

# **Superintendent's Recommended FY 2025 Capital Budget and the FY 2025–2030 Capital Improvements Program**

Maryland's Largest School District

**MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

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## MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

*Expanding Opportunity and Unleashing Potential*

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### OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

October 27, 2023

Ms. Karla Silvestre, President  
and Members of the Montgomery County Board of Education  
850 Hungerford Drive, Room 123  
Rockville, Maryland 20850

Dear Ms. Silvestre and Members of the Board of Education:

I am submitting my *Recommended Fiscal Year (FY) 2025 Capital Budget and the FY 2025–2030 Capital Improvements Program* (CIP) for your consideration and adoption. This six-year CIP plan includes the expenditure recommendations for FY 2025–2030 and provides the recommended FY 2025 Capital Budget funding appropriation authority needed to implement the CIP during the fiscal year that begins on July 1, 2024, and ends on June 30, 2025. FY 2025 is the first year of the biennial CIP review process. In accordance with the Montgomery County charter, all CIP projects are considered in odd-numbered fiscal years; therefore, this recommended CIP will receive a full review by the county executive and the Montgomery County Council during the coming months through the Montgomery County Council's final action on the FY 2025–2030 CIP in late May 2024.

On September 26, 2023, the Montgomery County Council adopted the Spending Affordability Guidelines (SAG) for the FY 2025 Capital Budget and the FY 2025–2030 CIP for General Obligation (GO) bonds used to fund a significant portion of the county's CIP. The adopted SAG of \$1.68 billion for the six-year period is the same level adopted for the two previous CIP cycles. This level will have an impact on the GO bonds available to Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) to provide essential capacity and programmatic spaces, as well as address our aging infrastructure in schools throughout the county.

The *Superintendent's Recommended FY 2025 Capital Budget and FY 2025–2030 Capital Improvements Program* totals \$1.999 billion for the six-year period, an increase of \$93.6 million more than the approved CIP. Many schools are overutilized and beyond their life-cycle and capital projects are necessary to provide the learning environment that students and staff deserve. This recommended CIP will address the growing need for classroom space through additions and new schools, and will focus on our aging facilities and infrastructure through the major capital project program and our many countywide systemic projects.

The recommended CIP includes a total of 22 capital projects; 9 at the high school level, 3 at the middle school level, and 10 at the elementary school level. The recommendation maintains the completion dates of all previously approved capital projects, with the exception of four that require a one-year extension of their approved construction timeline. The recommendation includes additional funding for the following:

- Three previously approved capital projects—Burtonsville Elementary School Replacement, JoAnn Leleck Elementary School at Broad Acres Replacement, and Damascus High School—to reflect increased construction costs;
- Three new addition projects—Mill Creek Town Elementary School, and James Hubert Blake and Paint Branch high schools;

- Five new Major Capital Projects—Eastern Middle School (planning and construction funds), and Cold Spring, Damascus, Twinbrook and Whetstone elementary schools (planning funds and placeholder construction funds); and
- Countywide systemic projects to address aging infrastructure.

The *Superintendent's Recommended FY 2025 Capital Budget and the FY 2025–2030 Capital Improvements Program* also includes additional funding to implement the *Blueprint for Maryland's Future* through capital solutions, such as relocatable classrooms, the construction of stand-alone centers, and/or capital improvements to closed former schools. The recommended CIP will address systemwide needs by increasing systemic projects, such as Roof Replacement and Planned Life-cycle Asset Replacement. One countywide project, Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning (HVAC) Replacement, substantially is increased to address the continued backlog of HVAC projects through upgrades and/or replacements of systems that are beyond their expected service life. A new countywide project, Healthy Schools, will provide matching funds for the state's *Healthy Schools Facility Fund* program to address HVAC, plumbing, and roof systems to improve the learning environment at schools throughout the county.

Unfortunately, the effects of the COVID-19 health pandemic, unprecedented rise in material prices, disruptions in the supply chain, and staffing shortages, continue to impact our capital improvements program, especially construction timelines. As a result, the recommended FY 2025–2030 CIP includes a one-year construction timeline extension for the following four capital projects to align with anticipated completion dates:

- August 2027 Recommended Completion:
  - Damascus High School
  - Northwood High School
  - Charles W. Woodward High School (Reopening)
- August 2026 Recommended Completion:
  - JoAnn Leleck Elementary School at Broad Acres

The *Superintendent's Recommended FY 2025 Capital Budget and FY 2025–2030 Capital Improvements Program* is fiscally prudent, addresses many critical capacity and aging infrastructure needs, and is affordable within the County Council's fiscal limits. The recommendation could have included additional capacity projects for schools that will continue to be overutilized as well as additional funding, beyond what was recommended, to address our aging facilities; however, submitting a recommendation not affordable by the county would not serve our students, staff, and parent community well.

