



**COALITION FOR
EDUCATION EQUITY**
OF ALASKA



Persistent Challenges:

01

Student
Outcomes

02

Aging
Building
Stock

03

Lack of
Funds

Building Stock:

There are 493 schools in the state of Alaska with the *average* age of school buildings currently at 45 years old.

Buildings built before 1980 will have significant code non-compliance, in addition to most of their systems being past their useful life.

For context, roofs, boilers and air-handling units have a typical useful life of 25 years.

For projects off the road-system, oversight during construction has not been robust and thus some maintenance issues can be attributed to installation that did not meet the specifications or manufacturers instructions*

We spend a lot of time talking about improving student performance and the focus is most often on educators and curriculum. Since the widespread “sick” building syndrome in the 80’s and 90’s, Corporate and Healthcare industries have focused heavily on Indoor Environmental Quality (IEQ) and Indoor Air Quality (IAQ) and the how they contribute to productivity. IEQ contributes significantly to student comfort and thus their ability to focus and learn while in school.



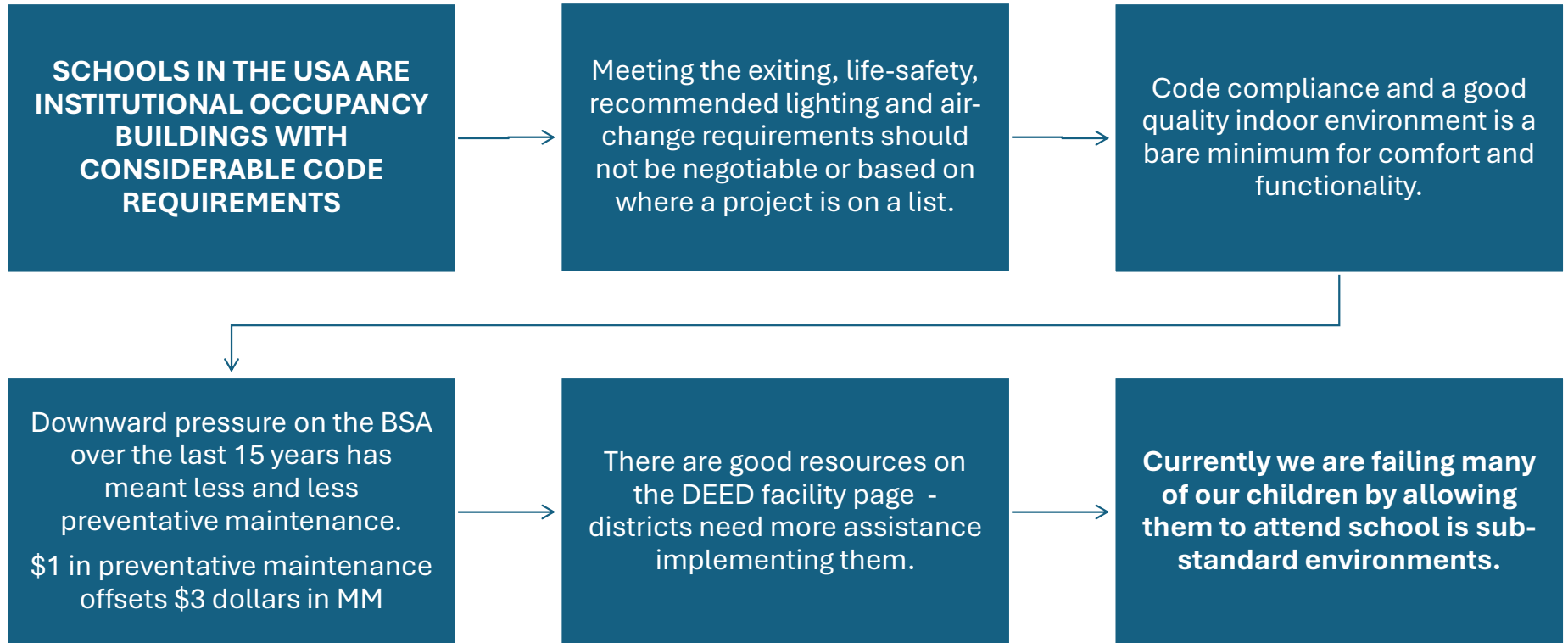
Why Is IAQ Important?

