



Shaping Tomorrow's
Built Environment Today

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2020-2021 ASHRAE President

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January 28, 2021

Dear State Education Commissioners, School Superintendents, and School Officials:

Thank you for the work you are doing to protect students, teachers, and other workers in America's educational facilities during the coronavirus pandemic. As funding is distributed to states from the recently enacted Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2021, I hope you will utilize technical information from ASHRAE in your decision-making regarding state and local investments to optimize the health and safety of educational facilities.

ASHRAE, the American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air-Conditioning Engineers, founded in 1894, is a global society advancing human well-being through sustainable technology for the built environment. In March 2020, ASHRAE established an Epidemic Task Force to help deploy technical resources to address the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic and possible future epidemics as it relates to the effects of heating, ventilation, and air-conditioning systems on disease transmission. Guidance has been developed for several building types and operational conditions, including for school buildings and facilities. This includes ASHRAE's [guidance for school buildings](#) and [guidance on reopening schools and universities](#).

The Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2021, which was signed into law on December 27, 2020, provides an additional \$82 billion for the Education Stabilization Fund to prevent, prepare for and respond to the coronavirus. Within that allocation, and per Section 313, the U.S. Secretary of Education is to allocate 67% of these funds to elementary and secondary schools through State educational agencies. The funds can be used for a variety of purposes including "School facility repairs and improvements to enable operation of schools to reduce risk of virus transmission and exposure to environmental health hazards, and to support student health needs," and for "Inspection, testing, maintenance, repair, replacement, and upgrade projects to improve the indoor air quality in school facilities, including mechanical and non-mechanical heating, ventilation, and air conditioning systems, filtering, purification and other air cleaning, fans, control systems, and window and door repair and replacement."

To help ensure that these investments optimize health and educational outcomes, we recommend that you reference ASHRAE's technical resources and distribute them to all decision-makers involved with educational facilities. A summary of this guidance ([guidance for school buildings](#) and [guidance on reopening schools and universities](#)) is included as an attachment to this letter.

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ASHRAE stands ready to help provide additional technical resources and answer questions. For assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me, or email GovAffairs@ashrae.org. We look forward to hearing from you and hope to be of service. Thank you again for your attention to the health and safety of students, teachers, and all those who learn and work in school facilities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Charles E. Gullledge III, P.E." The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial 'C'.

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Enclosures