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PUBLIC POLICY
INSTITUTE OF CALIFORNIA

Improving K-12 School Facilities in California

Technical Appendices

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Appendix A. FIT Assessment Data

As part of the *Williams* settlement, Senate Bill (SB) 550 (2004) directed the Office of Public School Construction to develop the Interim Evaluation Instrument (IEI) as a definition of good repair for school facilities. The law also required the legislature to adopt a permanent standard of good repair by September 2016, which was achieved by the passage of Assembly Bill (AB) 607. In addition, SB 550 requires that school districts and county offices of education participating in the School Facilities Program after July 1, 2005 to establish a facilities inspection system. Nearly all school districts participated in the School Facilities Program (Office of Public School Construction 2020).

AB 607 adopted the existing IEI definitions in statute, expanded the good repair standards to include the overall cleanliness of school facilities, and added a ranking and scoring system to evaluate the conditions of schools on or before July 1, 2007. The result for the requirements is the Facility Inspection Tool (FIT), which was adopted by the State Allocation Board on June 27, 2007.

The FIT is designed to identify areas of a school site that are in need of repair based on a *visual* inspection of the site. Good repair is defined to mean that the facility has met the minimum standards to ensure that it is clean, safe, and functional. In other words, good repair is synonymous with no deficiencies in facility conditions. FIT specifies 15 sections for facility inspection. The inspector reviews each of the 15 sections, and notes the number of good repairs (i.e., no deficiency), deficiencies, and extreme deficiencies in each section. The 15 sections are further grouped into 8 broad categories in SARC reporting. The textbox below includes examples for each category.

After the site inspection, an overall school site score is determined by computing the average percentage rating of the eight categories; however, schools with the highest overall ratings may still have repairs and deficiencies. In addition, our analysis finds a large degree of inconsistencies in the reporting of overall ratings, suggesting that schools may have approached this differently. Because of these reasons, we do not use overall score in this report.

We built a web scraper in Python to download all SARC reports that were posted on the California Department of Education's website (www.sarconline.org) in middle March.¹ This gave us more than 7200 SARC files with complete FIT data, which in total cover 72 percent of the K-12 student population. Because the SARC's files are PDFs, we used natural language processing tools to process the PDFs and extract FIT data. We then merged the FIT data with school and district characteristics including student enrollment, geographic location, high-need students share, capital expenditure, district assessed value, and participation in the School Facility Program.²

¹ Annual SARC is due on February 1 but some schools may not post it on time.

² This methodology for compiling data from the SARC documents is analogous to the one used in Gao and Lafortune, 2019.

TABLE A1

Examples of FIT facility standards

		No deficiency (good repair)	Deficient (fair)	Extremely Deficient (poor)
Systems	Gas Leaks	Safe, functional, and free of leaks		Gas leak; gas pipes are broken
	Mechanical systems	HVAC functional and unobstructed	Facilities not ventilated	HVAC not operable
	Sewer	No sewer line stoppage	Sanitary system does not control odor as designed	Flooding caused by sewer line back-up
Interior	Interior surfaces (floors, ceilings, walls, and window casings)	Clean, safe, and functional	Hazards from missing tiles, holes	Hazards from tears and holes; water damage
Cleanliness	Overall cleanliness	School grounds, buildings, common areas, and individual rooms appear to have been cleaned regularly	Drinking fountain and food preparation or serving areas not clean	Accumulated refuse, dirt and grime
	Pest/Vermin Infestation	Pest or vermin infestation not evident	Live rodents observed	Major pest or vermin infestation
Electrical	Electrical (interior and exterior)	Electrical system working properly	Lighting flickering; noise from light fixtures	Power failure; exposed electrical wires
Restrooms/ Fountains	Restrooms	Maintained and cleaned regularly	Not stocked with toilet paper, soap and paper towels	
	Sink/Fountains (inside and outside)	Accessible and functional	Drinking fountain not accessible	Water leaks
Safety	Fire safety	Equipment and emergency system functioning properly		Emergency alarms not functional
	Hazardous materials (interior and exterior)	No hazardous materials	Paint peeling, chipping or cracking	Hazardous materials not stored properly
Structural	Structural damage	No structural damage	Cracks	Ceiling and floors sloping
	roofs	Functional	Visible damage	Roof needs replacement
External	Playgrounds/School grounds	Safe, clean, and functional	Cracks, trip hazards, and holes	
	Windows/Doors/Gates/Fences (interior and exterior)	No safety or security risk	Cracks in windows	Broken glass

SOURCES: Office of Public School Construction, Facility Inspection Tool Example. 2020.

