

**Superintendent's
Recommended
FY 2026 Capital Budget
and Amendments to the
FY 2025–2030
Capital Improvements Program**

Maryland's Largest School District

MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

October 21, 2024

Ms. Karla Silvestre, President
and Members of the Board of Education
15 W. Gude Drive, Suite 100
Rockville, Maryland 20850

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

I am submitting my *Recommended Fiscal Year (FY) 2026 Capital Budget and Amendments to the FY 2025–2030 Capital Improvements Program (CIP)* for your consideration and adoption. This plan includes the expenditure recommendations for FY 2026–2030 and provides the recommended FY 2026 Capital Budget funding appropriation authority needed to implement the CIP during the fiscal year that begins July 1, 2025, and ends June 30, 2026. FY 2026 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.

Prekindergarten–Grade 12 student enrollment is 159,671 for the 2024–2025 school year as of September 30, 2024, a decrease of 552 students from the 2023–2024 school year. Kindergarten–Grade 12 student enrollment is 155,046 for the 2024–2025 school year, as of September 30, 2024, a decrease of 742 students from the 2023–2024 school year. Total school system enrollment is projected to increase to 162,178 students by the 2030–2031 school year. This represents a slight slowdown in growth, due to the continued decline in resident births, resulting in reduced size kindergarten classes, and the ripple effect as the cohorts progress through the system each year. As a result of this projected six-year growth, even with the slight slowdown, the capital projects included in the adopted CIP are warranted and must remain on their approved schedules.

As previously indicated, FY 2026 is an amendment year and, therefore, it is standard practice that the superintendent of schools recommends limited amendments. Unfortunately, the effects of the health pandemic, unprecedented rise in material prices, disruptions in the supply chain, and staffing shortages, still continue to impact our capital improvements program. As a result, to maintain the completion dates of previously approved projects and address our aging infrastructure, it is necessary to increase the adopted budgets for several of our individual capital projects and one countywide systemic project. In order to minimize the need for additional local funds in this amendment year, I am recommending to reallocate expenditures where possible to address these increased funding levels and align with

our school district's priorities. It is important that MCPS exercise financial stewardship and maximize taxpayer dollars, while ensuring that projects move forward to provide our school communities what they need.

Therefore, the *Superintendent's Recommended FY 2026 Capital Budget and Amendments to the FY 2025–2030 Capital Improvements Program* is \$1.853 billion, the same amount as the adopted CIP. While the total expenditure level remains the same, I am recommending that the Board of Education request \$21.6 million in new local funding to address project cost increases; complete build-out of major project elements; and compensate for a shortfall in State Aid. Details of my recommendation follow.

Increased expenditures for the following projects:

- *Charles W. Woodward High School*: Increase of \$28 million to construct Phase 3 of the building, including fit out of the auditorium and other associated spaces.
- *Crown High School*: Increase of \$20 million to fit out the interior of the auditorium, fit out shelled classrooms and labs, and build the stadium as originally designed.
- *Northwood High School*: Increase of \$5 million to upgrade the site amenities. These amenities primarily will be focused on the stadium, such as updating bleachers, lights, and the stadium's field.
- *Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning*: Increase of \$4.5 million to address the backlog of Heating, Ventilation, and Air-Conditioning (HVAC) projects that have been further impacted due to the rise in construction costs. This funding increase will allow for one additional HVAC project to be completed.

Reallocations of CIP programmed expenditures from the following projects:

- *Early Childhood Centers Project*: Reallocate \$36.5 million of placeholder funds for future projects. MCPS is in the process of finalizing its Early Childhood Center expansion plan to align with the *Blueprint for Maryland's Future*. A future CIP request most likely will occur once the expansion plan has been completed. My recommendation maintains funding for an east county early childhood center at the existing Burtonsville Elementary School.
- *Major Capital Projects—Elementary Project*: Reallocate \$12 million of placeholder funds pending completion of updated feasibility studies. Cold Spring, Damascus, Twinbrook, and Whetstone elementary schools currently have planning funds and placeholder construction dollars in the out-years of the CIP. In this recommendation, \$3 million from each of those four schools will be reallocated to other CIP projects. A future CIP request most likely will occur once MCPS has an anticipated completion date for these projects.
- *Sustainability Initiatives Project*: Reallocate \$5 million to other CIP projects.

