

# Chapter 3

## Facility Planning Objectives

### MCPS Vision, Mission, and Core Values

The *Recommended FY 2023 Capital Budget and the FY 2023–2028 Capital Improvements Program (CIP)* is closely aligned with the core values outlined in the MCPS Strategic Plan. The strategic plan states that MCPS is committed to educating our students so that academic success is not predictable by race, ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status, language proficiency, or disability. We will continue to strive until all gaps have been eliminated for all groups. Our students will graduate with deep academic knowledge and become prepared for tomorrow's complex world and workplace. Our work is guided by the following five core values:

- Learning
- Relationships
- Respect
- Excellence
- Equity

More information regarding the MCPS Strategic Plan is available on the MCPS website at the following link: *MCPS Strategic Plan*.

In addition to the strategic planning framework, Board of Education Policy FAA, *Educational Facilities Planning* and MCPS Regulation FAA-RA, *Educational Facilities Planning* and the Capital Improvement Priorities, listed below, guide the development of the CIP.

### Capital Improvement Priorities

1. Compliance Projects
2. Capital Maintenance Projects
3. Capacity Projects
4. Major Capital Projects
5. System Infrastructure Projects
6. Technology Modernization Project

Setting priorities is important in times of fiscal constraints. The CIP includes funding for capital projects in all priority areas and represents a balanced approach to address the many needs of the school system. A brief description of the type of projects included in each priority area follows:

- Priority #1—Compliance Projects. This includes funding to address mandates, including the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), asbestos abatement, fire safety upgrades, stormwater discharge, water quality management, and Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission (WSSC) requirements. These projects must be completed in a timely fashion to comply with laws and regulations.
- Priority #2—Capital Maintenance. This includes funding countywide projects that maintain school facilities in good condition so that they are safe, secure, and comfortable learning environments. In addition, capital projects in

this area preserve school assets and can avert more costly repairs or replacements in the future.

- Priority #3—Capacity Projects. This includes funding for new schools and additions so facilities can operate within capacity.
- Priority #4—Major Capital Projects. Funding in this area is important to sustain and upgrade building systems and address programmatic and capacity needs in schools.
- Priority #5—System Infrastructure. Funding in this area provides for facilities important to the operation of schools, including transportation depots, maintenance depots, the warehouse, and the upgrading of food services equipment.
- Priority #6—Technology Modernization. Funding in this area enables periodic upgrades to computers and technology that support student learning with up-to-date technologies.

### Educational Facilities Planning Policy Guidance

On September 24, 2018, the Board of Education adopted revisions to Policy FAA, *Educational Facilities Planning* that requires the superintendent of schools to include a review of certain guidelines involved in facility planning activities in the CIP recommendations each fall. The four guidelines include preferred range of enrollment, school capacity calculations, desired facility utilization levels, and school site size. Including the guidelines as part of the superintendent's CIP recommendations allows the community an opportunity to provide testimony to the Board of Education on the guidelines and any proposed changes to the guidelines.

See Appendix Q for BOE Policy FAA and MCPS Regulation FAA-RA.

### Preferred Range of Enrollment

The preferred range of enrollment for schools includes all students attending a school. The preferred ranges of enrollment for schools are:

- 450 to 750 students in elementary schools
- 750 to 1,200 students in middle schools
- 1,600 to 2,400 students in high schools

Enrollment in special and alternative program centers may differ from the above ranges and generally is lower.

The preferred range of enrollment is taken into consideration when planning new schools or when existing schools need changes. Departures from the preferred ranges may occur if circumstances warrant.

## School Capacity Calculations

Unless otherwise specified by Board action, the program capacity of a facility is determined by the space requirements of the educational programs in the facility and student-to-classroom ratios. These ratios should not be confused with staffing ratios determined through the annual operating budget process. Program capacity is based on the current classroom ratios shown below:

Head Start and prekindergarten—2 sessions	40:1
Head Start and prekindergarten—1 session	20:1
Grade K—full-day	22:1
Grade K—reduced class size	18:1
Grades 1–2—reduced class size	18:1
Grades 1–5 Elementary	23:1
Grades 6–8 Middle	25:1 <sup>a</sup>
Grades 9–12 High	25:1 <sup>b</sup>
Special Education, ESOL, Alternative Programs <sup>c</sup>	

<sup>a</sup> Program capacity is adjusted at the middle school level to account for scheduling constraints. The regular classroom capacity of 25 is multiplied by .85 to reflect the optimal utilization of a middle school facility (equivalent to 21.25 students per classroom).

