

*Prepared for outreach purposes by the
[California Alliance for Clean Air in Schools](#).*

(1) What is the CalSHAPE Ventilation Program?

The California Schools Healthy Air, Plumbing, and Efficiency ([CalSHAPE](#)) Ventilation Program is a grant program created by [AB 841](#), introduced by Assemblymember Phil Ting. It is administered by the California Energy Commission (CEC). CalSHAPE Ventilation Program grants fund work to improve indoor air quality and energy efficiency in schools. They [can pay](#) for qualified workers to:

- Install CO₂ monitors;
- Install MERV 13 or better filters where feasible;
- Verify ventilation rates;
- Assess HVAC systems and needs; and
- Make HVAC repairs, replacements, and upgrades to increase function and energy efficiency.

(2) When are applications for CalSHAPE Ventilation Program grants due?

By May 31, 2024, but to meet the CEC's June 1, 2024 deadline for grant agreements to be executed, school districts should apply by May 1, 2024, if possible. Awards are being made now on a rolling basis.

(3) Can my school district apply for a CalSHAPE Ventilation Program grant for school sites that aren't in underserved communities?

Yes. While some prior funding rounds were limited to high-priority school sites, school districts are now able to apply for a CalSHAPE

Ventilation Program grant for **all [school sites](#)** that fall within the service territory of a funding utility: Pacific Gas and Electric Co. (PG&E), Southern California Edison Co. (SCE), San Diego Gas & Electric Co. (SDG&E), or Southern California Gas Co. (SCG).

(4) Do CalSHAPE Ventilation Program grants require any match funds?

No.

(5) Can school sites without HVAC systems still benefit from a CalSHAPE Ventilation Program grant?

Yes. Under the CalSHAPE Ventilation Program, there are three "[pathways](#)":

- the **HVAC Assessment and Maintenance Pathway** for school sites with at least one HVAC system not scheduled for replacement within 2 years (including decentralized or unit HVAC systems as well as central HVAC systems);
- the **Scheduled for Replacement Pathway** for school sites where all HVAC systems are scheduled for replacement within 2 years; and
- the **Limited or No Mechanical Ventilation Pathway** for school sites that do not have an HVAC system.

CalSHAPE can pay for school sites without HVAC systems to receive CO₂ monitors and HVAC needs assessment. Even in places where HVAC systems have not been used in the past, such assessment is important because increasing [extreme heat events](#) and [ambient air pollution](#) will more broadly necessitate mechanical ventilation and filtration.

(6) If school sites have newer HVAC systems (e.g., funded through Prop 39, ESSER, or local bond measures), can they still benefit from a CalSHAPE Ventilation Program grant?

Yes. A 2017 [study](#) found that only 22% of classrooms in 37 recently constructed or renovated U.S. schools with HVAC met recommended minimum ventilation rates. In 2020, researchers from UC Davis and the Lawrence Berkeley National Lab published a study finding that [recent school HVAC retrofits were not delivering the ventilation rates required by California law](#). Using CO₂ level measurements, these researchers discovered that 85% of the 94 classrooms sampled lacked adequate ventilation. They recommended periodic HVAC systems testing and CO₂ monitoring to help detect and correct ventilation problems. Even if HVAC systems at a school site were recently installed, the HVAC assessments, adjustments, maintenance, repairs, replacements, and upgrades, as well as CO₂ monitors, funded by CalSHAPE can help to ensure that all systems are properly functioning.

(7) Will my school district be in stiff competition against other school districts for a CalSHAPE Ventilation Program grant?

No. Unlike some other grants, applying for a CalSHAPE Ventilation Program grant [does not](#) require an elaborate supporting narrative. Instead the [key inputs](#) involve site information, proof of ownership/lease, proposed work, and a contractor's estimate for that work.

If a grant application for eligible work is properly completed, a school district can expect to receive a notice of proposed award (NOPA). Post-NOPA, an award should be issued as long as the school district executes the [necessary paperwork](#) and funds are available in school sites' enrollment-based tier and funding utility service territory.

(8) I'm not sure how to find a contractor who can provide an estimate. Are there any resources available?

Yes. The California Association of Sheet Metal and Air Conditioning Contractors, National Association (CAL SMACNA), a non-profit trade association, worked with the CEC's CalSHAPE Program team to develop training for contractors. A list of contractors who completed the training can be found [here](#). Other reputable, licensed contractors can also provide an estimate and complete CalSHAPE-funded work as long as they use a [qualified workforce](#) as required by state law and comply with [program guidelines](#). Using skilled, trained workers helps ensure work is done to a high standard.

(9) If my school district misses the deadlines to apply and execute a grant agreement for this round of CalSHAPE Ventilation Program funding, can it apply during a later round?

No, likely not, unless the CalSHAPE Program is extended by the Legislature in the future. The CalSHAPE Program is scheduled to [sunset on January 1, 2027](#). If the sunset date remains unchanged, due to project lead times the current round of funding is anticipated to be the last.

(10) Can I get more general information or answers to specific questions about the CalSHAPE Ventilation Program?

Yes. You can visit the [CalSHAPE Program website](#) for more general information or contact the CEC's CalSHAPE Program team with specific questions at CalSHAPE@energy.ca.gov. Some notable CalSHAPE Ventilation Program resources available on the website include:

- [Round 5 Notice of Funding Availability](#)
- [Program Guidelines](#)
- [Application Instructions](#) and [Checklist](#)
- [Application Portal](#)