- *Building Modifications for Program Improvement Project:* Reallocate \$4 million from the Building Modifications for Program Improvements Project to other CIP projects.

All other projects remain on schedule at their approved funding levels.

For FY 2026, our state aid request is \$53.3 million. This amount is based on the current eligibility of projects approved by the County Council in May 2024. Of the \$53.3 million, \$28.6 million is for the balance of construction funding for Crown High School, while \$24.7 million is for 8 systemic roofing and HVAC projects.

My recommended CIP approach also reallocates unexpended funds from previous projects in order to mitigate the impact of a reduction in State Aid that resulted from an error in the MCPS submission for aid in the Charles W. Woodward Project. MCPS has been informed that we will not be receiving \$39.3 million in State Aid that was expected due to errors in calculating prevailing wage and bid award across the multiple phases of the project. While the initial State Aid shortfall is expected to be \$39.3 million, we are working with the Interagency Commission and the Maryland Stadium Authority to determine whether a portion of that \$39.3 million can be awarded. If any of the State Aid is recaptured, that amount will be reallocated to other eligible projects.

I recommend two steps to address this \$39.3 million State Aid funding gap. As we strive to be good partners with our funding body, the County Council, I recommend that we transfer \$17.7 million in unexpended appropriations from these projects:

- \$7 million from the Building Modifications for Program Improvements Project
- \$5 million from the William Tyler Page ES Addition project
- \$3.4 million from the Westbrook ES Addition project
- \$1.3 million from the Takoma Park MS Addition project
- \$1 million from the Parkland MS Addition project

By transferring the \$17.7 million from these prior projects, we are able to reduce the funding gap from \$39.3 million to \$21.6 million. Together with the other CIP project reallocations previously identified, the *Superintendent's Recommended FY 2026 Capital Budget and Amendments to the FY 2025–2030 Capital Improvements Program* requires only \$21.6 million in local revenues to address the State Aid gap and keep major projects intact and on schedule.

On October 24, 2024, the *Superintendent's Recommended FY 2026 Capital Budget and Amendments to the FY 2025–2030 Capital Improvements Program* will be presented to the Board of Education. Public hearings on the recommended amendments to the adopted CIP are scheduled for November 4 and 6, 2024. On November 8, 2024, the Board of Education

Ms. Karla Silvestre, President
and Members of the Board of Education

4

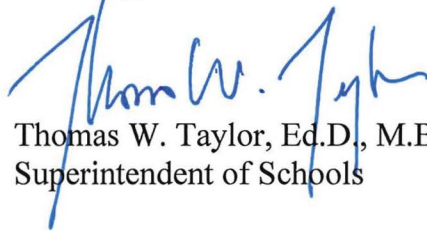
October 21, 2024

is scheduled to hold a work session to discuss the CIP recommendations. If necessary, there will be another public hearing on November 12, 2024, and another work session on November 14, 2024. The Board of Education will take final action on these items on November 21, 2024.

The county executive office will publish their CIP recommendations for all county agencies by mid-January 2025 for County Council discussion and action. The County Council will hold a hearing in February 2025, conduct work sessions in March and April 2025, and adopt the *FY 2026 Capital Budget and Amendments to the FY 2025–2030 Capital Improvements Program* in late May 2025.

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

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Thomas W. Taylor".

