

CDBG Disaster Recovery Funds

Eligibility Criteria

Level I – District

1. The school district's parish must have been declared eligible for FEMA Public Assistance for Rita and/or Katrina.
2. The school district's parish must have adopted the latest available base flood elevations of the FEMA Flood Recovery Guidance, unless exceptions have been granted to the parish by the LRA.
3. The school district's parish must have adopted, implemented, or be in the process of implementing, the new statewide building code standards adopted in the 2005 1st Extraordinary Session of the Louisiana Legislature.
4. The school district must be able to demonstrate that it has conducted or participated in a planning process that is integrated with parish, community, and/or neighborhood recovery planning efforts.
5. The school district must be able to demonstrate that its plans for school repair/reconstruction are based on the best available enrollment estimates for that district for the school years '06-'07, '07-'08, and '08-'09, considering population shifts since the storms. This demonstration must include a list of the schools to be reopened and a plan for how these particular schools will meet the needs of the estimated enrollment.
6. The school district will provide assurances and certificates testifying to its adoption of the following: all CDBG and FEMA regulations; all federal and state laws relative to procurement and ethics; agrees to accept CDBG signoff on any insurance settlements or judgments, or to assign litigation rights to CDBG; maintain appropriate documentation; provide timely updated information required by CDBG relative to rebuilding costs; maximize other sources of funding; and provide other assurances as required by CDBG funding regulations.

Level II – School

1. The school at which the project is proposed must be listed as one of the schools to be reopened to meet the needs of the estimated enrollment in its school district.
2. Applicant must be able to demonstrate that they have pursued FEMA Public Assistance grants for the proposed project(s) to the maximum practical extent and that those applications have been determined to be ineligible for such assistance. Applicant must also be able to demonstrate that they have pursued insurance reimbursement to the maximum extent practical.

3. Plans for school repair/reconstruction must consider and/or propose a mitigation plan to minimize damage in the event of future floods or hurricanes.
4. Applicant must demonstrate that the project is the most efficient and cost effective way to repair/reconstruct the school, or that the applicant has considered alternate methods of rebuilding to achieve the greatest efficiency of the school in serving the educational needs of the students as well as other public service needs of the community.
5. Applicant must demonstrate that the following school design best practices, which are detailed under the "Evaluation Criteria" section, have been considered, and included to the extent practical, in the design of the repair/reconstruction project:
 - a. Design Schools that Support Students and Learning as the Primary Consideration
 - b. Enhance Learning by Integrating Technology
 - c. Foster a Small School Culture
 - d. Support Neighborhood Schools
 - e. Create Schools as Centers of Community
 - f. Engage the Public in the Planning Process
 - g. Make Healthy, Comfortable, and Flexible Learning Spaces
 - h. Consider Non-Traditional Options for Schools Facilities and Classrooms
6. Applicant must commit to an ongoing maintenance plan for this facility and demonstrate how this maintenance plan will be funded.

Evaluation Criteria

Identification of Need

Applicant must describe and demonstrate critical need for these funds based on a description of the dollar amount of each of the following for each project:

- amount of damage identified and percentage this represents of damage to school facility
- amount eligible for FEMA PA grant
- amount needed for FEMA match of the grant
- underinsurance penalties
- amount of damage that must be covered with CDBG Infrastructure Program funds as a result of lack of insurance coverage
- amount needed for FEMA-ineligible repairs, not including lack of insurance issues

Students Served

CDBG regulations stipulate that more than 50% of the total amount of funding must benefit low/moderate income population. Consequently, projects to reconstruct schools that serve large numbers of low/moderate income students will be given preference.

Green Building

Preference will be given to projects that include elements of green building, as measured by the nationally recognized LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Green Building Rating System and/or the Natural Resources Defense Council's Green Communities Criteria. Among others, these standards emphasize sustainable site development, water conservation, maximizing energy efficiency, building facilities using renewable materials, and improving indoor environmental quality.

Project Timing

Each project should be categorized as one of the following:

- Short-Term: Repairs/reconstruction needed to open schools at some point during the 06-07 school year
- Long-Term: Repairs/reconstruction needed to open schools during the 07-08 school year and beyond

Note: Facility design criteria will not be applied to applications that represent simple, direct-replacement projects, as determined by the staff assessment team.

