

**Superintendent's
Recommended
FY 2022 Capital Budget and
Amendments to the
FY 2021–2026
Capital Improvements Program**

Maryland's Largest School District

MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Expanding Opportunity and Unleashing Potential

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MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Expanding Opportunity and Unleashing Potential

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

October 23, 2020

Mrs. Shebra L. Evans, President
and Members of the Montgomery County Board of Education
850 Hungerford Drive, Room 123
Rockville, Maryland 20850

Dear Mrs. Evans and Members of the Board of Education:

I am submitting my *Recommended Fiscal Year (FY) 2022 Capital Budget and Amendments to the FY 2021–2026 Capital Improvements Program (CIP)* for your consideration and adoption. This plan includes the expenditure recommendations for FY 2022–2026 and provides the recommended FY 2022 Capital Budget funding appropriation authority needed to implement the CIP during the fiscal year that begins July 1, 2021, and ends June 30, 2022. FY 2022 is the second year of the biennial CIP review process. In accordance with the Montgomery County charter, all CIP projects are considered in odd-numbered fiscal years. In even-numbered fiscal years, only projects with expenditure or appropriation changes needed in the second year of the adopted six-year CIP are considered for amendments to the CIP.

The *Board of Education's Requested FY 2021 Capital Budget and FY 2021–2026 Capital Improvements Program* totaled \$1.818 billion, an increase of \$74.2 million more than the approved CIP. The County Council adopted *FY 2021 Capital Budget and the FY 2021–2026 Capital Improvements Program* for Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) totaled \$1.728 billion for the 6-year period; \$90.1 million less than the Board of Education's request. This reduction resulted in the removal of expenditures for requested projects, delays to individual capital projects, as well as reductions of funds in three of our vital countywide systemic projects to address aging infrastructure needs throughout the school system.

Capital projects included in the adopted CIP, while not all on the completion schedules requested by the Board of Education, included funding for the planning, design, and/or construction of 14 elementary school capacity projects, 5 middle school capacity projects, 5 high school capacity projects, and 9 major capital projects—4 at the elementary school level, 1 at the middle school level, and 4 at the high school level. The approved CIP also included funding for the completion of five revitalization/expansion projects.

MCPS has seen a steady increase in enrollment since the 2007–2008 school year. The COVID-19 pandemic, however, has impacted our student enrollment, as well as the student enrollment of many public schools across the country. The preliminary September 30, 2020, enrollment is 161,583, a one-year decrease of 3,684 students (Pre-Kindergarten–Grade 12). Nationwide, school systems are seeing reduced enrollments in the 2020–2021 school year, especially in the lower grades, as homeschooling and private schools that offer in-person instruction gain student enrollment. I anticipate, however, that many of these students likely will return to our schools once in-person instruction resumes.

From the 2010–2011 school year, student enrollment has grown by more than 17,000 students. Total school system enrollment is projected to increase to 170,761 students by the 2026–2027 school year. This projection represents a slight slowdown in enrollment growth in part due to the continued decline in resident births, which results in lower kindergarten enrollment and smaller cohorts of students as they progress through the school system each year. Our enrollment projections do account for the current health pandemic. I believe, however, that this decline in enrollment will be temporary and, therefore, the capacity projects included in the adopted CIP, based on pre-pandemic enrollment projections, are still warranted and must remain on their approved schedules.

As previously indicated, FY 2022 is an amendment year and, therefore, it is standard practice that the superintendent of schools recommends limited amendments. Therefore, the *Superintendent's Recommended FY 2022 Capital Budget and Amendments to the FY 2021–2026 Capital Improvements Program* includes only \$3.67 million more than the adopted CIP over the 6-year period. While the additional expenditures are minimal, there are a number of recommended amendments to the adopted CIP that provide funding for new capital projects, accelerate the completion dates of previously approved capital projects, and provide additional funding for our vital countywide systemic projects that are essential to address our aging infrastructure.

