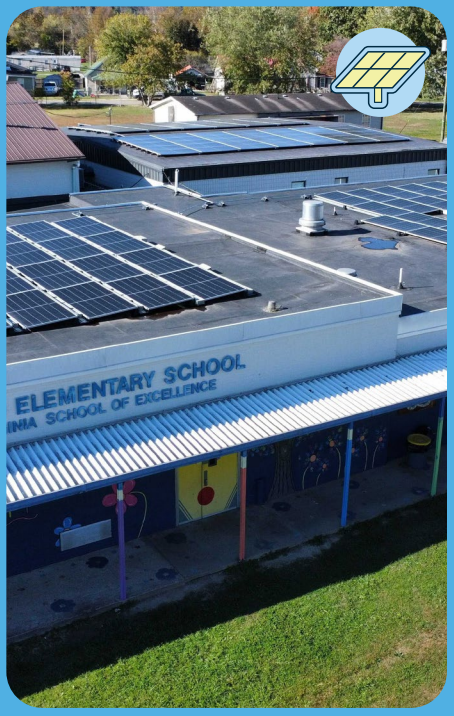
Generation180

SIXTH EDITION
AUGUST 2026

Brighter Future

The State of Solar and Battery Storage in U.S. K–12 Schools



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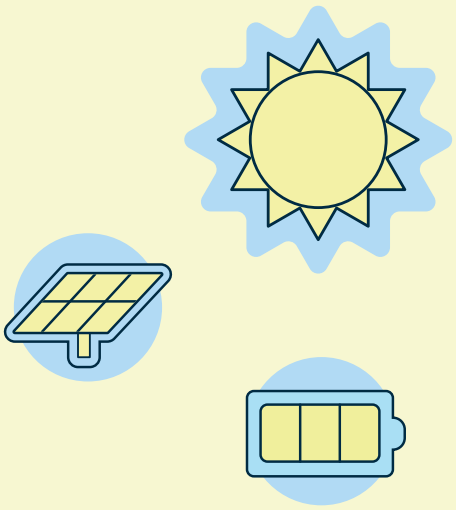

About Generation180

Generation180 is a national nonprofit organization working to inspire and equip people to take action on clean energy. We lead national education campaigns to electrify homes, buildings, and transportation and partner with trusted messengers—such as school leaders, EV owners, and content creators—to tell clean energy success stories and inspire action.

Through our nationwide Electrify Our Schools program, Generation180 is working toward a future in which all of our K-12 schools are completely powered by clean energy. Our campaign advances the transition to clean energy in the following ways:

Leading the way with research and advocacy

Generation180 analyzes and reports on key opportunities for schools to access the financial and educational benefits of clean energy. We advocate for policies that remove financial and administrative barriers.

Empowering and connecting school leaders

Generation180 supports and empowers a School Leadership in Clean Energy (SLICE) Network. This peer network connects superintendents, school board members, operations and facilities directors, and other leaders who champion clean energy in their schools and support the growth of renewables across the education sector.

Providing support to access clean energy

Generation180 expands opportunities for all schools to benefit from clean energy by providing free resources, support, and technical assistance to schools.

Sharing success stories and inspiring action

Generation180 shares clean energy success stories and best practices from school districts around the country. Through reports, blogs, videos, presentations, and digital content, we help schools recognize the benefits of going solar and identify opportunities in their own communities.

generation.180 | generationoneeighty | generation180 | generation1806

Acknowledgments

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We sincerely thank all the organizations, schools, solar companies, utilities, and government agencies that contributed data to this report. Without their time and support, this census and report would not be possible. Our appreciation goes to the following partners for their contributions to our dataset:

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SOLAR PHOTO | PRICHARD ELEMENTARY, WAYNE COUNTY SCHOOLS, WV | CREDIT: SOLAR HOLLER