Thomas W. Taylor, Ed.D., M.B.A.
Superintendent of Schools

Table of Contents

	<i>Page</i>
Alphabetical Listing of Schools	viii
Countywide Map of Clusters	x
Introduction	xi
CHAPTER 1	
The Superintendent's Recommended FY2026 Capital Budget and Amendments to the FY 2025–2030 Capital Improvements Program.....	1-1
The Impact of the Biennial CIP Process	1-1
The Superintendent's Recommended Capital Improvements Program	1-2
Funding the Capital Improvements Program	1-3
General Obligation (GO) Bonds and the Spending Affordability Guidelines (SAG)	1-3
Recordation Tax and School Impact Tax	1-4
State Funding	1-4
Current Revenues	1-5
The Relationship between State and Local Funding	1-5
Capital Budget and Operating Budget Relationship	1-5
The Superintendent's Recommended FY 2026 Capital Budget And Amendments to the FY 2025–2030 CIP Summary Table	1-6
The Superintendent's Recommended FY 2026 Capital Budget And Amendments to the FY 2025–2030 CIP Funding Table	1-11
Requested FY 2026 State CIP for MCPS Table	1-12
CHAPTER 2	
The Planning Environment	2-1
Community Trends	2-1
Population	2-1
Economy	2-1
Master Plans & Housing	2-2
County Growth and Infrastructure Policy	2-2
Student Population Trends	2-3
Student Diversity	2-3
Class-size Reduction and Non-class-size Reduction Elementary Schools	2-4
MCPS Enrollment Forecast	2-5
Summary	2-6
CHAPTER 3	
Facility Planning Objectives	3-1
MCPS Vision, Mission, and Core Values	3-1
Capital Improvements Priorities	3-1
Educational Facilities Planning Policy Guidance	3-1
Preferred Range of Enrollment	3-1
School Capacity Calculations	3-2
School Facility Utilization	3-2
School Site Size	3-2
Facility Planning objectives	3-2
Facility Planning Objectives	
Objective 1: Implement Facility Plans that Support the Continuous Improvement of Educational Programs in the School System	3-2
Class Size Reductions	3-3
Head Start and Prekindergarten Programs	3-3
Signature and Academy Programs	3-3
Information Technologies	3-3
Objective 2: Meet Long-Term and Interim Space Needs	3-4
Long-term Space Needs	3-4
Interim Space Needs	3-5
Non-Capital Actions	3-5
Objective 3: Sustain and Upgrade Facilities	3-5
Objective 4: Provide Schools that are Environmentally Safe, Secure, Functionally Efficient, and Comfortable	3-6
Objective 5: Support Multipurpose Use of Schools	3-6
Objective 6: Meet Special Education Programs	
Space Needs	3-7
Birth through 5 Years of Age Special Education Growth	3-8

CHAPTER 4	
Recommended Actions and Planning Issues.....	4-1
MCPS Clusters for 2024–2025	4-3
Bethesda–Chevy Chase Cluster	4-5
Winston Churchill Cluster	4-10
Clarksburg Cluster	4-14
Damascus Cluster	4-19
Downcounty Consortium	4-24
Gaithersburg Cluster	4-35
Walter Johnson Cluster	4-40
Col. Zadok Magruder Cluster	4-45
Richard Montgomery Cluster	4-49
Northeast Consortium	4-54
Northwest Cluster	4-62
Poolesville Cluster	4-66
Quince Orchard Cluster	4-70
Rockville Cluster	4-74
Seneca Valley Cluster	4-78
Sherwood Cluster	4-83
Watkins Mill Cluster	4-86
Walt Whitman Cluster	4-91
Thomas S. Wootton Cluster	4-96
Special Education Centers	4-101
Other Educational Facilities	4-105
CHAPTER 5	
Countywide Projects	5-
APPENDICES	
A: Projected Enrollment	A-1
B: Special Program Enrollment	B-1
C: MCPS Land Use Planning, Zoning, Subdivision Review, and Growth Policy	C-1
MCPS Enrollment Forecasting	C-3
D: Subdivision Staging Policy Table	D-1
E: School Enrollment and Capacity Table	E-1
F: Facilities Data and State Rated Capacities Table	F-1
G: Capacity Calculations	G-1
H: Relocatable Classrooms	H-1
I: Former Operating Schools and Future School Sites	I-1
J: Facilities History Information	J-1
K: Planned Life-cycle Asset Replacement (PLAR) Projects	K-1
L: Head Start and Prekindergarten Locations	L-1
Preschool Special Education Service Locations	L-2
M: Catchment Areas for Special Programs Maps	M-1
N: Special Education Services Descriptions	N-1
O: School/Program Sites and Political Districts	O-1
P: Priority Funding Areas	P-1
Q: Long-range Facilities Planning Policy and Regulation (FAA)	Q-1
R: Community Involvement Policy (ABA)	R-1
S: Student Transfers Policy (JEE)	S-1
T: Student Transportation Policy (EEA)	T-1
U: Sustainability Policy (ECA)	U-1
V: Cluster, Special Education Centers, and Other Educational Facilities Maps	V-1
School Addresses and Phone Numbers	
Planning Calendar	