During my deliberations the past few months, the fiscal climate that impacted our approved CIP and the anticipated further fiscal constraints due to the current health crisis, made it clear that it was imperative to reevaluate our approved CIP funding and reexamine our ability to address capacity needs and aging infrastructure in ways that could potentially achieve cost savings. As a result of this examination, my recommended CIP seeks to prioritize, to the extent possible, by reducing and reallocating approved expenditures for some projects to support other system priorities. My intent is for this to result in a funding request that acknowledges the fiscal environment, while at the same time, addresses both the capacity and programmatic needs of many of our schools throughout the system.

My first two amendments are for the Bethesda Elementary School addition project and the Westbrook Elementary School addition project. Bethesda Elementary school is projected to remain overutilized for the six-year planning period; and therefore, the Board of Education requested \$16.7 million in the FY 2021–2026 CIP to construct an addition, with a completion date of 2023. Due to fiscal constraints, the County Council's adopted FY 2021–2026 CIP delayed the Bethesda Elementary School addition project by two years, resulting in a completion date of September 2025.

As part of a classroom addition at Westbrook Elementary School that was constructed in 2013, a classroom shell was master-planned. To relieve the overutilization at Somerset Elementary School, the *Board of Education's Requested FY 2021 Capital Budget and the FY 2021–2026 Capital Improvements Program* included \$4.4 million for the classroom shell to be built out with

a completion date of September 2021. In May 2020, the County Council adopted FY 2021–2026 CIP, which did not include the shell build-out for Westbrook Elementary School.

The Bethesda Elementary School service area is adjacent to Somerset Elementary School. The three-classroom build-out at Westbrook Elementary School, along with its current available capacity, would provide approximately 270 seats to relieve elementary school overutilization. The total seat deficit for Bethesda and Somerset elementary schools will be approximately 220 seats by the end of the 6-year planning period.

As previously noted, the cost of the classroom build-out at Westbrook Elementary School will be \$4.4 million. Reallocating funds from the Bethesda Elementary School addition project to a classroom build-out at Westbrook Elementary School results in a cost difference of \$12.3 million. When considering capacity opportunities in combination with the current fiscal climate, I believe that it is fiscally prudent to complete the classroom build-out at Westbrook Elementary School to address the overutilization at both Somerset and Bethesda elementary schools.

The adopted CIP includes two addition projects—one at Cresthaven Elementary School and the other at Roscoe R. Nix Elementary School—both to address the overutilization at JoAnn Leleck Elementary School at Broad Acres. Enrollment projections indicate that JoAnn Leleck Elementary School at Broad Acres will exceed 870 students by the end of the 6-year period and currently has 10 relocatable classrooms. Due to the topography of the site, it will be a challenge to place additional relocatable classrooms there, if it becomes necessary.

Due to the continued enrollment growth at JoAnn Leleck Elementary School at Broad Acres, the addition projects, as approved, may not provide enough capacity to address the projected overutilization. In addition, the cost of the two addition projects is approaching the cost of a new elementary school. Therefore, the next three recommended amendments include the removal of all expenditures for the additions at Cresthaven and Roscoe R. Nix elementary schools and reallocates those funds for a Grades 3–5 elementary school for JoAnn Leleck Elementary School at Broad Acres, with a completion date of September 2025. My recommendation is to conduct a site selection process in spring 2021, to determine a site to construct this Grades 3–5 elementary school.

The adopted CIP includes funding for an addition at Silver Spring International Middle School. A decline in enrollment as well as increasing complexities of the addition project will have significant fiscal implications. These complexities include the consideration of relocating the elementary school students off-site and the construction of the Purple Line that led to the discovery of new site conditions and challenges. As a result, a one-year delay of this project was requested, and approved, in the FY 2021–2026 CIP to evaluate the scope of the project and the related challenges of the proposed construction.

After careful consideration regarding the scope of this project, the fiscal challenges facing our county and state, and the substantial budget for the approved project, my next recommended amendment is to reduce the scope and cost of this addition project and to reevaluate the scope of the project to specifically address the programmatic and safety needs for Silver Spring International Middle School as it relates to the location and administration of the physical education program, as well as the overall safety of the school community with the construction of the new Purple Line. With this change in scope, the completion date for this project will be September 2024. It will be vital to engage the community around how best to address the key priorities for this project within the recommended budget.

