

The total grant under this subsection is \$4,350,000.]

SECTION 3. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That:

~~(a) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, in counties for which the State share of eligible costs for public school construction projects is less than 75%, the State shall provide 75% of the eligible costs for public school construction projects for any school in which 50% or more of the students in the school are eligible for free and reduced price meals under the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act, 42 U.S.C. 1751, et seq.~~

~~(b) The provisions of this Act shall be construed to apply only prospectively and may not be applied or interpreted to have any effect on or application to any project initiated before the effective date of this Act.~~

SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect July 1, 2002.

(a) There is a Task Force to Study Public School Facilities.

(b) The task force shall review, evaluate, and make findings and recommendations regarding the following issues relating to the State's public school construction program:

(1) whether public school facilities are adequate to support programs funded through an adequate operating budget as proposed by the Commission on Education Finance, Equity, and Excellence in its January 2002 Final Report;

(2) the equity of the State's public school construction program, particularly the equity of the State and local cost shares for school construction projects;

(3) whether the Aging Schools Program should be continued as a permanent program;

(4) whether the State should provide a greater share of eligible costs for:

(i) schools with 50% or more of the students eligible for free and reduced price meals;

(ii) small schools constructed or renovated in a priority funding area; and

(iii) schools in qualified distressed counties as defined in Article 83A, § 5-701 of the Code; and

(5) any other matter that the task force determines to be relevant to an evaluation of the adequacy and equity of the State's public school construction program.

(c) The task force shall be composed of 21 members as follows:

(1) a chairman, appointed by the Governor;