

Building Excellent Schools Today (BEST)

The Colorado Department of Education Division of Public School Capital Construction Assistance primarily administers a capital construction grant program known as Building Excellent Schools Today (BEST). The BEST Program focuses on helping public schools with a multitude of capital construction needs; from new roofs and boilers, to major renovations and new schools. The goal of the BEST Program is to provide first class, high performing, 21st century facilities and help alleviate health and safety concerns throughout Colorado.

The BEST Program is a competitive grant program available to all public school districts, charter schools, institute charter schools, boards of cooperative educational services and the Colorado School for the Deaf and Blind.

Grant applications are reviewed on a yearly cycle and recommended for funding by the Capital Construction Assistance Board. The board consists of nine appointed members who in conjunction with Division staff review all grant applications for the current fiscal year.

Revenue Sources

The BEST Assistance Fund has four revenue sources:

- State Land Trust Funds
- Colorado Lottery Spillover Funds
- Marijuana Excise Taxes
- Interest

Types of Grants

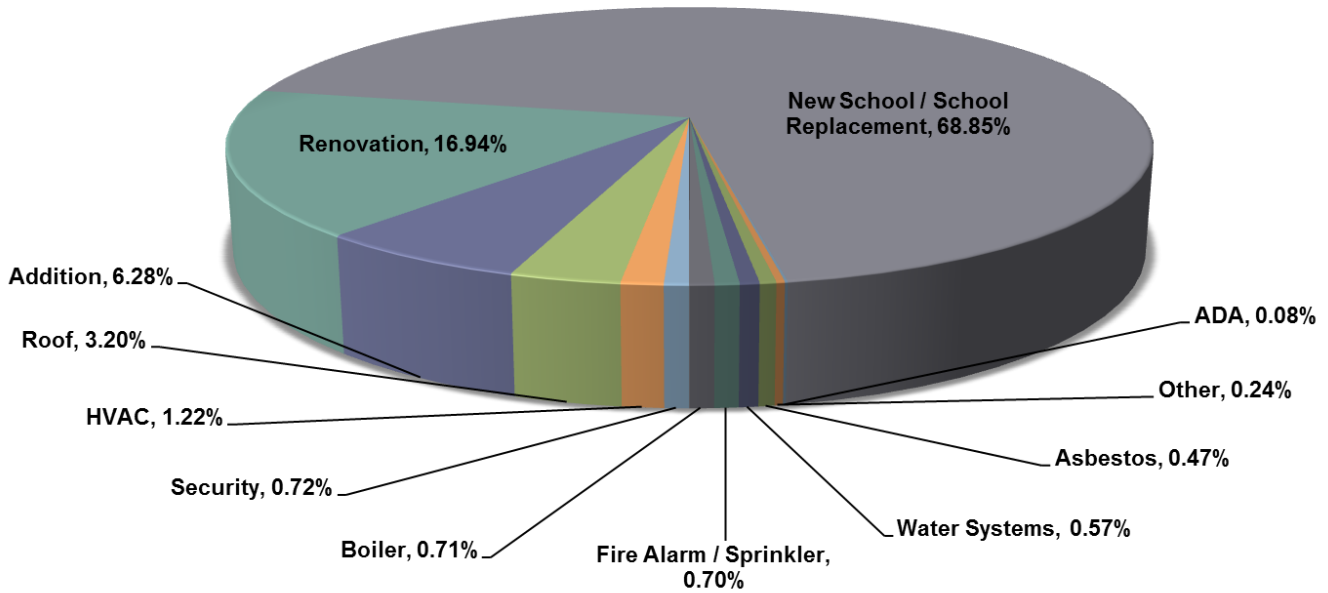
There are three types of grants available from the BEST Program:

- **BEST Cash Grants**, typically used to fund smaller projects like roofs, boiler replacements, fire alarms, etc.
- **BEST Lease-Purchase Grants**, typically used to fund larger projects like new schools, major renovations and additions. These grants are financed and the financing is paid back with future assistance fund revenues.
- **BEST Emergency Grants**, for an unanticipated event that makes all or a significant portion of the building unusable for educational purposes or threatens the health or safety of the occupants.