Enrollment projections at Highland View Elementary School indicate that the school will continue to exceed capacity during the six-year planning period. This is a small elementary school and is projected to be 139 percent overutilized by the end of the 6-year period. Currently, there are six relocatable classrooms on-site, and it will be a challenge to place additional relocatable classrooms if needed in the future. Planning funds were included in the adopted FY 2019–2024 amended CIP, with no construction funding or a completion date. My next amendment is to recommend reallocating the reduced expenditures from Silver Spring International Middle School to support construction funding for an addition at Highland View Elementary School with a completion date of September 2025.

Similar to Highland View Elementary School, William Tyler Page Elementary School will continue to exceed capacity during the six-year period. In fact, William Tyler Page Elementary School will exceed capacity by more than 370 students by the end of the 6-year period. Currently, this school has 10 relocatable classrooms and, if more need to be added to this site, it will become more challenging to construct the addition. Therefore, my recommended amendment is to accelerate the construction funding for this addition project to align with the request included in the Board of Education’s FY 2021–2026 CIP. The recommended completion date is September 2023.

My next three amendments all relate to the Major Capital Projects for elementary schools. The adopted CIP delayed the construction funding for three of the four elementary school projects—South Lake, Stonegate, and Woodlin elementary schools. The Major Capital Project approach not only addresses the aging infrastructure at these schools, but also the programmatic and capacity elements necessary for our students to be successful. While I certainly understand the current fiscal constraints, both the planning and construction funding for these projects are already incorporated in the adopted CIP.

My amendments for these three schools accelerate the construction funds and align the completion dates with those included in the Board of Education’s requested FY 2021–2026 CIP, with the exception of Stonegate Elementary School. For the Stonegate Elementary School project, my recommendation is to accelerate the project six months ahead of the Board of Education’s

previous request due to the ability to utilize the former Carl Sandburg Learning Center as another elementary school holding facility. Therefore, all three of these projects have recommended completion dates of September 2023.

Finally, my last three recommended amendments provide for additional funding for three of our vital countywide systemic projects—Heating, Ventilation, and Air-Conditioning (HVAC); Planned Life-cycle Asset Replacement; and Roof Replacement. My recommendation reinstates the funds that were removed for these three projects in the adopted CIP for FY 2022. With the fiscal challenges that we know will continue for the foreseeable future, funding for our countywide systemic projects is even more essential to maintain and sustain our many facilities with building components that have reached the end of their life-cycle.

For FY 2022, our state aid request is \$76.05 million. This figure is based on current eligibility of projects approved by the County Council in May 2020. Of the \$76.05 million, \$295,000 is for the balance of funding for 1 project, \$20.6 million is for 13 systemic roofing and HVAC projects, \$13.04 million is for construction funding for 1 project, and \$42.1 million is for 3 projects that require state planning approval in addition to construction funding. Finally, there are 13 projects being requested for state planning approval. As a result of the construction delays to many of our capital projects in the adopted CIP, this request is considerably lower than our previous request for state funding. If the completion dates in this recommended CIP are approved as requested, our state CIP request for FY 2023 will be more in-line with previous requests.

There is one supplement to the *Superintendent's Recommended FY 2022 Capital Budget and Amendments to the FY 2021–2026 Capital Improvements Program—Supplement A—Superintendent's Recommendation for Somerset and Westbrook Elementary Schools Boundary Study*. The supplement may be accessed at the following link:

<https://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/departments/planning/SomersetWestbrookBoundaryStudy.aspx>

The recommended amended CIP includes one new boundary study. This boundary study is recommended to explore the reassignment of students from Bethesda and Somerset elementary schools to Westbrook Elementary School. The boundary study will begin spring 2021, with Board of Education action scheduled for November 2021.

The Board of Education previously approved MCPS staff to conduct two boundary studies. The first was to address the overutilization at Rachel Carson Elementary School by expanding DuFief Elementary School and then to reassign students from Rachel Carson Elementary School to DuFief Elementary School. The second boundary study was to create a service area for a new elementary school in the Clarksburg Cluster to address the overutilization at the elementary school level.

