

School Facilities: Major Maintenance & School Construction



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Kuspuk School District: Jack Egnaty Sr. School (Sleetmute)

Project Status

- Effective July 1, 2024, funds were appropriated by the Legislature to the Department of Education and Early Development for the Sleetmute major maintenance project
- Kuspuk and contracted firms are completing the repair design
- Kuspuk will release a request for proposals from contractors for the repairs in the coming weeks



Kuspuk School District: Jack Egnaty Sr. School (Sleetmute)

How did we get here?

- Submitted Major Maintenance Grant Fund Applications for 19 years - Contracted with SERRC
- Spent \$200,000+ in the last 5 years for professional assessments and to secure reports determining building condition and life/safety concerns for the Major Maintenance applications
- Committed \$400,000 from the district's Capital Improvement Program (CIP) fund
- Secured an emergency construction grant of nearly \$1 million through the Office of Impact Aid + Extension
- Invested extensive time and effort of the Kuspuk Maintenance Department and community members
- Worked with contractors present in Sleetmute to leverage equipment staged in the community for an airport project. (Airport project ended prior to Sleetmute School being funded, so this was not able to be done)

Impact of School Facility Conditions on Student Achievement

School Environment Matters - The physical condition of school buildings directly affects student learning outcomes. **Students in substandard buildings perform 5–17 percentile points lower than those in well-maintained schools**, even when controlling for socioeconomic status.

- Key Facility Factors Affecting Achievement:
 - **Temperature Control:** Ideal classroom temperatures (68–74°F) enhance reading and math performance. Poor thermal control leads to reduced student efficiency.
 - **Lighting & Acoustics:** Proper lighting and reduced noise levels significantly improve student focus and comprehension.
 - **Building Age & Maintenance:** Older, poorly maintained buildings lack essential features for learning, such as proper ventilation, lighting, and soundproofing.

Impact of School Facility Conditions on Teacher Retention

Poor facilities reduce teacher effectiveness and morale, which leads to lower instructional quality. Teachers in deteriorating schools are more likely to leave, even when controlling for other factors.

- Key Facility Factors Impacting Teachers:
 - **Poor Indoor Air Quality (IAQ):** Contributes to teacher illnesses and absenteeism
 - **Inadequate Temperature Control:** Affects both teaching quality and job satisfaction
 - **Insufficient Lighting & Noise Pollution:** Leads to lower teacher morale and increased stress

(Earthman, 2002)

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs & The Impact of Deteriorating School Facilities



Maslow's hierarchy of needs

Students and staff must have their basic needs met before they can focus on learning or teaching effectively.

Deteriorating school facilities disrupt every level of Maslow's Hierarchy, preventing students from focusing on learning and teachers from being effective educators.

Addressing these issues is not just about infrastructure—it's about creating an environment where students and staff can thrive.

The Impact of Poor School Facilities on Maslow's Hierarchy

Physiological Needs (Basic Survival)

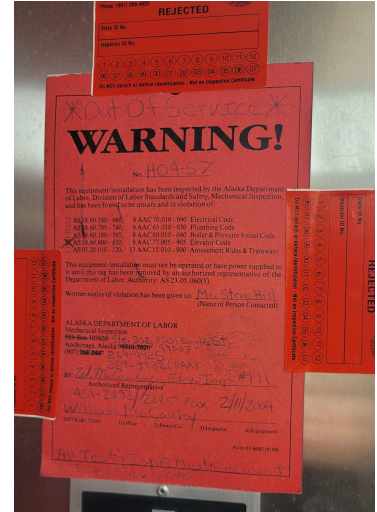
- **Poor Air Quality & Ventilation:** Leads to increased respiratory illnesses, higher absenteeism, and difficulty concentrating
- **Extreme Temperatures:** Classrooms that are too hot or too cold reduce focus, lower cognitive performance, and cause physical discomfort
- **Inadequate Restroom & Sanitation Facilities:** Lack of proper hygiene resources can result in illness, discomfort, and stress for both students and staff
- **Limited Access to Clean Water & Food Areas:** Malfunctioning cafeterias and water fountains affect students' ability to stay hydrated and nourished, impacting energy levels and learning capacity