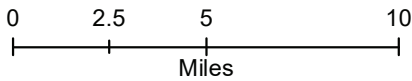
Alphabetical Listing of Schools

	Page		Page
Arcola ES—Downcounty Consortium.....	4-24	Diamond ES—Northwest and	
Argyle MS—Downcounty Consortium.....	4-24	Quince Orchard Cluster	4-62, 4-70
Ashburton ES—Walter Johnson Cluster	4-40	Dr. Charles R. Drew ES—Northeast Consortium.....	4-54
John T. Baker MS—Damascus Cluster.....	4-19	DuFief ES—Thomas S. Wootton Cluster.....	4-96
Benjamin Banneker MS—Northeast Consortium.....	4-54	East Silver Spring ES—Downcounty Consortium	4-24
Bannockburn ES—Walt Whitman Cluster	4-91	Eastern MS—Downcounty Consortium.....	4-24
Lucy V. Barnsley ES—Rockville Cluster	4-74	Thomas Edison High School of Technology	4-108
Beall ES—Richard Montgomery Cluster.....	4-49	Albert Einstein HS—Downcounty Consortium	4-24
Bel Pre ES—Downcounty Consortium.....	4-24	Blair Ewing Center	4-105
Bells Mill ES—Winston Churchill Cluster.....	4-10	Fairland ES—Northeast Consortium	4-54
Belmont ES—Sherwood Cluster	4-83	Fallsmead ES—Thomas S. Wootton Cluster.....	4-96
Bethesda ES—Bethesda-Chevy Chase Cluster.....	4-5	Farmland ES—Walter Johnson Cluster.....	4-40
Bethesda-Chevy Chase HS—		William H. Farquhar MS—Northeast Consortium and	
Bethesda-Chevy Chase Cluster	4-5	Sherwood Cluster	4-54, 4-83
Beverly Farms ES—Winston Churchill Cluster.....	4-10	Fields Road ES—Quince Orchard Cluster	4-70
Montgomery Blair HS—Downcounty Consortium	4-24	Flower Hill ES—Col. Zadok Magruder Cluster	4-45
James Hubert Blake HS—Northeast Consortium.....	4-54	Flower Valley ES—Rockville Cluster	4-74
Bradley Hills ES—Walt Whitman Cluster	4-91	Forest Knolls ES—Downcounty Consortium.....	4-24
Briggs Chaney MS—Northeast Consortium.....	4-54	Forest Oak MS—Gaithersburg Cluster	4-35
Brooke Grove ES—Sherwood Cluster.....	4-83	Fox Chapel ES—Clarksburg Cluster	4-14
Brookhaven ES—Downcounty Consortium.....	4-24	Robert Frost MS—Thomas S. Wootton Cluster	4-96
Brown Station ES—Quince Orchard Cluster.....	4-70	Gaithersburg ES—Gaithersburg Cluster.....	4-35
Burning Tree ES—Walt Whitman Cluster	4-91	Gaithersburg HS—Gaithersburg Cluster.....	4-35
Burnt Mills ES—Northeast Consortium.....	4-54	Gaithersburg MS—Gaithersburg Cluster	4-35
Burtonsville ES—Northeast Consortium	4-54	Galway ES—Northeast Consortium	4-54
Cabin Branch ES—Seneca Valley Cluster.....	4-78	Garrett Park ES—Walter Johnson Cluster	4-40
Cabin John MS—Winston Churchill and		Georgian Forest ES—Downcounty Consortium	4-24
Thomas S. Wootton Clusters	4-10, 4-96	Germantown ES—Northwest and	
