

Calif. school builders seek 2016 bond

By Jim Miller, Sacramento Bee

School-construction and home-building groups Monday launched an effort to qualify a \$9 billion school bond for the November 2016 ballot, only days after Gov. Jerry Brown released a budget plan that minimized the state's role in paying for building new classrooms and modernizing existing ones.

The last state school bond was in 2006, and the pot of new construction and modernization money is virtually empty, with a \$2 billion backlog in applications for assistance. Besides putting students in aging or overcrowded classrooms, officials warn that the situation could trigger a 1998 state law that would double developer fees on new homes.

"Every child deserves access to safe, secure, modern learning environments," Joe Dixon, the chairman of the Coalition for Adequate School Housing and an assistant superintendent at the Santa Ana Unified School District, said in a statement Monday from the pro-bond Californians for Quality Schools. "This is an investment in the development of our state's future workforce, and will help ensure our children are prepared to compete in a 21st Century global economy."

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