<sup>b</sup> Program capacity is adjusted at the high school level to account for scheduling constraints. The regular classroom capacity of 25 is multiplied by .9 to reflect the optimal utilization of a high school facility (equivalent to 22.5 students per classroom).

<sup>c</sup> Special Education, ESOL, alternative programs, and other special programs may require classroom ratios different from those listed.

## School Facility Utilization

Unless otherwise specified by Board action, elementary, middle, and high schools should operate in an efficient facility utilization range of 80 to 100 percent of program capacity. If a school is projected to be underutilized (less than 80 percent) or overutilized (over 100 percent), a boundary study, non-capital action, or a capital project may be considered. Whether a school meets the preferred range of enrollment also is considered. In the case of overutilization, an effort to judge the long-term need for permanent space is made prior to planning for new construction. Underutilization of facilities also is evaluated in the context of long-term enrollment forecasts.

## School Site Size

School Site Size is the minimum acreage desired to accommodate the full instructional program, as follows:

- Elementary schools—a minimum useable site size of 7.5 acres that is capable of fitting the instructional program, including site requirements. The 7.5 acres is based on an ideal leveled site, and the size may vary depending on site shapes and surrounding site constraints.
- Middle schools—a minimum useable site size of 15.5 acres that is capable of fitting the instructional program, including site requirements. The 15.5 acres is based on an ideal leveled site, and the size may vary depending on site shapes and surrounding site constraints.
- High schools—a minimum useable site size of 35 acres that is capable of fitting the instructional program, including site requirements. The 35 acres is based on an ideal leveled site, and the size may vary depending on site shapes and surrounding site constraints.

## Facility Planning Objectives

Adequate and up-to-date school facilities form the physical infrastructure needed to pursue MCPS goals and priorities. Long-range facility plans, as reflected in this CIP, justify the programming and construction of construction projects. Facility planning and capital programming activities are closely coordinated with educational program delivery approaches. In addition, an emphasis is placed on the inclusion of stakeholders in facility planning processes. Six objectives guide the facilities planning process and development of each CIP. These objectives are outlined below, with the remainder of this chapter dedicated to providing information on planning for each objective.

OBJECTIVE 1: Implement facility plans that support the continuous improvement of educational programs in the school system

OBJECTIVE 2: Meet long-term and interim space needs

OBJECTIVE 3: Sustain and upgrade facilities

OBJECTIVE 4: Provide schools that are environmentally safe, secure, functionally efficient, and comfortable

OBJECTIVE 5: Support multipurpose use of schools

OBJECTIVE 6: Meet space needs of special education programs

## OBJECTIVE 1: Implement Facility Plans that Support the Continuous Improvement of Educational Programs in the School System

As the school system focuses program initiatives to improve student performance, facility plans are developed to address the space needs and facility requirements of schools. Implementing school system educational priorities that require more classroom and support space continues to be a challenge, particularly over the past 30 years of steady enrollment growth. With continued student enrollment at the secondary schools, the school system will continue to be challenged to provide adequate capacity.

Several educational program initiatives have required more classroom and support space. These initiatives include the reduction in class sizes in Grades K–2 for the 64 schools most heavily affected by poverty and English language deficiency (called “focus schools”) and the expansion of full-day kindergarten to all elementary schools in MCPS. Creative uses of existing space in schools, modifications to existing classrooms, and placement of relocatable classrooms are all used to accommodate the additional staff needed to implement these initiatives. At schools with capital improvements in the facility planning or architectural planning phase, additional classrooms are provided to accommodate these initiatives. These initiatives are described in further detail in the following paragraphs.