The Impact of Poor School Facilities on Maslow's Hierarchy

Safety Needs

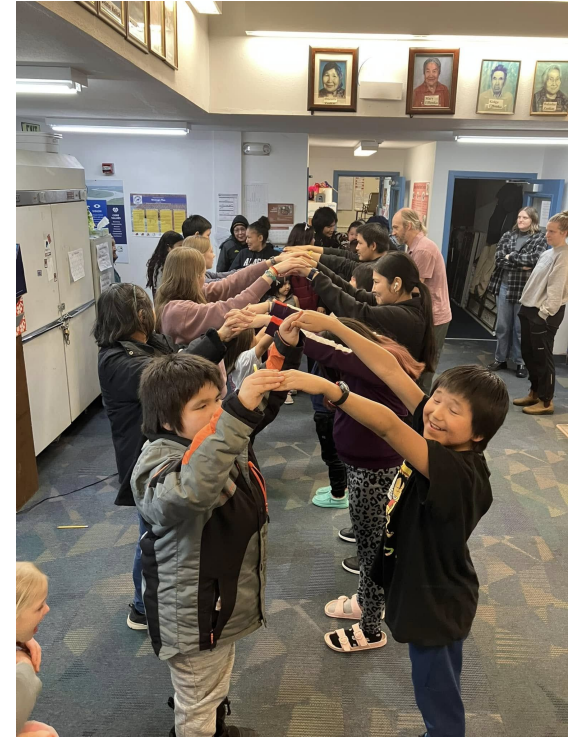
- **Structural Hazards:** Leaky roofs, broken windows, and outdated electrical wiring create unsafe environments for students and teachers
- **Lack of Secure Entrances & Lighting:** Poorly maintained security measures increase concerns about student safety, leading to anxiety and fear in school environments
- **Presence of Mold, Pests, & Unsafe Materials:** Exposure to environmental hazards can lead to long-term health risks and discomfort



The Impact of Poor School Facilities on Maslow's Hierarchy

Love & Belonging

- **Students Feel Undervalued:** Attending a school in poor condition can create a sense of neglect, reducing motivation and school engagement
- **Teachers Experience Isolation & Burnout:** Working in a deteriorating facility decreases morale, reducing staff collaboration and professional enthusiasm
- **Community Disconnect:** Parents and the surrounding community may disengage when school conditions are visibly poor, weakening support networks for students



The Impact of Poor School Facilities on Maslow's Hierarchy

Esteem Needs

- **Lack of Pride in School Environment:** Students in rundown schools may feel ashamed or embarrassed, affecting self-esteem and motivation
- **Teachers Feel Unappreciated:** Working in poorly maintained schools makes teachers feel undervalued, increasing dissatisfaction and turnover
- **Negative Perception of Learning Quality:** Poor facilities contribute to the stigma that students in underfunded schools receive a lower-quality education, discouraging ambition



Self-Actualization

- **Reduced Motivation & Future Aspirations:** If students feel unsupported by their environment, they may disengage from academic and career goals
- **Inhibited Teacher Effectiveness:** Without a comfortable, functional space, teachers struggle to inspire and challenge students, reducing overall educational quality

Going Forward from a Superintendent's Perspective

School Districts Need:

1. A process for address emergency life & safety needs
2. The Governor's Office and DEED to work together to assess needs and report to the Legislature
3. Reasonably predictable funding for school facilities that is not a \$0 proposed budget

Structured Solution to Address the Statewide Problem:

1. Field work: Governor's Office, Legislators, DEED
2. Collaboration: Governor's Office, Legislators, DEED, School & District Administrators
3. Legislative Committee Work

References

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Thank you! Questions?

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