The capital projects included in the *Superintendent's Recommended FY 2025 Capital Budget and FY 2025–2030 Capital Improvements Program* will help to accomplish the goal of addressing our capacity needs throughout the school system. During the past 10 years, MCPS enrollment has grown by more than 12,000 students. The preliminary September 30, 2023, enrollment is 160,770, a one-year increase of 216 students. Total school system enrollment is projected to increase to 167,543 students by the 2029–2030 school year. This projection represents a slowdown in enrollment growth in part due to the continued decline in resident births, which results in reduced kindergarten enrollment and smaller cohorts of students as they progress through the school system each year. However, even with this projected slowdown in growth, the capacity projects included in the recommended CIP are warranted and must remain on their approved schedules.



For FY 2025, the state aid request is \$237.93 million. This amount is based on current eligibility of projects approved by the Montgomery County Council in May 2023. Of this request, \$18.5 million is for eight systemic roofing and HVAC projects, \$63.39 million is for five capital projects that require construction funding, and \$156.04 million is for two capital projects that require both planning approval and construction funding.

On March 28, 2023, the Board of Education (Board) adopted *The Boundary Study Scope Recommendation to Determine the Service Area for the Reopening of Charles W. Woodward High School*. As previously noted, as a result of continued effects of the health pandemic, the construction timelines for Northwood High School and the reopening of Charles W. Woodward High School are recommended to be extended one year. Therefore, a recommendation to adjust the timeline of the approved boundary study to align with the construction completion dates will be presented as part of the Board's work sessions on the *Superintendent's Recommended FY 2025 Capital Budget and FY 2025–2030 Capital Improvements Program*.

The *Superintendent's Recommended FY 2025 Capital Budget and the FY 2025–2030 Capital Improvements Program* will be presented to the Board on October 31, 2023. Following that presentation, the Board is scheduled to hold two public hearings on November 6 and 7, 2023. Following the public hearings, the Board will hold a work session on November 10, 2023. The Board is scheduled to act on the *Superintendent's Recommended FY 2025 Capital Budget and the FY 2025–2030 Capital Improvements Program* on November 16, 2023.

The county executive will publish his CIP recommendations for all County agencies by mid-January 2024. The Montgomery County Council will hold hearings in early February 2024, conduct work sessions in March and April 2024, and adopt the FY 2025 Capital Budget and the FY 2025–2030 CIP in late May 2024. I look forward to partnering with you during this process to secure the necessary funding for our Capital Improvements Program.

In collaboration with parents, guardians, community members, and business leaders, we will continue to work for the improvement of public school facilities in Montgomery County.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Monifa B. McKnight".

Monifa B. McKnight, Ed.D.  
Superintendent of Schools

MBM:MBH:SPA:ALK



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# Cluster Service Areas 2023-2024



Division of  
Capital Planning  
and  
Real Estate  
October 2023

# 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 2025–2030 CIP falls in an odd-numbered fiscal year and will receive a full review by the County Council. The FY 2025 Capital Budget and the FY 2025–2030 CIP provides the recommended appropriation authority for funds needed to implement CIP projects during FY 2025, and the expenditure schedule for the FY 2025–2030 CIP.

This document contains the following sections:

**Chapter 1**, *The Superintendent's Recommended FY 2025 Capital Budget and the FY 2025–2030 Capital Improvements Program (CIP)*, is a review of the major factors that have influenced the development of recommended projects in the FY 2025 Capital Budget and the FY 2025–2030 CIP. This chapter includes a table summarizing the recommended FY 2025–2030 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 recommended CIP.

**Chapter 4**, *Recommended Actions and Planning Issues*, is arranged by high school cluster and high school consortium. This chapter provides tables with enrollment projections, school demographic profiles, facility room use, capacity data, and other facility information. Planning issues are identified and recommended 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, 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 while cluster organization is used for presentation of information, planning decisions often cross cluster boundaries to meet program and facility needs for students.