## 2021–2022 Focus and Title I Schools

<b>Arcola</b> Lucy V. Barnsley	S. Christa McAuliffe Meadow Hall Mill Creek Towne
* <b>Bel Pre (K–2)</b>	*Montgomery Knolls (K–2)
<b>Brookhaven</b>	* <b>New Hampshire Estates (K–2)</b>
<b>Brown Station</b>	* <b>Roscoe R. Nix (K–2)</b>
<b>Burnt Mills</b> Burtonsville Cannon Road	* <b>Oak View (3–5)</b> Oakland Terrace William T. Page
<b>Clopper Mill</b>	*Pine Crest (3–5)
* <b>Cresthaven (3–5)</b>	*Piney Branch (3–5) Judith A. Resnik
<b>Capt. James E. Daly</b> Dr. Charles R. Drew East Silver Spring	Sally K. Ride Rock Creek Forest Rock View
<b>Fairland</b> Fields Road Flower Hill Forest Knolls Fox Chapel	<b>Rolling Terrace</b> <b>Rosemont</b> Sequoyah
<b>Gaithersburg</b>	<b>Sargent Shriver</b> Flora M. Singer
<b>Galway</b>	<b>South Lake</b> Stedwick
<b>Georgian Forest</b> Germantown Glen Haven Glenallan Goshen Great Seneca Creek	* <b>Strathmore (3–5)</b> Strawberry Knoll
<b>Greencastle</b>	<b>Summit Hall</b>
<b>Harmony Hills</b>	*Takoma Park (K–2)
<b>Highland</b> Highland View	<b>Twinbrook</b>
<b>Jackson Road</b>	<b>Viers Mill</b>
<b>Kemp Mill</b>	<b>Washington Grove</b> Waters Landing
<b>Lake Seneca</b>	<b>Watkins Mill</b>
<b>JoAnn Leleck at Broad Acres</b>	<b>Weller Road</b>
Maryvale	<b>Wheaton Woods</b> <b>Whetstone</b>

All schools in this table are receiving additional staff to reduce class sizes in Grades K–2 except for the Grades 3–5 schools.

\*These schools are paired, either Grades K–2 or Grades 3–5.

Schools in **bold** are also Title I schools in the 2021–2022 school year.

### Class Size Reductions

In the 2000–2001 school year, the Board of Education began a three-year initiative to reduce class sizes in the primary grades as a key component of the Early Success Performance Plan. Over a three-year period, class size in Grades K–2 in the focus schools most heavily impacted by poverty and language deficiency were reduced for the full instructional day to an average of 17 students per teacher in Grades 1–2 and 15 students per teacher in full-day kindergarten. Reducing class sizes in Grades K–2 had a dramatic impact on utilization levels in elementary schools, creating the need for additional classrooms to accommodate the increased number of teaching positions.

Beginning in FY 2012, the staffing guidelines for the focus schools increased to an average of 18 students per teacher in Grades K–2. Some schools also receive staffing to reduce class sizes in the upper grades. These schools are listed in the Focus and Title 1 Schools table.

### Head Start and Prekindergarten Programs

The *Bridge to Excellence in Public Schools Act of 2002* requires that all eligible children “shall be admitted free of charge to publicly funded prekindergarten programs” established by the Board of Education. These programs are located yearly, based on need in the community and transportation travel times. The Montgomery County Council added additional funding to the FY 2018 budget to support the expansion of 10 MCPS Head Start classrooms to full school-day programs. With the additional funding from the County Council, 27 of the 34 Head Start classes became full-day programs. The locations are shown in Appendix L.

### Signature and Academy Programs

Many high schools have developed and implemented signature and/or academy programs that integrate a specific focus or distinguishing theme with skills, concepts, and instructional strategies into some portion of a school’s curriculum. Some of these programs are school-wide programs, while others are structured as a special program offering at the school. The theme or focus becomes the vehicle for teaching the traditional high school curriculum in a fresh, interesting, and challenging way. Some schools also have created themed academies to engage students through a small learning community approach, and to raise student engagement and achievement by matching programs with student interests. Some of these programs require specialized classrooms or laboratories to support the delivery of the educational program. High schools may require facility modifications to accommodate signature or academy programs either through a major capital project or through countywide capital projects.

### Information Technologies

MCPS has a strong commitment to prepare today’s students for life in the 21st century and to ensure a technologically literate citizenry and an internationally competitive work force. Board of Education Policy IS, Educational Technology, strives to ensure that educational technology is appropriately and equitably integrated into instruction and management to increase student learning, enhance the teaching process, and improve the operation of the school system.

The Technology Modernization Project provides the needed technology updates and computers in every school. Funds included in this project update schools’ technology hardware, software, and network infrastructure. Up-to-date technology enhances student learning through access to online information and the latest instructional software. MCPS plans a multiyear effort to provide all students with access to mobile computers and a cloud-based learning platform that enhances creativity and collaboration in the classroom. These technologies also are critical for implementing online testing and learning.

