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News Release

Public School Capital Construction Assistance Board Adopts BEST Rules And Will Distribute Funds As Early As March

At a meeting held Wednesday, Nov. 19, the Public School Capital Construction Assistance Board adopted the Building Excellent Schools Today (BEST) 2008-2009 rules as emergency rules. This will allow the board to prioritize projects and distribute money in 2008-2009, before the statewide facilities assessments are complete.

The online application for BEST funding will be ready within the second or third week of December. Applications will be due on Friday, Jan. 16 or Friday, Jan. 23, 2009 depending on when the application opens. The funds will be awarded in March.

Projects that received funding from the previous CDE capital construction grant program and require additional funding for completion will be given priority. One or more pilot projects may be funded if districts have passed bonds for matching funds and CDE has been involved in detailed assessments.

"It is exciting to be rolling out this program," said Ted Hughes, Director of BEST. "I look forward to providing workshops and presentations detailing the BEST process over the next few weeks and months."

The board also approved the adoption of Full-Day Kindergarten Rules as permanent rules and the Public Schools Capital Construction Guidelines as permanent rules.

The nine-member board oversees what is known as the "BEST" legislation, approved by the 2008 Colorado State Legislature. BEST stands for Building Excellent Schools Today.

The BEST legislation increases the level of financial assistance provided to school districts, charter schools, institute charter schools, BOCES, and the Colorado School for the Deaf and Blind for capital construction projects.

It's anticipated that BEST legislation will provide approximately \$500 million for capital projects including new schools, major renovations, additions and smaller projects. With local matching contributions, the \$500 million may be leveraged to as much as \$900 million or \$1 billion.

The next scheduled meeting of the Capital Construction Assistance Board will be held Tuesday, Feb. 24 and Wednesday, Feb. 25 to review BEST applications and recommend applications to the Colorado State Board of Education. A public hearing will be scheduled soon for the 2008-09 BEST rules.

For more information on the Capital Construction Assistance Board and to read board minutes, visit <http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdefinance/CapConstCCAB.htm>

For more information, contact Mark Stevens, 303-866-3898, or Megan McDermott, 303-866-2334, in the CDE Office of Communications. To sign up for the CDE e-mail news service, please visit <http://www.cde.state.co.us/Communications/index.html>.

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