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Two out of five public school buildings in California are at least 50 years old — built long before we knew anything about the climate crisis. These schools rely on antiquated technologies that are expensive to repair and may create health hazards rather than solve them. To protect students and teachers from climate-related harms and to move schools closer to the State target of net zero emissions, campuses should:

1. Adopt sustainable construction practices;
2. Power schools with solar technology and battery storage;
3. Electrify building energy systems to transition away from fossil fuel dependence;
4. Upgrade heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) systems to electric heat pumps;
5. Improve the efficiency of water use;
6. Create green schoolyards that increase shade and reduce the presence of asphalt and other impervious surfaces and create a buffer against flooding;

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Amid the uncertainty of climate change, schools must be  
places of social-emotional support for students experiencing

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