KEY FINDINGS

State of Solar and Battery Storage in U.S. K-12 Schools

STATE OF SOLAR

10,840 schools
Number of schools with solar energy systems

2.4 gigawatts (GW)
Cumulative solar capacity

225 kilowatts (kW)
Average solar energy system size

9%
Percentage of K-12 schools with solar energy systems

STATE OF BATTERY STORAGE

155 schools
Number of schools with battery energy storage systems (BESS)*

94 schools
Solar and battery storage

61 schools
Battery storage only

0.1%
Percentage of K-12 schools with battery storage*

**Only includes BESS installed since 2016*

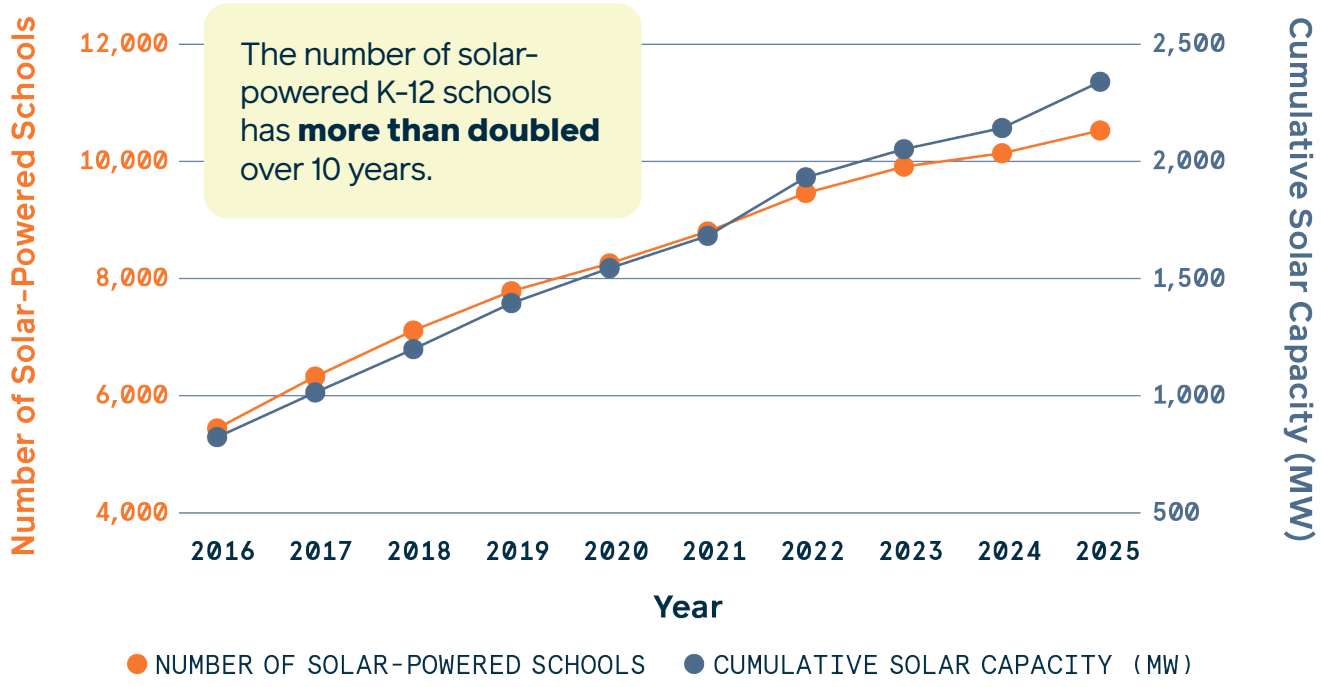
Our nation's K-12 schools generate enough solar energy to **power the electricity use of all the households in Austin, TX—that's over 450,000 homes.**[1]

1 in 7 students (over 7 million) attends a solar-powered K-12 school.

