

THE SCHOOLS HVAC CHANGE LAB

The Change Lab is a catalytic initiative that invites collaboration to address the urgent infrastructure crisis facing U.S. schools. Forty-one percent of schools require HVAC installations or replacements, with 14,000 schools lacking air conditioning entirely. This crisis jeopardizes learning and health for 50.8 million students, leading to more than 14 million missed school days annually due to conditions like asthma and poor indoor air quality. The root causes are not a lack of technical solutions, but deep, persistent barriers:



Insufficient staff to manage complex infrastructure projects



Fragmented access to trusted information and funding



\$85 billion annual gap in school infrastructure investment

Theory of Change

The HVAC Change Lab serves as a proof-of-concept for a powerful theory of change, testing whether a coordinated action network can overcome fragmentation and deliver value that individual nonprofits and initiatives acting alone cannot. Rather than launching with theoretical assumptions or diluting our capacity by working on multiple issues, **the Change Lab will focus on a specific problem: HVAC upgrades—a solvable, measurable, and high-need problem.**



Center for Green Schools

nbi new buildings
institute



National Center on
School Infrastructure

The Change Lab will test and demonstrate how a centralized, coordinated support network can close gaps in staff capacity, technical expertise, and access to funding. Helping districts reduce project risk and accelerate high-impact HVAC upgrades in under-resourced schools.

Through this pilot, the Change Lab will achieve the following outcomes:



Student health: Deliver measurable improvements in indoor air quality and student outcomes across 8–15 pilot schools, supporting healthier learning environments and attendance.



Project acceleration: Unlock stalled projects and improve implementation outcomes through coordinated communities of practice and targeted 1:1 technical assistance.



Capital leveraged: Expand equitable access to financing and incentives by enabling districts to leverage tax credits, performance contracting, green banks, and public and philanthropic funding.



Coordinated networks: Build and activate a coordinated national impact network of districts, nonprofits, technical experts, funders, and policymakers to streamline support and reduce fragmentation.



Capacity built: Create a field-tested toolkit and best-practice playbook grounded in real-world district implementation experience.



Model scalability: Establish a scalable, evidence-based model for collective action that can be applied to future school infrastructure and sustainability challenges.

We welcome support from organizations and companies that are excited to support healthy and efficient schools. We are asking for larger sponsorship levels because of this initiative's intent to scale and its impact potential.

Funding levels and benefits to supporters:

Sponsor Benefit	\$25,000	\$50,000	\$100,000
Representation in Marketing Materials (combined 37,000 subscribers)	☒	☒	☒
Host Speaker for Topical Convening to Participating Districts	☒	☒	☒
Representation on Two HVAC-related Publications		☒	☒
Attendance and Logo at One In-Person Event		☒	☒
Attendance at School District 'HVAC Community of Practice' Meetings		☒	☒
Resource Co-Creation: Co-design HVAC Decision Making Tool			☒
Resource Co-Creation: HVAC Technical Best Practice Guidelines			☒

Your organization's support of the Change Lab will help to create not just better schools, but a powerful, network-centered engine for lasting transformation across the entire system of K-12 education.