Candlewood ES—Col. Zadok Magruder Cluster	4-45	Seneca Valley Clusters	4-62, 4-78
Cannon Road ES—Northeast Consortium	4-54	William B. Gibbs, Jr. ES—Clarksburg and	
Carderock Springs ES—Walt Whitman Cluster	4-91	Seneca Valley	4-14, 7-83
Rachel Carson ES—Quince Orchard Cluster.....	4-70	Glen Haven ES—Downcounty Consortium.....	4-24
Cashell ES—Col. Zadok Magruder Cluster	4-45	Glenallan ES—Downcounty Consortium.....	4-24
Cedar Grove ES—Clarksburg and		Goshen ES—Gaithersburg Cluster	4-35
Damascus Cluster.....	4-14, 4-19	Great Seneca Creek ES—Northwest Cluster.....	4-62
Chevy Chase ES—Bethesda-Chevy Chase Cluster	4-5	Greencastle ES—Northeast Consortium	4-54
Winston Churchill HS—Winston Churchill Cluster.....	4-10	Greenwood ES—Sherwood Cluster.....	4-83
Clarksburg ES—Clarksburg and		Harmony Hills ES—Downcounty Consortium.....	4-24
Seneca Valley Clusters	4-14, 4-78	Highland ES—Downcounty Consortium	4-24
Clarksburg HS—Clarksburg Cluster	4-14	Highland View ES—Downcounty Consortium.....	4-24
Clearspring ES—Damascus Cluster	4-19	Herbert Hoover MS—Winston Churchill Cluster	4-10
Roberto W. Clemente MS—Northwest and		Jackson Road ES—Northeast Consortium.....	4-54
Seneca Valley Clusters	4-62, 4-78	Walter Johnson HS—Walter Johnson Cluster.....	4-40
Clopper Mill ES—Northwest and		Jones Lane ES—Quince Orchard Cluster	4-70
Seneca Valley Cluster.....	4-62, 4-78	Kemp Mill ES—Downcounty Consortium.....	4-24
Cloverly ES—Northeast Consortium	4-54	John F. Kennedy HS—Downcounty Consortium.....	4-24
Cold Spring ES—Thomas S. Wootton Cluster	4-96	Kensington-Parkwood ES—Walter Johnson Cluster	4-40
College Gardens ES—Richard Montgomery Cluster.....	4-49	Francis Scott Key MS—Northeast Consortium	4-54
Cresthaven ES—Northeast Consortium	4-54	Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. MS—Seneca Valley Cluster.....	4-78
Crown HS—Winston Churchill, Clarksburg, Damascus, Gaithersburg,		Kingsview MS—Northwest Cluster.....	4-62
Richard Montgomery, Northwest, Poolesville, Quince Orchard,		Lake Seneca ES—Seneca Valley Cluster	4-78
Seneca Valley, Watkins Mill, and Thomas S. Wootton		Lakelands Park MS—Northwest and	
Clusters	4-10, 4-14, 4-19, 4-35, 4-49, 4-62, 4-66, 4-70, 4-78, 4-86, 4-97	Quince Orchard Clusters.....	4-62, 4-70
Capt. James E. Daly ES—Clarksburg Cluster.....	4-14	Lakewood ES—Thomas S. Wootton Cluster	4-96
Damascus ES—Damascus Cluster	4-19	Laytonsville ES—Damascus and	
Damascus HS—Damascus Cluster	4-19	Gaithersburg Clusters	4-19, 4-35
Darnestown ES—Northwest Cluster	4-62	JoAnn Leleck at Broad Acres ES—Northeast Consortium	4-54