Appendix B. Supplemental Tables and Figures

TABLE B1

Districts with higher per-student capital expenditures and assessed values generally have better conditions

	Capital Outlay (per pupil) Quartiles				Assessed Value (per pupil) Quartiles			
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
1+ deficiencies	44.7%	39.0%	43.6%	29.3%	42.8%	40.2%	32.8%	38.5%
2+ deficiencies	22.4%	18.5%	22.0%	16.0%	21.8%	19.1%	17.2%	19.9%
3+ deficiencies	9.3%	8.4%	11.5%	8.1%	11.1%	8.3%	8.1%	11.6%
Any extremely deficient	18.5%	13.1%	19.2%	12.2%	20.0%	17.2%	10.5%	15.2%
Number of Schools	1119	1654	1769	2327	1739	1722	2593	718

SOURCES: FIT assessment results, 2018-19 SARC report cards; SACS financial data; authors' calculations.

NOTES: Data are weighted by student enrollment.

TABLE B2

Percent of schools with deficiencies (unweighted analogue of Table 1 in main text)

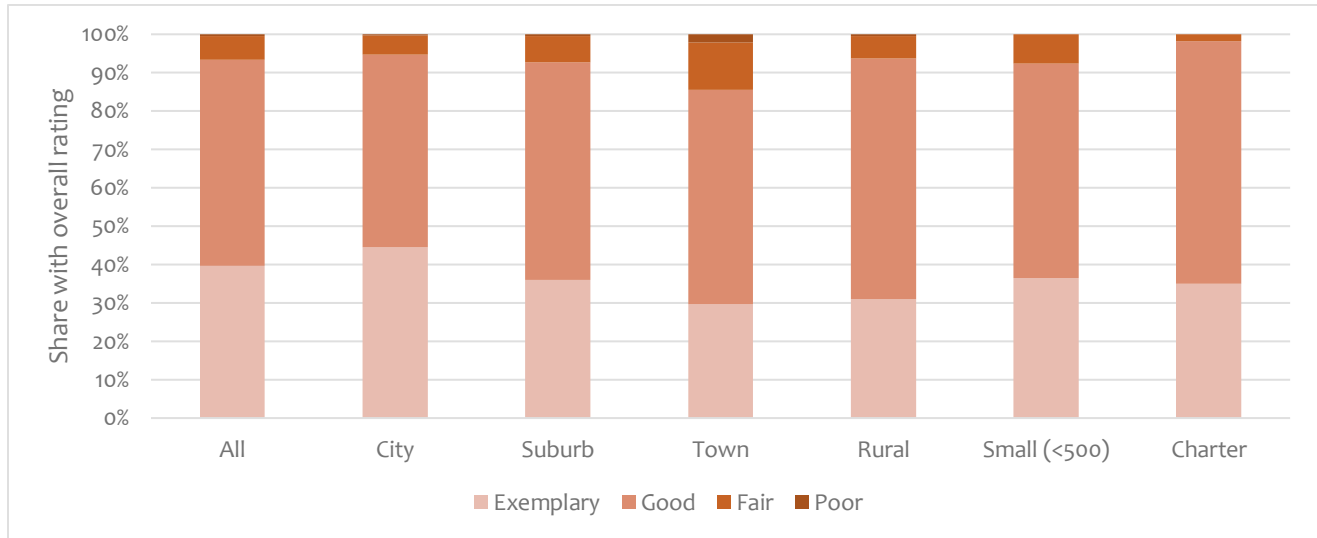
	Overall	City	Suburb	Town	Rural	Small Dist (<500)	Charter
1+ deficiencies	37.0%	35.0%	39.6%	39.8%	34.0%	30.7%	25.9%
2+ deficiencies	18.7%	16.4%	20.7%	22.6%	19.3%	16.2%	13.0%
3+ deficiencies	8.8%	6.8%	10.2%	12.3%	9.9%	7.9%	6.7%
Any extremely deficient	14.8%	14.7%	13.7%	19.7%	15.9%	11.0%	4.1%
Number of Schools	7,385	3,443	2,732	664	523	290	1,023