Facility Improvement Criteria for Long-Term Repairs/Reconstruction

Projects that incorporate the following school design best practices, including the principles developed by the American Architectural Foundation and KnowledgeWorks, will be preferred.

- 1. Design Schools that Support Students and Learning as the Primary Consideration**
 - provides space for teacher planning, conferences, and professional development, other than the teachers' lounge

- building details, color schemes, and materials are durable and appropriate for intended use
- provides learning spaces in a variety of sizes
- lighting is adequate for tasks with light levels that can be adjusted for a variety of uses
- provides adequate and appropriate space for early childhood programs in schools of appropriate grade configuration
- provides adequate and appropriate space for activities and care of children with special needs
- provides adequate and appropriate space for science labs, foreign language labs, and programs and activities in the areas of music, drama, and the arts
- areas are provided for student socialization

2. Enhance Learning by Integrating Technology

- access is provided to non-traditional technology learning, such as a TV studio and a media program
- personal computing is easily accessible as needed
- connection is available with local and worldwide learning resources

3. Foster a Small School Culture

- schools are organized to promote a small, personalized learning environment, in the appropriate context
- flexible facilities for different sized group work
- technology is in place to support distance learning as an enhancement to on-site classes and other activities as appropriate

4. Support Neighborhood Schools

- located within walking distance of homes and other resources, to the extent practical
- land is available and zoning is appropriate to support a neighborhood school site, subject to local restrictions and/or zoning ordinances
- building design and site layout are responsive to community context

5. Create Schools as Centers of Community

- schools share facilities, as appropriate, with:
 - o libraries
 - o recreational centers
 - o performing arts venues
 - o healthcare, including school-based health clinics
- school site is large enough to meet both educational and community needs, to the extent practical
- parking is adequate to support a variety of programs without intruding on the neighborhood, to the extent practical

6. Engage the Public in the Planning Process

- a support organization of school and community stakeholders is assembled
- a process is in place to obtain input from and provide feedback to stakeholders

7. Make Healthy, Comfortable, Safe, and Flexible Learning Spaces

- spaces are designed with minimal fixed furniture (e.g., bookcases, shelves, etc.)
- furnishings are flexible and durable
- building acoustics provide for appropriate ambient sound levels
- building is user-friendly and easy to monitor for safety and security
- access to the building is effectively monitored
- site circulation is planned for safety and efficiency
- ample space is provided in protected areas for student safety in the event of natural disasters
- storage is adequate for a variety of users

8. Consider Non-Traditional Options for Schools Facilities and Classrooms

- facilities are designed to accommodate handicapped students and staff, and to follow the regulations of the Americans with Disabilities Act
- community resources have been identified as opportunities for collaboration (e.g., local business partners)

Method of Allocation of Funds to School Districts

from Initial LRA Allotment of \$200 Million for School Repairs

The critical repair needs of K-12 schools in the hurricane-affected parishes were initially estimated in February 2006. The total estimated need at that time, including the non-federal match of FEMA PA grants and critical FEMA-ineligible repairs, was \$387 million. The LRA Board, at their July meeting, approved an Action Plan Amendment that allocated an additional \$500 million to the Local Infrastructure program, \$200 million of which was dedicated to school repairs. The reason for allocating only \$200 million to school repairs at this time, as compared to allocating the entire \$387 million, is to avoid over-subscribing that program in light of the large degree of uncertainty in the original estimate. Funds can be added to the school repair allocation by the LRA as needed, but \$200 million should ensure that schools have the match and/or full funding necessary to get up and running again without being held up by funding issues.

The initial allocation of \$200 million represents approximately 52% of the \$387 million currently estimated to meet K-12 repair needs. To ensure equitable distribution of the \$200 million allocation, and to prevent individual districts from receiving a disproportionate share, each district may only apply for up to 52% of the original estimate of need for their district, until such time as updated estimates indicate that more funds should be allocated to the program. The ranking team may grant an exception to the 52% limit for eligible projects where there is demonstrated evidence of critical need. However, in no case shall a district received more than the total amount of their current estimated need.