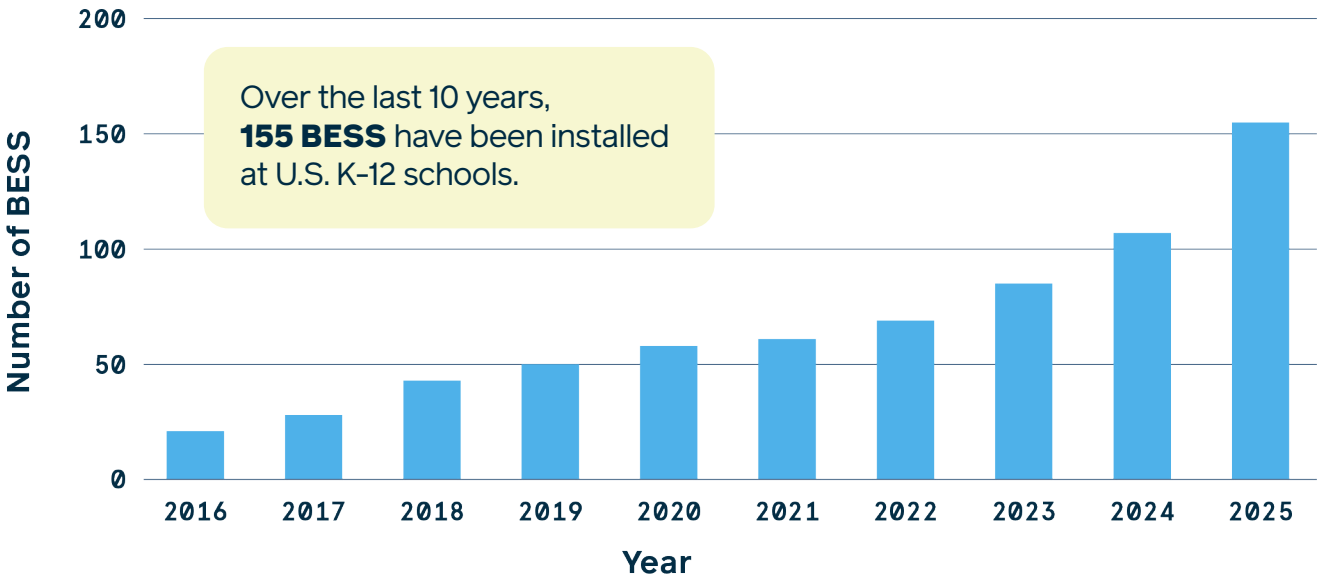
1 U.S. EPA, "GREENHOUSE GAS EQUIVALENCIES CALCULATOR", HTTPS://WWW.EPA.GOV/ENERGY/GREENHOUSE-GAS-EQUIVALENCIES-CALCULATOR; U.S. CENSUS BUREAU, 'QUICK FACTS: AUSTIN, TEXAS', HTTPS://WWW.CENSUS.GOV/QUICKFACTS/FACT/TABLE/AUSTINCITYTEXAS, ACCESSED ON JULY 15, 2026.

Growth of Solar and Battery Storage in U.S. K-12 Schools

Growth in Solar Adoption by U.S. K-12 Schools*



Growth in Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS) at U.S. K-12 Schools*



*CUMULATIVE THROUGH THE END OF EACH YEAR

Ownership of Solar and Battery Storage in U.S. K-12 Schools

Direct Ownership

Includes funding from grants, donations, government funds, cash, loans, and bonds.

Third-Party Ownership

Includes power purchase agreements, leases, energy service agreements, and off-site community solar.

Average solar capacity by ownership type*

280 kW

Third-party ownership

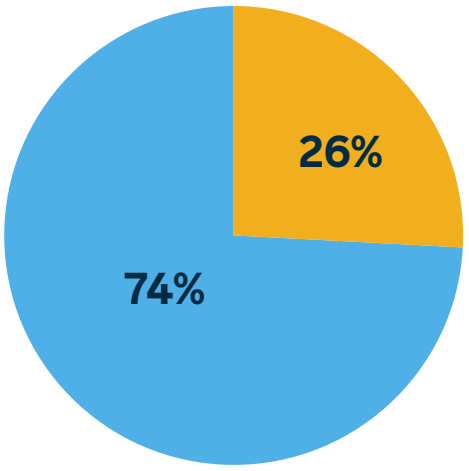
149 kW

Direct ownership

*INCLUDES SYSTEMS OVER 5 kW WITH AVAILABLE FUNDING DATA

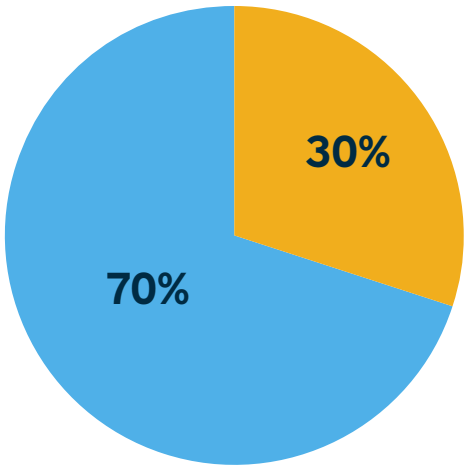
Ownership of Solar Energy Systems

(% of cumulative solar capacity)