## OBJECTIVE 2: Meet Long-term and Interim Space Needs

Montgomery County has demonstrated a strong commitment to providing sufficient school facilities. Funding capital improvements has been a challenge since 1983 when enrollment began to rise sharply. MCPS enrollment is now approximately 67,975 students greater than it was in 1983, and 35 elementary schools, 19 middle schools, and 6 high schools have been constructed. Numerous additions to existing schools also have been constructed to accommodate the growth in enrollment. This year, MCPS operates a total of 207 school facilities, including: 135 elementary schools, 40 middle schools, and 25 high schools; 1 career and technology high school; 5 special education schools; and 1 alternative education center with two satellite centers.

### Long-term Space Needs

A continued commitment to capital projects for the next six years is necessary to address overdue space needs and keep up with enrollment over the past few years. This year's preliminary school enrollment is 159,005 students. Enrollment is projected to be 166,160 students by 2027. The CIP identifies where space shortages are projected to occur and how the school system plans to address them. Due to the high level of school utilization throughout the school system, there may be some opportunities to address school space shortages through boundary changes among existing schools. However, additions to existing schools, the opening of new schools, and other major capital projects at schools will continue to be important strategies to address space needs. For a summary of recommended capital projects, please see the table in Chapter 1, labeled "Superintendent's Recommended FY 2023 Capital Budget and the FY 2023–2028 Capital Improvements Program Summary Table".

To develop long-term space plans for schools, school planners annually review the space available at schools by comparing the enrollment projections with program capacity in the sixth year of the CIP planning period. When the enrollment exceeds the program capacity of a school, planners may consider several strategies to address the overutilization of a school. These strategies include:

- Determine if space is available at adjacent or nearby schools and reassign students to a school(s) with space available;
- Consider an addition at the school to accommodate the enrollment if possible. If the school cannot be expanded to accommodate the projected enrollment, additions could be considered at nearby schools and students would be reassigned to these schools. For a classroom addition to be considered for funding at an individual school, the following thresholds need to be met:
- Elementary school—the enrollment needs to exceed capacity by four classrooms or more (a minimum of 92 seats) in the sixth year of the CIP period

- Middle school—enrollment needs to exceed capacity by six classrooms or more (a minimum of 150 seats) in the sixth year of the CIP period
- High school—enrollment needs to exceed capacity by eight classrooms or more (a minimum of 200 seats) in the sixth year of the CIP period
- Consider the opening of a new school if reassignments and increasing capacity of existing schools is not sufficient to address the projected enrollment. Expanding schools to their maximum core capacity is considered before the opening of a new school.
- A new elementary school may be considered if the cluster-wide deficit of space exceeds 500–600 seats.
- A new middle school may be considered if deficits of space exceed 800 seats in one or more clusters.
- For a new high school, the deficit would need to exceed approximately 1600 seats in one or more clusters.

School planners also review the impact of school utilization on the county's Growth and Infrastructure Policy.

To address growing enrollment in the county, the *FY 2023 Capital Budget and the FY 2023–2028 CIP* includes funds for five new schools that are listed below:

- Gaithersburg Elementary School #8 (opens August 2022)
- Clarksburg Elementary School #9 (opens August 2023)
- Reopening of Charles W. Woodward High School (opens August 2025)
- Crown High School (opens August 2026)
- Bethesda-Chevy Chase/Walter Johnson Clusters Elementary School (opens TBD)

In addition to new school openings, classroom addition projects and major capital projects are planned to address overutilization at schools. Planning and/or construction funds are planned for several classroom addition projects as part of the Recommended FY 2023–2028 CIP. All capital projects are listed on the following table, along with the number of rooms in the projects and the completion dates. Prior to requesting funding for a project, facility planning funds are requested to conduct a feasibility study to determine the feasibility, scope, and cost for the project.

