficulties and sick building syndrome due to poor indoor air quality.
- [IgCC, powered by ANSI/ASHRAE/ICC/USGBC/IES Standard 189.1](#) is a comprehensive green code that establishes minimum regulations for building systems and site considerations using prescriptive and performance-related provisions.

We welcome the opportunity to meet with you or your staff to help develop guidelines to improve energy performance in schools, or to assist with any other aspects of this important newly-authorized program. To schedule a meeting, please feel free to contact me directly or have your staff contact ASHRAE's government affairs staff at GovAffairs@ASHRAE.org. Thank you again for your work to improve education and educational facilities across our nation. We stand ready to help assist.

Sincerely,



Michael CA (Mick) Schwedler, P.E., Fellow ASHRAE, LEED AP
2021-2022 ASHRAE President