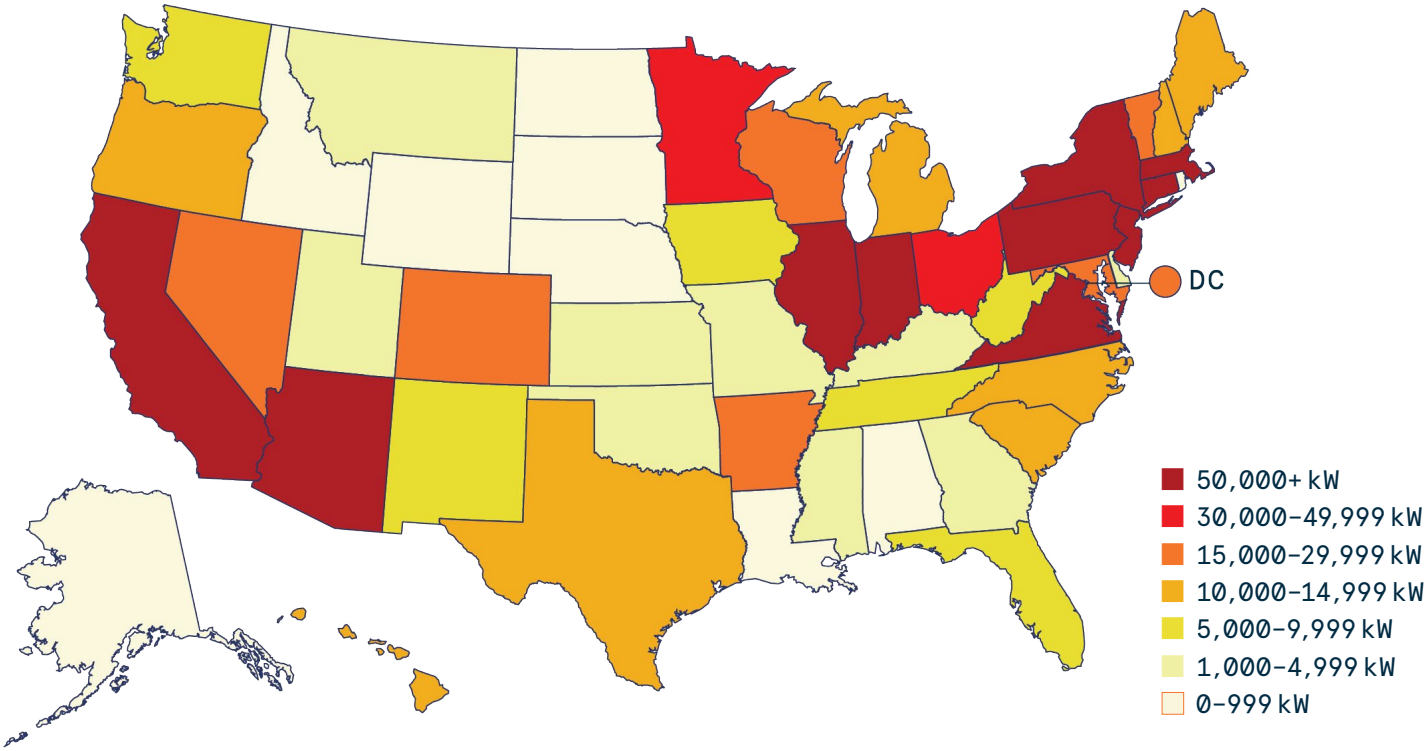
Ownership of Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS)

(% of BESS)



Third-Party Ownership Direct Ownership

State Rankings for Cumulative Solar Capacity in K-12 Schools



State Rankings (kW)

