

REVITALIZING AMERICA'S SCHOOLYARDS ACT (S. 4258/H.R. 8303)

Talking Points

- Across the United States, millions of students attend schools with aging asphalt schoolyards that lack trees, shade, outdoor classrooms, and opportunities to connect with nature.
- Schoolyards are more than playgrounds—they are essential community assets that support student health, learning, recreation, environmental education, and neighborhood resilience.
- Green schoolyards improve students' physical and mental health. They encourage outdoor learning and physical activity, and they have been shown to improve academic performance and environmental literacy.
- Schoolyards designed with trees, native plants, rain gardens, permeable surfaces, and other nature-based features help reduce urban heat, manage stormwater, improve air quality, expand biodiversity, and strengthen community resilience.
- Schools in underserved communities often have the fewest outdoor learning opportunities and are disproportionately affected by extreme heat, flooding, and limited access to green space.
- Landscape architects are uniquely qualified to plan and design green schoolyards that integrate nature-based solutions, outdoor learning environments, recreational opportunities, accessibility, and community needs into a single cohesive design.
- Green schoolyards are a smart investment. According to the Congressional Research Service (CRS), green infrastructure can be built for 5–30 percent less and maintained for approximately 25 percent less than gray infrastructure.
- Federal investments can help communities overcome the financial barriers that often prevent schools from planning and constructing high-quality green schoolyards.
- Extreme heat is causing frequent and intense rainfall, leading to severe flooding, property damage, and human health concerns.
- The Revitalizing America's Schoolyards Act would establish a competitive grant program within the U.S. Department of Education to support the planning, design, and construction of green schoolyards for public schools.
- The legislation supports projects that incorporate trees, native vegetation, outdoor classrooms, learning gardens, natural play spaces, and green stormwater infrastructure while prioritizing schools serving economically disadvantaged communities.
- The legislation also directs the Department of Education to develop national best practices and technical assistance to help schools plan, design, construct, and maintain high-quality outdoor learning environments.
- **The ASK** — House of Representatives: Cosponsor H.R. 8303, the Revitalizing America's Schoolyards Act, to help public schools create healthier, greener, and more resilient outdoor learning environments that benefit students and their communities.
- **The ASK** — Senate: Cosponsor S. 4258, the Revitalizing America's Schoolyards Act, to help public schools create healthier, greener, and more resilient outdoor learning environments that benefit students and their communities.