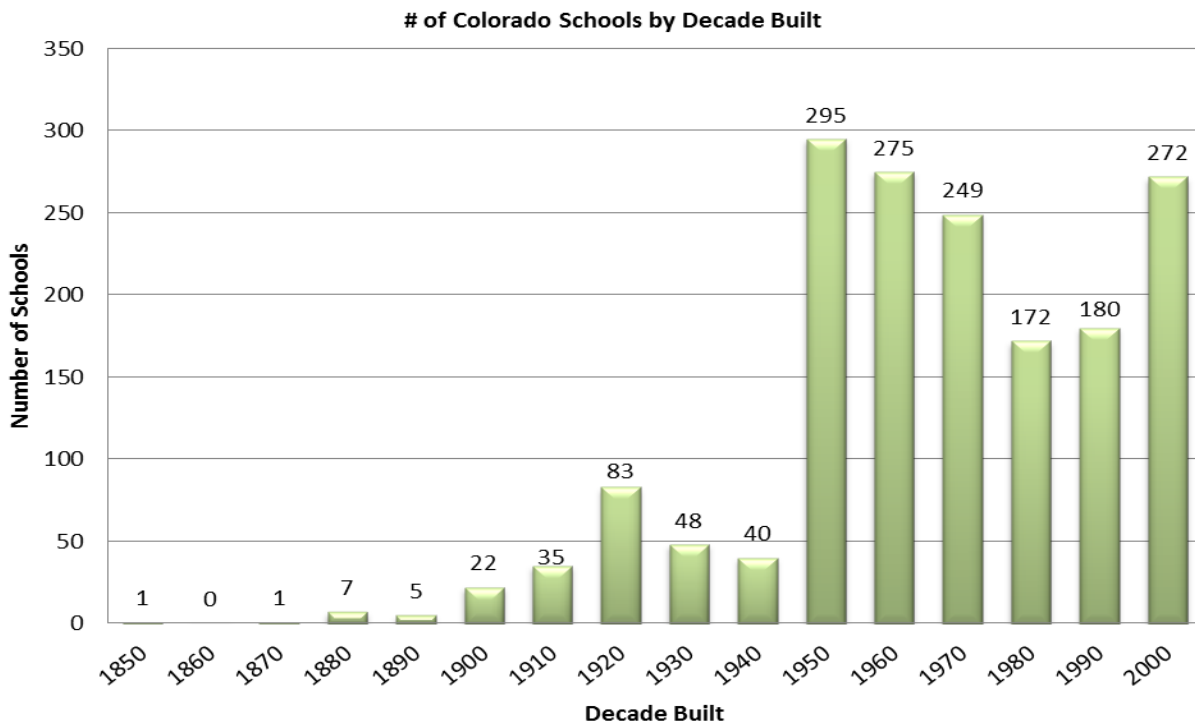
BEST Accomplishments

- BEST has funded 209 grant applications in 114 school districts.
- BEST has funded \$1,087,524,508 in needy public school capital construction projects, from \$2.48 billion in requests.
- BEST has improved health, safety & security in 325 school facilities.
- BEST has provided an environment that is conducive to learning for more than 125,600 students.
- BEST has helped create and support more than 18,430 jobs. *(As of Dec. 2013, includes direct, indirect & induced jobs. Analysis provided by the Colorado Department of Local Affairs).*
- Through a statewide facility assessment, 8,419 facilities were inventoried and more than 139 million square feet were assessed to determine a need of \$17.9 billion in capital construction projected through 2018.