01	CA 895,270	**14**	MD 27,819	**27**	MI 10,140	**40**	DE 1,549
02	NJ 309,566	**15**	CO 27,609	**28**	NM 9,677	**41**	MT 1,106
03	NY 167,094	**16**	VT 25,666	**29**	FL 8,421	**42**	MS 1,047
04	AZ 154,541	**17**	WI 23,598	**30**	TN 8,027	**43**	ID 789
05	MA 116,820	**18**	NV 20,605	**31**	WA 7,790	**44**	RI 779
06	IL 95,213	**19**	DC 16,227	**32**	IA 6,164	**45**	LA 365
07	CT 84,505	**20**	ME 14,809	**33**	WV 5,528	**46**	WY 232
08	VA 83,403	**21**	TX 14,799	**34**	MO 4,930	**47**	NE 214
09	IN 68,181	**22**	HI 14,663	**35**	UT 4,600	**48**	ND 80
10	PA 50,376	**23**	SC 12,972	**36**	OK 4,193	**49**	AL 38
11	MN 44,535	**24**	NC 11,170	**37**	KY 4,108	**50**	AK 33
12	OH 36,114	**25**	OR 10,807	**38**	GA 3,362	**51**	SD 0
13	AR 29,985	**26**	NH 10,391	**39**	KS 1,859		

State Rankings for Cumulative Solar Capacity in K-12 Schools *(cont.)*

•MALIBU HIGH SCHOOL, SANTA MONICA-MALIBU UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT, CA | CREDIT: PAUL VU, HERE AND NOW AGENCY

Cumulative Capacity
Top 10 States

State	kW
CALIFORNIA	895,270
NEW JERSEY	309,566
NEW YORK	167,094
ARIZONA	154,541
MASSACHUSETTS	116,820
ILLINOIS	95,213
CONNECTICUT	84,505
VIRGINIA	83,403
INDIANA	68,181
PENNSYLVANIA	50,376

Cumulative Capacity
Bottom 10 States

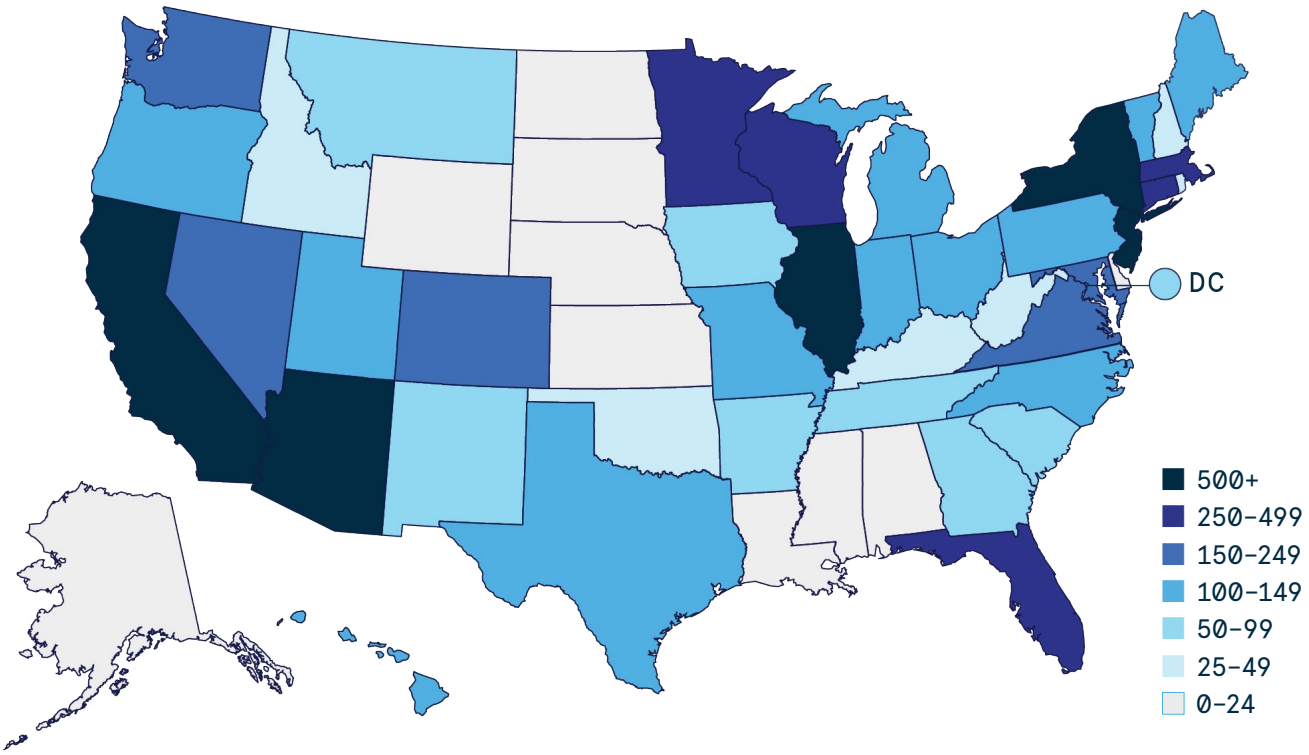
State	kW
SOUTH DAKOTA	0
ALASKA	33
ALABAMA	38
NORTH DAKOTA	80
NEBRASKA	214
WYOMING	232
LOUISIANA	365
RHODE ISLAND	779
IDAHO	789
MISSISSIPPI	1,047