SOURCES: FIT assessment results, 2018-19 SARC report cards; authors' calculations.

NOTES: Data are unweighted; weighted results are reported in Table 1 in the main text.

FIGURE B1

FIT results, by “Overall” school condition

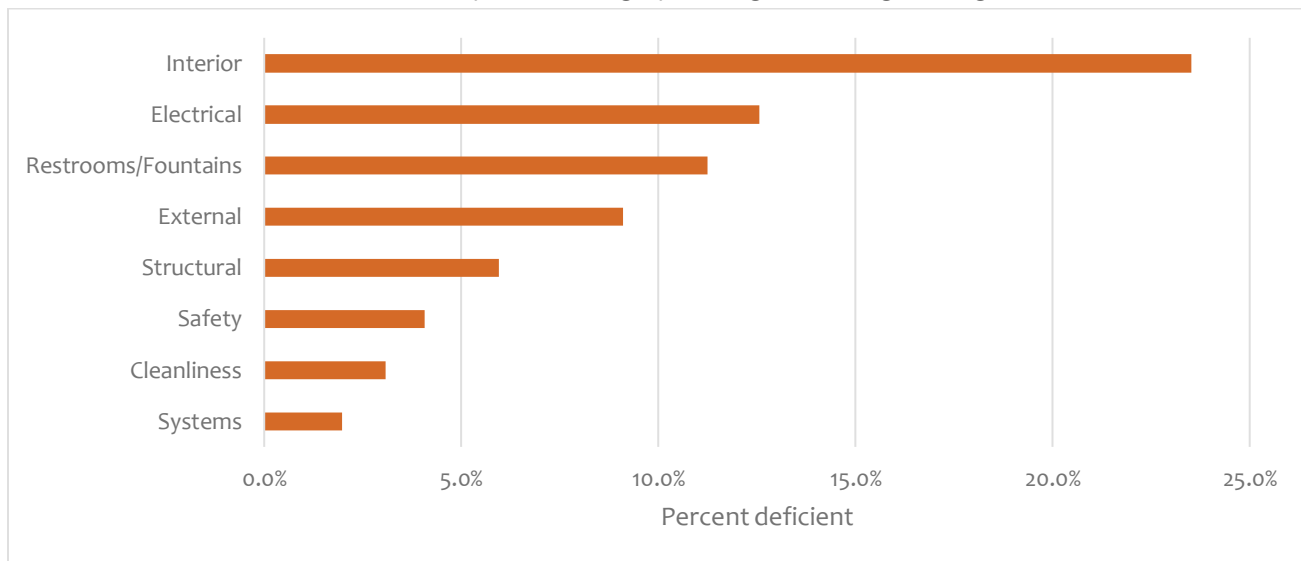


SOURCE: FIT assessment results, 2018-19 SARC report cards; authors’ calculations.

NOTE: 1. Exemplary and good ratings do not mean that schools are free of deficiencies. Based on the state’s guidelines, exemplary schools may have deficiencies that are either not significant or impact a very small area of school. Schools with good ratings could have deficiencies that are isolated or in the process of being mitigated. 2. “Overall” ratings are inconsistently aggregated across schools, and are therefore a less reliable indicator of school conditions than the specific subcomponent results. 3. Data are weighted by student enrollment.

FIGURE B2

Percent schools with at least one deficiency in each category (unweighted analogue of Figure 2 in main text)



SOURCE: FIT assessment results, 2018-19 SARC report cards; authors’ calculations.

NOTE: Data are unweighted; weighted results are reported in Figure 2 in the main text.



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