PROJECT BRIEF
Oregon Task Force on School Capital Improvement Planning:
The Schools Our Students Deserve
March 2014 - October 2014

DELIVERABLES
A four part program to make state general obligation bonding an instrument for investment in Oregon’s 197 school districts. The program consists of 14 recommendations to the Oregon State Legislature to:

- Authorize $125 million in new bonding for PreK-12 matching grants;
- Establish an Office of School Facilities;
- Provide technical assistance and grants to expand school district participation in the program; and
- Launch the Oregon School Facilities database.

CHALLENGES
Most of Oregon’s public K-12 schools are decades out-of-date, posing life-safety hazards and technological challenges for a 21st century education. Few districts are managing to raise the capital they need to keep schools up-to-date. Oregon needs a plan to provide financial and technical assistance to help 197 local school districts pass school bonds that address key issues:

- Deferred maintenance at Oregon’s K-12 schools totals at least $7.6 billion.
- 43% of Oregon school districts have tried and failed, or not tried at all to pass capital bonds since 1997. Some districts make four or more attempts to win voter approval before succeeding with a bond or local option levy.
- Oregon is out of step with most other states in not having established statewide planning and funding for local school facilities.

STRATEGY
Partner with and provide support to the legislatively appointed Task Force on School Capital Improvement Planning to research and develop solutions to make capital investments in Oregon’s public schools, including:

- Researching funding for K-12 capital needs.
- Analyzing bond and local-option levy election data across the state to identify patterns and develop an approach to help districts pass bonds in the future.
- Assist in developing technical assistance for districts to undertake capital construction programs.
- Draft, edit, and finalize the Task Force’s report and recommendations for the legislature.

RESULTS
The Task Force’s research, report, and recommendations were used to draft Senate Bill 447 for the 2015 Legislative Session. Legislators approved the bill, authorizing $300 million toward school facilities improvements and technical assistance.

FULL REPORT
Read the executive summary and full report at: pdx.edu/cps/profile/schools-our-students-deserve-statewide-school-facilities-program-oregon-report