5-Year Growth* in Cumulative Capacity
Top 10 States

State	kW
CALIFORNIA	273,711
NEW JERSEY	90,716
NEW YORK	61,498
ILLINOIS	48,246
VIRGINIA	44,282
MASSACHUSETTS	43,183
CONNECTICUT	29,764
PENNSYLVANIA	27,770
ARKANSAS	24,253
MINNESOTA	16,387

*2021–2025

State Rankings for Number of Solar-Powered K-12 Schools



State Rankings (# of schools)

01	CA	2,921	14	NV	159	27	MI	103	40	RI	32
02	NJ	901	15	WA	156	28	AR	89	41	WV	30
03	NY	701	16	IN	145	29	TN	83	42	KS	16
04	IL	659	17	TX	143	30	DC	78	43	MS	12
05	AZ	561	18	PA	137	31	SC	74	44	NE	12
06	MA	440	19	OH	129	32	NM	61	45	DE	11
07	MN	382	20	NC	128	33	MT	57	46	LA	8
08	CT	368	21	UT	125	34	GA	56	47	AL	7
09	WI	316	22	HI	121	35	IA	52	48	WY	5
10	FL	311	23	VT	120	36	KY	43	49	AK	3
11	VA	236	24	OR	116	37	NH	42	50	ND	1
12	MD	211	25	MO	115	38	ID	40	51	SD	0
13	CO	197	26	ME	107	39	OK	35			

State Rankings for Number of Solar-Powered K-12 Schools *(cont.)*

• TUCKER HIGH SCHOOL, HENRICO COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS, VA | CREDIT: MADISON ENERGY INFRASTRUCTURE

# of Solar Schools
Top 10 States

State	#
CALIFORNIA	2,921
NEW JERSEY	901
NEW YORK	701
ILLINOIS	659
ARIZONA	561
MASSACHUSETTS	440
MINNESOTA	382
CONNECTICUT	368
WISCONSIN	316
FLORIDA	311

% of Statewide Schools With Solar
Top 10 States

State	%
HAWAII	30%
VERMONT	30%
CONNECTICUT	29%
NEW JERSEY	27%
WASHINGTON, D.C.	25%
CALIFORNIA	23%
ARIZONA	22%
MASSACHUSETTS	19%
NEVADA	19%
MAINE	15%

5-Year Growth* in # of Solar Schools
Top 10 States

State	#
CALIFORNIA	494
NEW YORK	318
NEW JERSEY	219
MINNESOTA	194
ILLINOIS	153
VIRGINIA	111
WISCONSIN	108
MASSACHUSETTS	92
CONNECTICUT	81
ARIZONA	79

