

State Requirements

By regulation 4 AAC 31.010, the Alaska State Department of Education & Early Development requires the chief school administrator, under the direction of the local school board, to be responsible for preparation of educational specifications for all new public elementary and secondary schools, as well as additions and renovations of existing facilities, for which state aid is sought. The question of whether a capital project requires educational specifications often arises for there are many capital projects, such as a roof replacement or mechanical upgrades, that do not require educational specifications. It is the department's policy to require educational specifications on any project that alters the configuration of the building's spaces or the manner in which those spaces are to be used. Therefore, all new school construction projects, additions, and renovations typically require educational specifications that include, at a minimum, the following elements:

- The current year and five-year post-occupancy projected attendance area enrollments in the grades (*grade levels*) affected by the facility;
- A statement of educational philosophy and goals for the facility;
- The curriculum to be housed by the facility;
- The activities that will be conducted in the facility;
- The anticipated community uses of the facility;
- The general and specific architectural characteristics desired;
- The educational spaces needed, their approximate sizes in square feet, their recommended equipment requirements, and their spatial relationships to other facility elements;
- The size, use, and condition of existing school spaces in the facility (*additions and rehabilitations only*);
- The recommended site and utility requirements;
- The proposed budget and method of financing; and
- The technology goals of the curriculum and their facility requirements.

Additional regulations in 4 AAC 31.020 identify guides for planning educational facilities as well as the method of determining allowable square footage for a school facility. Regulations 4 AAC 31.021 and 31.060 stipulate the process of application for state aid for school capital projects. Regulation 4 AAC 31.022 outlines the requirements for review of capital project applications. Further information regarding the review and scoring of capital project applications is available with the CIP Application & Instruction packet that is distributed to all school districts each year. Regulations 4 AAC 31.030 and 4 AAC 31.040 address the review and approval of school construction plans. Copies of the school facility regulations are available in electronic form online through the Alaska legislature's website (www.akleg.gov) as well as in print form through commercial vendors.

A school district's six-year capital improvement project (CIP) plan is closely related to the educational specifications for a given project. The requirements of the six-year CIP plan are

identified in statute AS 14.11.011 and regulation 4 AAC 31.011. Regulations 4 AAC 31.021 and 4 AAC 31.022 address the six-year CIP plan's relationship to and integration with a school district's CIP request. The six-year CIP plan is also a component of the overall district master plan. As such, it serves as support for individual programs for design and educational specifications.