### Number of Additional Rooms Planned—Capital Projects

School	Number of Rooms Planned*	Completion Date
John F. Kennedy HS Addition	20	8/22
Odessa Shannon MS Addition/Facility Upgrade	11	8/22
Gaithersburg Elementary School #8	39	8/22
Parkland MS Addition	11	8/23
Silver Spring International MS Addition	5	8/23
Clarksburg Elementary School #9 (New)	37	8/23
Ronald McNair ES Addition	8	8/23

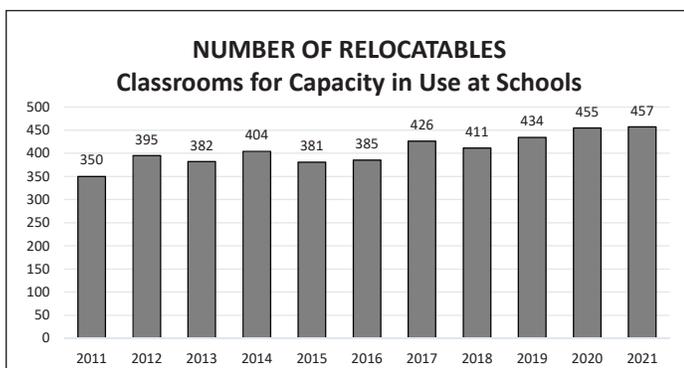
School	Number of Rooms Planned*	Completion Date
William T. Page ES Addition	16	8/22
Westbrook ES Addition	3	8/22
Northwood HS Addition	45	8/25
Charles W. Woodward HS Reopening	101	8/25
Burtonsville ES Addition	10	8/25
Greencastle ES Addition	10	8/25
Highland View ES Addition	8	8/25
JoAnn Leleck ES at Broad Acres (Grades 3–5) (New)	21	8/25
Crown High School	106	8/26

\*The number of rooms includes classrooms that are being added with new construction. These rooms include teaching stations that are counted in capacity as well as teaching stations in the elementary schools that are not counted in the capacity (art, music, and the dual purpose room), October 2021.

## Interim Space Needs

The use of relocatable classrooms on a short-term basis has proven to be successful in providing schools the space necessary to deliver educational programs. Relocatable classrooms provide an interim learning environment for students until permanent capacity can be constructed. Relocatable classrooms also enable the school system to avoid significant capital investment where building needs are only short term. The number of relocatable classrooms in use grew dramatically as program initiatives described under Objective 1 were implemented and enrollment increased. The number of relocatable classrooms declined between 2005 and 2008 as enrollment plateaued and capacity projects opened. However, with enrollment increases since 2008, the number of relocatable classrooms started to increase. In the 2021–2022 school year, 457 relocatable classrooms are in use at various schools throughout the county. This number does not include relocatable classrooms used for daycare, to stage construction on site at schools, or relocatables located at holding facilities and other facilities throughout the school system.

With the implementation of wireless technology and mobile devices at all schools, the need for computer laboratories has decreased. At some schools with space needs, the school system converted some computer laboratories to standard classrooms to deliver the educational programs beginning in the 2013–2014 school year.



## Non-Capital Actions

Two non-capital actions are included in the *Superintendent's Recommended FY 2023 Capital Budget and the FY 2023–2028 Capital Improvements Program* as follows:

- Gaithersburg Cluster Elementary School #8 was approved to open in August 2022. In accordance with Board of Education action, the boundary study was approved to create the service area for the school in spring 2020, earlier than typical boundary studies. The boundary study began in March 2020, however, due to the COVID-19 health pandemic, community meetings were suspended. The boundary study reconvened in mid-October 2020, with virtual meetings. The superintendent of schools released her recommendation in October 2021, as part of the FY 2023 Capital Budget and FY 2023–2028 Capital Improvements Program, with Board of Education action scheduled for November 18, 2021. Information regarding this boundary study and the superintendent's recommendation is available on the MCPS website at the following link: <https://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/departments/planning/gaithersburgcluster8boundarystudy.aspx>.
- A boundary study was conducted in winter 2020, to relieve the overutilization of Somerset Elementary School. The scope of the boundary study included Somerset and Westbrook elementary schools. Instead of recommending a staff-developed option, the Board of Education approved a second boundary study that included Bethesda, Somerset, and Westbrook elementary schools to address the overutilization at Bethesda and Somerset elementary schools. The boundary study occurred in spring 2021. The superintendent released her recommendation in October 2021, as part of the FY 2023 Capital Budget and FY 2023–2028 Capital Improvements Program, with Board of Education action scheduled for November 18, 2021. Included in the CIP recommendation is to complete the classroom shell build-out for Westbrook Elementary School by August 2022. Information regarding this boundary study and the superintendent's recommendation is available on the MCPS website at the following link: <https://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/departments/planning/BethesdaSomersetWestbrookBoundaryStudy.aspx>

A boundary study is recommended as part of the FY 2023 Capital Budget and the FY 2023–2028 Capital Improvements Program, to create the service area for the new Clarksburg Elementary School #9. The anticipated scope will include the following elementary schools—Clarksburg, William B. Gibbs, Jr., Little Bennett, and Wilson Wims elementary schools. No middle or high schools are anticipated to be included in the boundary study. Based on the approved completion date for the school, the boundary study will be conducted in the spring 2022, with Board of Education action in November 2022.