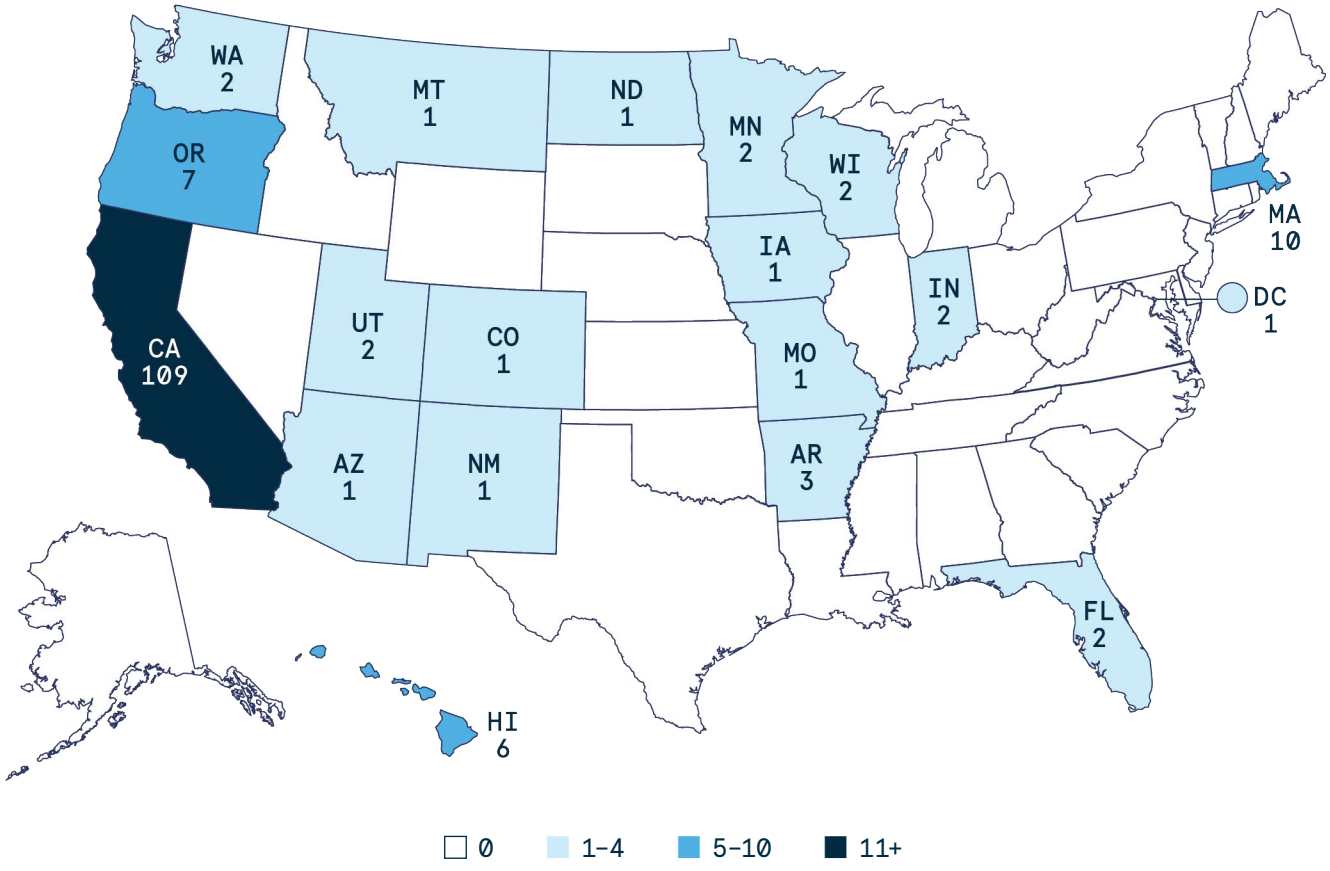
*2021–2025

State Rankings for Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS) in K-12 Schools

Number of K-12 Schools with BESS by State*

Rank	State	# of BESS
1	CALIFORNIA	109
2	MASSACHUSETTS	10
3	OREGON	7
4	HAWAII	6
5	ARKANSAS	3
6	FLORIDA, INDIANA, MINNESOTA, UTAH, WASHINGTON, WISCONSIN	2
7	ARIZONA, COLORADO, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, IOWA, MISSOURI, MONTANA, NEW MEXICO, NORTH DAKOTA	1

*ONLY INCLUDES BESS INSTALLED BETWEEN JAN 1, 2016 - Q2 2026



Methodology

The methodology used for collecting and analyzing data for this report was developed and iteratively improved by Generation180. The process outlined below builds on the methodology initially developed by Solar Energy Industries Association and The Solar Foundation that was used for the first two editions of the report, *Brighter Future: A Study on Solar in U.S. K-12 Schools*, in 2014 and 2017.

