Growth of Solar Schools

5,489 K-12 solar schools in U.S.

Cumulative Installed Capacity (Megawatts)

Falling Costs

The cost of installing solar in schools has decreased more than 60% over the last seven years.

School solar installations produce 1.4 million megawatt-hours of electricity annually, enough to power over 190,000 homes.

California leads the nation with 1,946 solar schools and 489 megawatts of installed solar capacity.

SOLAR SCHOOLS STATE BY STATE

Why Are Schools Going Solar?

Saving Money
An investment in solar can reduce electricity bills.

Staying Safe
Solar can provide backup power during emergencies and outages.

Helping the Environment
Solar schools offset about 1 million metric tons of carbon dioxide per year. That’s equivalent to taking 221,000 cars off the road or planting 27 million trees.

New Learning Opportunities
Students gain hands-on exposure to solar power to help with their education in STEM subjects.

About 5% of U.S. schools use solar. That’s 95% left to go!
LET’S GO SOLAR!
A HOW-TO GUIDE FOR SCHOOLS

Assess Interest and Identify Solar Champions
- Find and engage key students, teachers, parents, staff, or community members
- Identify leaders who can advocate for the project
- Educate the school community on benefits and opportunities of solar
- Build consensus

Determine Energy Savings, System Size, and Economic Feasibility
- Assess your current energy use and costs
- Determine the energy savings potential from solar
- Consider rooftop, parking lot, and ground-mounted systems
- Estimate project costs

Identify Financing Options
- Determine if system will be financed as part of a larger capital improvement campaign
- Determine whether district will own the system or will accept third-party ownership
- Investigate federal, state, and utility incentives
- Determine if net metering is available

Identify Regulatory Requirements
- Understand state and local regulations
- Anticipate, plan, and budget for regulatory requirements
- Address regulatory constraints where feasible

Prepare and Issue the Request for Proposal
- Include information on project feasibility and regulatory requirements in the RFP
- Make sure to follow all state procurement procedures
- Establish common criteria and scoring parameters

Evaluate and Select the Solar Installer
- Aim for at least three submissions from qualified and experienced installers
- Consider educational opportunities when weighing proposals
- Evaluate responses, select and negotiate a contract with the preferred contractor

Download the Brighter Future report at www.TheSolarFoundation.org/Solar-Schools
Learn how your school can go solar at www.GoSolarSchools.org