

U.S. Departments of Homeland Security and Education Release Toolkit of Federal Resources to Help Rebuild Puerto Rico's School Infrastructure

Release Date: ?? 21, 2022

Guaynabo, Puerto Rico – Today, the Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), and the U.S. Department of Education released a toolkit outlining federal resources available to help Puerto Rico recover and rebuild safe, healthy, and modernized school facilities. The Departments of Energy and Labor, as well as the Environmental Protection Agency, also collaborated on the toolkit.

The toolkit focuses on four key aspects to supplement ongoing recovery efforts in the education sector: planning and design, workforce readiness, contracting and procurement, and project review. In addition, the document includes a directory with technical assistance opportunities and information on other funding sources from federal partners.

"As Puerto Rico continues to rebuild, recover, and reimagine a future of security and prosperity for all of its families, DHS will be there every step of the way," said Secretary of Homeland Security Alejandro N. Mayorkas. "I encourage officials to use the resources available to them through the federal government to build safe and resilient schools for teachers and students."

"All children deserve to have the opportunity to learn and thrive in safe and functioning educational facilities," said FEMA Administrator Deanne Criswell. "FEMA is proud to continue supporting Puerto Rico through this important phase of work."

"The Biden-Harris Administration is committed to supporting a full recovery in Puerto Rico grounded in dignity, equity, and respect," said Secretary of Education Miguel Cardona. "Education is a critical component of full recovery, and access to



FEMA

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first-class facilities is a first step in providing all students in Puerto Rico—the island of my roots—with the high-quality education they deserve."

This toolkit was generated by the [White House Working Group on Puerto Rico](#), which was launched in July 2021 to provide Puerto Rico the resources and technical assistance it needs to recover and prosper.

After multiple natural disasters, Puerto Rico has access to extensive recovery resources, including more than \$2 billion in FEMA Public Assistance for school infrastructure related to recovery. Additionally, billions more in federal education and COVID-19 relief funds are available to assist with addressing and recovering from COVID-19. These funds may also include upgrades to school infrastructure, depending on the program.

To date, FEMA has obligated over \$25.9 billion towards response and recovery efforts in Puerto Rico. FEMA is helping rebuild large parts of the island and supporting the government of Puerto Rico's plan to restore critical services systems and build capacity in a manner that is both fiscally sound and resilient against the impacts of future disaster.

On Jan. 27, 2022, at 3pm ET/4pm AT, the White House will host a webinar where agencies will discuss the toolkit and resources it identifies. The webinar will be held on Zoom and requires advance [registration](#).

To see the full toolkit, visit: [Interagency Technical Assistance Toolkit for School Infrastructure in Puerto Rico](#) (or in [Spanish](#)).

For more information on Puerto Rico's recovery from Hurricane María, please visit fema.gov/es/disaster/4339 and recuperacion.pr.

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