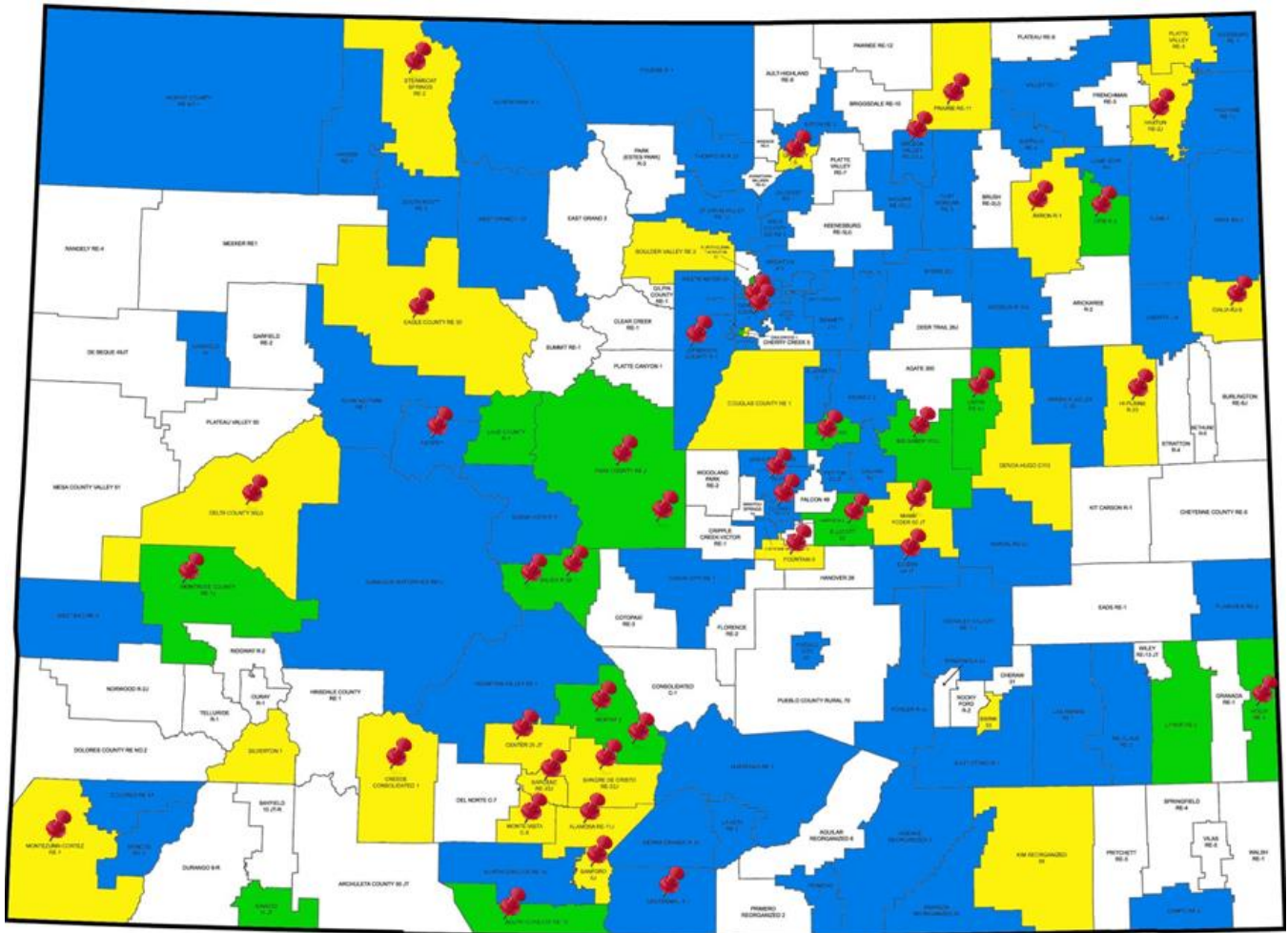
BEST has funded \$1,087,524,508 in needy public school capital construction projects, from \$2.48 billion in requests. The graph below shows the types of projects that have been funded.



In 2010, there were 1,685 public schools in Colorado. The national average age of a school building is 42 years old, while Colorado schools are on average 40 years old. Colorado schools median date built is 1971 with 15.59 percent (Colorado) & 28 percent (national) being built before 1950, 32.66 percent (Colorado) & 45 percent (national) being built between 1950-1969, 20.51 percent (Colorado) & 17 percent (national) being built between 1970-1984, and 31.24 percent (Colorado) & 10 percent (National) being built after 1985.



BEST Projects Funded by District



- BEST Lease-Purchase Project
- BEST Cash Project
- BEST Cash & Lease-Purchase Project
- BEST New Schools

Where can I learn more?

- Capital Construction Assistance webpage: www.cde.state.co.us/cca
- Building Excellent Schools Today (BEST) Program information: www.cde.state.co.us/cdefinance/CapConstBEST
- Capital Construction Assistance Resource page: www.cde.state.co.us/cdefinance/capconsttechnical

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