October 23, 2020

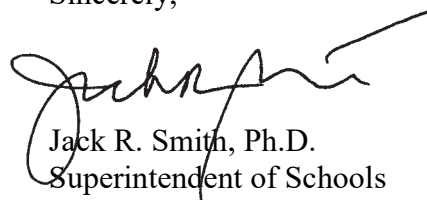
While both boundary studies were to be conducted in 2020, in spring and fall, respectively, both capital projects were delayed one year by the County Council in May 2020 and are now scheduled to be completed in September 2023. Based on the delay, my recommendation is to conduct both of these boundary studies in spring 2022, with Board of Education action scheduled for November 2022.

On October 26, 2020, the *Superintendent's Recommended FY 2022 Capital Budget and Amendments to the FY 2021–2026 Capital Improvements Program* will be presented to the Board of Education. On October 29 and November 12, 2020, the Board of Education is scheduled to hold work sessions to discuss the CIP recommendations. Public hearings on the recommended amendments to the adopted CIP are scheduled for November 2, 5, and 17, 2020, and the Board of Education will take final action on these items on November 19, 2020.

The county executive will publish his CIP recommendations for all County agencies by mid-January 2021 for County Council discussion and action. The County Council will hold a hearing in early February 2021, conduct work sessions in March and April 2021, and adopt the *FY 2022 Capital Budget and Amendments to the FY 2021–2026 Capital Improvements Program* in late May 2021.

I look forward to working with you, along with parents/guardians, community members, and business leaders, to secure the necessary funding and support for the improvement of public school facilities in Montgomery County.

Sincerely,



Jack R. Smith, Ph.D.
Superintendent of Schools

JRS:DGT:EM:ak

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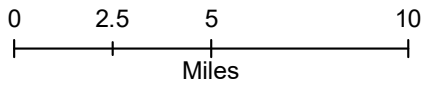
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Cluster Service Areas 2020-2021



October 8, 2020

Introduction

In November 1996, the voters of Montgomery County approved by referendum an amendment to the County Charter that changed the County Council’s review and approval cycle of the six-year Capital Improvements Program (CIP) from an annual to biennial cycle. The referendum specified that in odd-numbered fiscal years (on-years), the County Council would conduct a full review of the six-year CIP and in even-numbered fiscal years (off-years), the County Council only would consider amendments to the adopted CIP. The FY 2021–2026 CIP falls in an odd-numbered fiscal year and received a full review by the County Council. The Superintendent’s Recommended *FY 2022 Capital Budget and Amendments to the FY 2021–2026 CIP* provides the recommended appropriation authority for funds needed to implement CIP projects during FY 2022 and to implement the FY 2021–2026 CIP.

This document contains the following sections:

Chapter 1, “*The Superintendent’s Recommended FY 2022 Capital Budget and Amendments to the FY 2021–2026 Capital Improvements Program (CIP)*,” is a review of the major factors that have influenced the development of approved projects in the FY 2022 Capital Budget and Amendments to the FY 2021–2026 CIP. This chapter includes a table summarizing the recommended amendments to the FY 2022–2026 CIP.

Chapter 2, “The Planning Environment,” describes the demographic, economic, and enrollment trends in Montgomery County that form the context for reviewing facility plans and addressing system needs.

Chapter 3, “Facility Planning Objectives,” outlines six facility planning objectives that guide the school system as it moves to accommodate enrollment growth and program changes. The objectives are discussed and placed in the context of the adopted CIP actions.

Chapter 4, “Recommended Actions and Planning Issues,” is arranged by high school cluster and high school consortium. This chapter provides maps depicting school boundaries and locations, a bar graph that indicates school utilization within each cluster, tables with enrollment projections, school demographic profiles, building room use, capacity data, and other facility information. Planning issues are identified and adopted actions are discussed.

Chapter 5, “Countywide Projects,” provides a brief summary description of the CIP projects that are programmed to meet the needs of schools across the county. These projects (countywide projects) involve multi-year plans with different schools scheduled each year.

Several appendices, at the end of the document, contain information on a variety of topics including enrollment, state-rated capacities, Board of Education policies, project schedules, available school sites, closed schools and their current uses, and relocatable classroom placements, and color maps for each cluster. Also included are maps for identifying Board of Education, council manic, and legislative election districts. It is important to note that this is a planning document for the school system as a whole and that while cluster organization is used for presentation of information, planning decisions often cross cluster boundaries to meet program and facility needs for students.