## OBJECTIVE 3: Sustain and Upgrade Facilities

The Board of Education, superintendent of schools, and school community recognize the necessity to maintain schools in

good condition through a range of activities that includes routine daily maintenance to the systematic replacement of building systems. A number of capital projects provide funds for systematic life-cycle asset replacement, including the Roof Replacement Program, the Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning (HVAC) Program, and the Planned Life Cycle Asset Replacement (PLAR) Program. Because schools built or modernized since 1985 are generally of higher construction quality than schools built prior to 1985, it is possible to extend the useful life through a high level of maintenance and replacement of building systems. In the coming years, more funds will be directed to major capital projects that sustain and upgrade facilities in good condition for longer periods than has been feasible in the past.

The Board of Education, superintendent of schools, and school community also recognize that even well-maintained facilities eventually reach the end of their useful life span and require upgrade to the infrastructure building systems and the need to address programmatic needs. The school system has developed a new system to assess all schools utilizing the Key Facilities Indicators (KFI) to identify schools for a possible major capital project. Once a school is identified for a major capital project, the scope for the project will be identified based on the individual building system and programmatic and capacity needs for each school. The following table identifies nine schools that have been approved for a major capital project with planning and/or construction funding in the FY 2023–2028 CIP in the Major Capital Projects—Elementary or Major Capital Projects—Secondary projects. Eastern Middle School and Piney Branch Elementary School have been identified as the next two schools to be included for major capital projects. However, only planning funds have been included in the recommended FY 2023–2028 CIP, and therefore, a TBD completion date will be shown until construction funds are approved in a future CIP. Additionally, as part of the recommended FY 2023–2028 CIP, 10 elementary schools and three middle schools have been identified for feasibility studies as follows: Belmont, Cold Spring, Damascus, DuFief, Oakland Terrace, Sherwood, Twinbrook, Whetstone, and Woodfield elementary schools; and Banneker, Gaithersburg, and White Oak middle schools. The intent of the feasibility studies is to identify the scope of the project as noted above and to determine the programmatic, capacity, and building system need for each school. Once the feasibility studies are complete, a recommendation regarding scope, timeline and funding these projects will be considered in a future CIP.

### Number of Additional Room— Major Capital Projects

School	Number of Rooms Planned	Completion Date
Burnt Mills ES	13	8/23
Stonegate ES	9	8/23
South Lake ES	5	8/23
Woodlin ES	8	8/23
Poolesville HS	15	8/24

School	Number of Rooms Planned	Completion Date
Neelsville MS	7	8/24
Damascus HS	TBD	8/26
Col. Zadok Magruder HS	TBD	8/27
Thomas S. Wootton HS	TBD	8/27
Eastern MS	TBD	TBD
Piney Branch	TBD	TBD

The number of rooms includes classrooms that are being added with new construction. These rooms include teaching stations that are counted in capacity as well as teaching stations in the elementary schools that are not counted in the capacity (art, music, and the dual purpose room), October 2021

## OBJECTIVE 4: Provide Schools that Are Environmentally Safe, Secure, Functionally Efficient, and Comfortable

To maintain and extend the useful life of school facilities, MCPS follows a continuum of activities that begins the first day a new school is opened. Funding for maintenance activities is found in both the capital and operating budgets. A level of effort funding is provided in both budgets for building maintenance and systemic renovations.

MCPS has many projects designed to meet the capital maintenance needs of schools across the county. These countywide projects are described in Chapter 5. Countywide projects address environmental issues, safety and security, and major building system maintenance in schools. These projects require an assessment of each school relative to the needs of other schools and include scheduled major repairs and replacement activities. The assessment process for most of the countywide projects is carried out through an annual review that involves a team of maintenance professionals, school principals, and consultants. On some projects, local, state, and federal mandates affect the scope and cost of the effort required.