Comparative risk studies performed by EPA's Science Advisory Board (SAB) have consistently ranked indoor air pollution among the top five environmental risks to public health. ***Good IAQ is an important component of a healthy indoor environment and can help schools reach their primary goal of educating children.***

Failure to prevent or respond promptly to IAQ problems can increase long- and short-term health effects for students and staff, such as:

- Coughing;
- Eye irritation;
- Headaches;
- Allergic reactions;
- Aggravate asthma and/or other respiratory illnesses

Nearly 1 in 13 children of school-age has asthma, which is the leading cause of school absenteeism due to chronic illness. There is substantial evidence that indoor environmental exposure to allergens (such as dust mites, pests, and molds) plays a role in triggering asthma symptoms. These allergens are common in schools.



The Challenges of Conducting Routine Preventative and Major Maintenance in Alaska

Cost



The average per square foot cost of new construction is \$600 a sq.ft. in Anchorage.



That cost jumps by 40 to 60% in remote locations, depending on barge service (\$960)



Major Maintenance may or may not cost less depending on the scope, what is being replaced and any economy of scale.



Half of any project is the cost of labor. Remote districts also pay a per-diem for labor.

Additional Cost Factors

- **Contractor and/or labor availability** (there is currently a shortage). Sometimes there is only 1 bidder per project.
- **Materials availability:** Mechanical equipment can have an 18 month lead time; nothing is produced in AK
- **Tariffs currently steel**
- ***Manufacturers who are not willing to sell a product to Alaska because they don't want to warranty it or fly-in personnel to oversee the installation, or repair it under the warranty period.**

Industry standards for Preventative Maintenance:

Cost



Action



Preventative maintenance is \$2.50 a sq.ft.



2% of the operating budget should be set aside for long term accumulated repairs

- **Shift from reactive to preventative maintenance.**
- **Reactive repairs cost \$5-7 a sq.ft.**
- **Scheduled preventative maintenance cost is \$2-3 a sq.ft.**
- **Implement the proposed BFA**

Added challenge of how projects qualify for state funding:

IT'S COSTLY AND TIME CONSUMING

Site visits, architecture and engineering fees, estimate preparation fees are high.

The application itself is onerous and few in smaller districts has the expertise to complete it.

There simply isn't the support available to make recommendations to districts on whether its worth their while to apply.

The Preventative Maintenance Program position and the Project Support position in DEED are vacant as of preparing these slides.

CONCERNS

LIFE – SAFETY AND CODE COMPLIANCE SHOULD BE THE # 1 PRIORITY.

THE CURRENT DRAFT MM LIST HAS:

- 15 FIRE SUPPRESSION OR FIRE ALARM PROJECTS
- 16 ROOF REPLACEMENT PROJECTS
- 3 SEWER/WATER PROJECTS
- 2 GENERATOR PROJECTS

None of them are sitting at # 1

Districts have stopped applying because the projects aren't funded.

Where are we now?

INADEQUATE FUNDING FOR MAJOR MAINTENANCE AND INEQUITY PERSIST DUE TO LACK OF BONDING AUTHORITY AND COSTS.

Despite the BSA increase last year there isn't extra money for maintenance because other costs are consuming the increase.

Each district faces unique maintenance issues, that are hampered by logistics.

We still have schools across the state either without functioning fire-suppression systems, or adequate bathrooms, or sufficient heat, or leaking roofs, or sewage backing up into hallways.

In the five years between 2011 and 2015, the state spent 111% of the recommended amount on school building maintenance.

In the most recent five years, that has dropped to 19%. And the schools are not getting any easier to maintain: The average age of Alaska's school buildings is 45 years.

Recommendations:



Develop a negotiated contract with one design team to assess projects statewide and develop an estimate for the projects: economy of scale.



Adopt the Base Facilities Allocation proposal drafted by AML.



Building Standards.



Incentivize districts to develop either a shared services agreement with larger facilities in their region, or rural districts co-developing a hub for parts and maintenance staff.



Incentivize Anchorage and Fairbanks maintenance companies to do courtesy check-ins with neighboring districts when they are already going to an area to coordinate travel and maintenance tasks/calls. This will largely depend on standardized equipment.



Use the state's bonding capacity to fund some of the critical projects.



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