School Data Collection

The census aims to include all public, private, and independent K-12 schools in the United States. The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), the primary federal entity for collecting and analyzing data related to education, was the primary source of information on schools used in this report. NCES databases provided comprehensive lists of all U.S. public and private K-12 schools, with corresponding geographic and demographic information. The NCES list of U.S. public schools with corresponding data was sourced from the Common Core of Data for the 2024–2025 school year through the Elementary/Secondary Information System (ElSi). Private school data were obtained from the Private School Universe Survey (PSS) for the 2021–2022 school year at https://nces.ed.gov/surveys/pss/pssdata.asp.

Solar and Battery Storage Data Collection and Analysis

Our nationwide census of U.S. K-12 schools includes data on solar energy systems and battery energy storage systems that were operational by spring 2026. To be included, the solar installation must either be installed on the property of or be providing electricity to a public school, private school, or educational center that services students in grades pre-K to 12. In cases where a school district installed a solar array or subscribed to an offsite community solar array that is intended to power multiple buildings, or the energy is used to offset the district's total electricity consumption, then all applicable schools in the district are included in the census data as a school with solar. For arrays delivering solar power to a whole district, unless known otherwise, the total kW provided to the district is distributed evenly across all schools in the district to ensure that all schools benefiting from solar power are included in the census. Non-instructional school buildings and sites that do not have a school-level NCES ID—such as bus garages, administrative buildings, and athletic facilities—contribute to a school district's total solar capacity, but are not counted as solar-powered schools in the census.

Data for this report were collected primarily between January and April 2026 from a variety of online sources, including state databases, utility lists, solar developer websites, press releases, school websites, and newspaper articles. Schools, solar installers, and relevant stakeholders across the country were contacted for additional data collection and verification. All new data were integrated into Generation180's existing national database for solar schools. Data were cross-checked across sources and database editions to prevent double-counting and to verify new information. In this data collection process, data published in previous editions of the *Brighter Future* report, have been updated to improve the accuracy of historic data. Data from all report editions were updated as needed to account for school closures, decommissioned solar systems, and other changes to solar capacity and operating status. Solar energy systems over 30 years old were tagged as decommissioned.

Generation180 accepts and verifies solar data that it receives from the public on an ongoing basis. Readers are encouraged to submit any new information on solar and battery storage installations in U.S. K-12 schools by contacting us through the website SolarforAllSchools.org and filling out the form to "Add my school to the map".

Data Limitations

While we aim for a comprehensive count of all solar energy systems and battery energy storage systems installed at U.S. K-12 schools, our data collection primarily relies upon publicly available information on the internet (including school websites, solar installer websites, utility databases, state databases, news articles, and press releases). We include a survey of a limited number of solar installers, solar developers, architects, installers, and entities that we know to consistently work on solar and battery storage projects at K-12 schools. We did not include a national survey of the 125,000+ K-12 schools to collect data. While our search is exhaustive of the data that are available to us, we recognize the limitations of the available data and that we are likely to be missing operating systems at schools if there is no searchable public record of them.

This is the first report edition that includes data on battery energy storage systems at K-12 schools. The dataset only includes battery energy storage systems that were installed after 2015. Because of the rapid pace of change in the technology and the product warranties ranging from 5 to 15 years, we chose to limit this dataset to battery energy storage systems that have been operating for 10 years or less. Because our census does not include a robust process for collecting data on systems that have become inoperable or have been decommissioned, we chose 2016 as the starting installation year for the dataset to increase confidence that those battery energy storage systems are still operating. Data on battery power and battery capacity of the battery energy storage systems at K-12 schools were not yet consistent and comprehensive enough to be included in this edition of the report. Data will continue to be collected on those metrics with the goal of including them in future editions.

Information on the ownership type (direct ownership vs. third-party ownership) was only available for approximately 57% of the schools included in the dataset. The ownership statistics cannot be applied to all schools included in the report. Any conclusions drawn about ownership or funding patterns should be interpreted with an understanding of this limitation.