MCPS is committed to sustainability and conservation of resources in the design and operation of all facilities. Several programs exist to support these activities. The School Energy and Recycling Team (SERT) Program promotes efficient and responsible energy use and active recycling in all schools. The SERT Program strives to significantly reduce energy consumption and to increase recycling systemwide by providing training and education; incentives, recognition, and award programs for conservation; accessible energy and recycling data; individual school programs for energy and environmental investigation-based learning opportunities; and conservation operations and procedures. SERT staff works with students, teachers, staff, and the community to practice environmental stewardship and to develop strategies to reduce the carbon footprint of MCPS.

MCPS has implemented measures to reduce the environmental impact of its buildings through a comprehensive revision of its construction design guidelines. Beginning in 2006, schools

were designed utilizing the practices from the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) rating system of the United States Green Building Council. Great Seneca Creek Elementary School, which opened in September 2006, was the first public school in Maryland to be “gold” certified under the LEED rating system for green buildings. From FY 2007 through FY 2019, all new schools were designed to achieve a LEED for Schools “silver” certification. Smaller green technology and conservation pilots were introduced at several schools to provide a healthy and effective learning environment for students and staff. Beginning in FY 2020, schools are being designed utilizing the Green Globes rating system for green building design.

## OBJECTIVE 5: Support Multipurpose Use of Schools

MCPS recognizes the role schools play as centers of community activity and affiliation. The school system supports multipurpose use of its schools, especially in regard to uses that complement the educational program. Multipurpose uses of schools that promote family and community partnerships also are of great importance. Compatible uses of schools are factored into the facility planning process whenever possible. A prime example of compatible uses in schools is the leasing of available space in elementary schools to childcare providers. Most of the elementary schools in the system provide space for childcare providers through a mixture of full-day centers and before and after school services.

The Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Capital Budget includes several projects to provide services in county schools. In the Child Care in Schools Project, DHHS funds the construction of childcare classrooms in schools undergoing major construction or renovation. MCPS oversees the construction of the childcare classroom while DHHS arranges for the lease of the childcare classroom to a private childcare provider. DHHS has requested funds for a Childcare in Schools facilities at Woodlin Elementary School to open as part of the major capital project.

Linkages to Learning, a collaborative program between the school system, DHHS, and private community providers, addresses the complex social and mental health needs of an increasingly diverse and economically impacted population in Montgomery County. In order to address possible barriers to learning, a variety of mental health, social, and educational support services are brought together at Linkages to Learning sites. In addition, services are provided at the School Health Services Center at Rocking Horse Road. The long-range plan is to expand the Linkages to Learning programs to additional schools. Funding is included in the DHHS CIP for the following Linkages to Learning projects:

Linkages to Learning Projects	Completion Date
Odessa Shannon MS	August 2022
Gaithersburg ES #8 (New)	August 2022
Silver Spring International MS	August 2023
Neelsville Middle School	August 2024

Since fall 1997, Linkages to Learning/School-based Health Centers (SBHC) have been providing enhanced health resources to students and their families. In response to the County Council Health and Human Services Committee request for a plan to expand SBHCs to additional school sites, the DHHS convened the School-based Health Centers Interagency Planning Group. The planning group was an interagency group that developed selection criteria to rank schools and a timeline for constructing new SBHCs at school sites. Based on the work of the work group, several schools were identified to receive a SBHC. The following table shows the schools that have SBHCs along with the opening date:

SBHC Schools	Opening Date
JoAnn Leleck ES at Broad Acres	1997
Harmony Hills ES	1997
Gaithersburg ES	2005
Summit Hall ES	2008
New Hampshire Estates ES	2009
Rolling Terrace ES	2011
Highland ES	2012
Viers Mill ES	2013
Weller Road ES	2013
South Lake ES	2023

In spring 2006, the School-based Wellness Center Planning Group convened. The planning group was charged with describing the services that would be offered at wellness centers at high schools and to identify criteria and a decision-making process for prioritizing school sites for wellness centers. As a result of the work of the planning group, School-based Wellness Centers (SBWC) have opened at several high schools. The table below shows the schools that have SBWCs and the opening date:

SBWC Schools	Opening Date
Northwood HS	2007
Gaithersburg HS	2013
Watkins Mill HS	2013
Wheaton HS	2016
Seneca Valley HS	2020
John F. Kennedy HS	2022

Kingsview Middle School in Germantown adjoins a county-operated community center. The community center is a 23,000 square foot building that contains a gymnasium, social hall, arts room, game room, and exercise room, as well as administrative offices, common areas, and conference spaces. The center is structurally integrated with the middle school building but has a separate and distinct main entry. An outdoor pool and bathhouse also are located on the site as a separate facility, consisting of the following: 50-meter lap pool, leisure pool, wading pool for toddlers, and common lounging areas. Other opportunities

to collocate schools with compatible uses will be pursued in the future as land for new school sites becomes more limited.

Community use of school facilities is another important way in which schools serve their communities. Outside of the instructional day, schools are used for a wide range of community activities. The Interagency Coordinating Board (ICB) for Community Use of Public Facilities (CUPF) manages school use, collects fees for most community uses of schools, and maintains an Enterprise Fund to pay for the cost of utilizing schools after school hours. Among the largest users of schools are childcare providers, county recreation groups, sports groups, and religious groups.

## **OBJECTIVE 6: Meet Special Education Program Space Needs**

The Maryland State Department of Education established a target for local school systems to address the need for students with disabilities to receive access to services in the general education environment. The Fiscal Year 2022 proposed target requires 72 percent of students with disabilities to receive special education services in the general education environment. As a result of this mandate, the Department of Special Education Services and the Division of Prekindergarten, Special Programs, and Related Services, in collaboration with the Department of Facilities Management and the Office of School Support and Improvement, plan and coordinate the identification of program sites and locations to address the diverse needs of students with disabilities. This process is designed to ensure the delivery of special education services with an emphasis on providing services to the maximum extent appropriate in the school the student would attend if nondisabled.

Montgomery County Public Schools chooses locations for special education programs by focusing on the delivery of services in the student's home school or in the school as close as possible to the student's home. The location of programs enables students with disabilities to receive special education services within the school, cluster, or region of the county where the student resides.

The percentage of students who receive services in their home school has increased each year since 1998. The following model guides facility planning:

- Special education Home School Model services are offered in all schools for Grades kindergarten–5.
- Learning and Academic Disabilities services and transition services are provided in all secondary schools.
- Special education services are available regionally for students who are recommended for the following services:
  - Augmentative and Alternative Communication Services
  - Autism Spectrum Disorders Services
  - Autism Resource Services
  - Aspergers Services
  - Bridge Services
  - Prekindergarten and Elementary Physical Disabilities Services

- Elementary Learning Center
- Extensions (Upcounty and Downcounty)
- Gifted and Talented/Learning Disabled (GT/LD) Program
- Infants and Toddlers Program
- Learning for Independence (LFI) Program
- Preschool Education Program (PEP)
- Prekindergarten Language Classes
- School/Community-based (SCB) Program
- Social Emotional Special Education Services (SESES)
- Longview and Stephen Knolls schools
- Special education services are countywide for students in need of the following programs:
  - Carl Sandburg Learning Center
  - Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services
  - GT/LD Program
  - Preschool Vision Class
  - John L. Gildner Regional Institute for Children and Adolescents
  - Rock Terrace School

## **Birth through 5 Years of Age Special Education Growth**

The Montgomery County Infants and Toddlers Program provides services to children with developmental delays from birth to three years of age or until the start of the school year after turning four under the Extended Individualized Family Service Plan, in natural environments, such as home, childcare, or other community settings. Growth in the Infants and Toddlers Program has resulted in the location of five centers throughout the county.

MCPS provides a continuum of special education services for children ages three through five. Preschool Education Program (PEP) services range from consultative and itinerant services for children in community-based childcare settings and preschools to itinerant instruction at home for medically fragile children. Classroom environments are provided for children who need a comprehensive approach to their learning needs.

Providing prekindergarten special education services in the least restrictive environment (LRE) is a challenge because of the limited number of general education prekindergarten classrooms and services available in MCPS. DSES and the Division of Early Childhood Programs and Services (DECPS) collaborate to collocate general and special education preschool classes to provide additional LRE opportunities to prekindergarten students. MCPS also is focused on increasing the number of locations where nondisabled community peers are invited to learn alongside students with disabilities in a prekindergarten classroom.