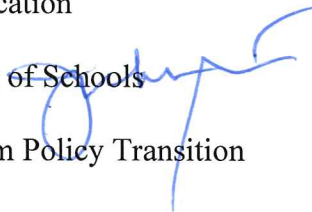


Office of the Superintendent of Schools
MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Rockville, Maryland

October 19, 2017

MEMORANDUM

To: Members of the Board of Education

From: Jack R. Smith, Superintendent of Schools 

Subject: Capital Improvements Program Policy Transition

My staff and I have been engaged in several efforts around rethinking our capital planning processes. Our experience as a school district in Montgomery County and the national capital region in recent years increasingly has been one of flux and of changing growth patterns and dynamics in the school system and in the larger community. We have been working to analyze our capital planning approaches in light of these shifting dynamics. We need to develop approaches for our future planning that both ensure that our Capital Improvements Program (CIP) leverages available funding for maximum impact and efficiency, as well as remains flexible to appropriately respond as conditions in our student population, our facilities, and our community evolve over time.

There are multiple ongoing strands of this work, and we have brought elements to the Board for review and discussion during the process. We have conducted several of the facility, enrollment, and process analyses requested by the Board and by community stakeholders; developed initial proposals for moving the district's capital priorities forward; and engaged community stakeholders in early conversations about this work to share our thinking and gain insight and feedback.

We are now at a stage in our work where it is appropriate for us to pause and bring the results of our analysis and dialogue to the Board. These various components of capital planning work must be brought together to ensure policy coherence and alignment. As a result, I recommend that the Board conduct a formal policy review process of our capital planning policies prior to further work on new aspects of our educational facilities planning processes.

In our work thus far, we have engaged external consultants to review and analyze our enrollment forecasting methodology and are including our agency partners in these discussions to work toward a collaborative approach. We also have worked with the consultants to develop a growth management scenario framework that will be applied to each region of the school district for a longer-range view of possible facility planning responses to future conditions. On June 26, 2017, the Board approved a pilot to develop these plans, distinct from our regular

six-year CIP planning process. In response to feedback from Board members and members of the community, we have worked with Board staff to develop a new scheduling approach to the CIP and capital budget processes that will allow additional time for Board discussion and review and will sequence the Board's hearings and work sessions to allow for each to be informed by the other.

A key component of our work to position the CIP in this dynamic environment has been to reimagine our Revitalization/Expansion project (Rev/Ex) and the Facilities Assessment and Criteria Testing approach that has supported it. The Board has received two presentations on our work to develop a revised approach to implementing Major Capital Projects using a Key Facility Indicators (KFI) approach. In all the iterations of our work around the Rev/Ex process during the past two years, themes have emerged as to the need for flexibility in setting priorities with these projects, the need to explicitly factor in the impact of overutilization on facilities, and the need to discontinue the static and extensive project queue that has been in place.

We have contacted our Montgomery County Council of Parent Teacher Associations, Inc. leadership and school communities to share our thinking on these efforts and to gather their perspectives and insights on the facility planning challenges and dynamics facing our school system. The scope of the work we have been engaged in regarding our capital planning processes has required us to think big, to stretch the limits of our own and others' comfort in questioning familiar and traditional approaches, and has allowed us to conceptualize a robust and flexible capital planning framework that I believe will continue to serve us well in the new growth and planning environment.

This work has been necessary to lay the foundation for a more formal process with the Board, and it is that formal review process that I propose we take now as the next step in developing this long-range educational facility planning framework. Our work in this critical area is guided primarily by two Board policies, FAA, *Long-range Educational Facilities Planning*, and FKB, *Sustaining and Modernizing Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) Facilities*. I am requesting that the Policy Management Committee prioritize review and revision of these policies in its work plan for the coming year. This policy review process will refine and hone the future capital planning direction through direct engagement with the Board and through wider opportunity for formal public comment on the policies. Once the Board has completed its work on these policies, my staff and I will continue the process by reviewing MCPS Regulation FAA-RA, *Long-range Educational Facilities Planning*, and any other regulations that are affected.

My recommended Fiscal Year 2019–2024 CIP will be consistent with existing policies. Several schools that were programmed previously in the Rev/Ex project through the process outlined in Policy FKB remain to be completed, and I will continue to recommend full funding to complete those projects. They are: Luxmanor Elementary School, Maryvale Elementary School/Carl Sandburg Learning Center, Potomac Elementary School, Tilden Middle School/Rock Terrace School, and Seneca Valley High School. My recommendation will leave fiscal room

in anticipation of programming future projects that will be determined through the revised KFI analysis and capital planning processes. However, it would be premature at this juncture to name specific schools for projects before completing the Board policy review and approval of a substantive change to the process laid out in Policy FKB. For those schools that may have been impacted by the previous Rev/Ex approach, we will include language in the Educational Facilities Master Plan that these schools will be considered for inclusion in a future CIP once the policy review of a new approach to address capacity and building infrastructure is completed.

Given that we are still engaged in completing active Rev/Ex projects during the first few years of the CIP schedule, our CIP affords us this window to complete the policy review without delaying future capital projects. I am confident that our work to date positions MCPS to improve upon an already successful and effective capital planning program. I look forward to working with the Board to further align these various strands of review and analysis into a streamlined and cohesive educational facilities planning policy framework.

If you have any questions, please contact Dr. Andrew M. Zuckerman, chief operating officer, at 301-279-3627.

JRS:AMZ:em

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