	Page
Little Bennett ES—Clarksburg Cluster	4-14
A. Mario Loiederman MS—Downcounty Consortium.....	4-24
Longview—Special Education Centers	4-101
Luxmanor ES—Walter Johnson Cluster	4-40
Col. Zadok Magruder HS—Col. Zadok Magruder Cluster	4-45
Thurgood Marshall ES—Quince Orchard Cluster.....	4-70
Maryvale ES—Rockville Cluster.....	4-74
Spark M. Matsunaga—Northwest and Seneca Valley Cluster	4-62, 4-78
S. Christa McAuliffe ES—Seneca Valley Cluster.....	4-78
Dr. Ronald E. McNair ES—Northwest Cluster	4-62
Meadow Hall ES—Rockville Cluster	4-74
Mill Creek Towne ES—Col. Zadok Magruder Cluster	4-45
Monocacy ES—Poolesville Cluster	4-66
Richard Montgomery HS—Richard Montgomery Cluster.....	4-49
Montgomery Knolls ES—Downcounty Consortium	4-24
Montgomery Village MS—Watkins Mill Cluster.....	4-86
Neelsville MS—Seneca Valley and Watkins Mill Clusters	4-78, 4-86
New Hampshire Estates ES—Downcounty Consortium.....	4-24
Newport Mill MS—Downcounty Consortium	4-24
Roscoe R. Nix ES—Northeast Consortium.....	4-54
North Bethesda MS—Walter Johnson Cluster.....	4-40
North Chevy Chase ES—Bethesda-Chevy Chase Cluster.....	4-5
Northwest HS—Northwest Cluster	4-62
Northwood HS—Downcounty Consortium.....	4-24
Oak View ES—Downcounty Consortium.....	4-24
Oakland Terrace ES—Downcounty Consortium	4-24
Olney ES—Sherwood Cluster	4-83
William Tyler Page ES—Northeast Consortium	4-54
Paint Branch HS—Northeast Consortium	4-54
Parkland MS—Downcounty Consortium	4-24
Rosa M. Parks MS—Sherwood Cluster	4-83
Pine Crest ES—Downcounty Consortium.....	4-24
Piney Branch ES—Downcounty Consortium.....	4-24
John Poole MS—Poolesville Cluster	4-66
Poolesville ES—Poolesville Cluster	4-66
Poolesville HS—Poolesville Cluster	4-66
Potomac ES—Winston Churchill Cluster.....	4-10
Thomas W. Pyle MS—Walt Whitman Cluster.....	4-91
Quince Orchard HS—Quince Orchard Cluster.....	4-70
Redland MS—Col. Zadok Magruder Cluster	4-45
Judith A. Resnik ES—Col. Zadok Magruder Cluster	4-45
RICA—Special Education Centers	4-101
Dr. Sally K. Ride ES—Seneca Valley Cluster.....	4-78
Ridgeview MS—Quince Orchard Cluster.....	4-70
Ritchie Park ES—Richard Montgomery Cluster	4-49
Rock Creek Forest ES—Bethesda-Chevy Chase Cluster	4-5
Rock Creek Valley ES—Rockville Cluster	4-74
Rock Terrace—Special Education Centers	4-101
Rock View ES—Downcounty Consortium.....	4-24
Rockville HS—Rockville Cluster.....	4-74
Lois P. Rockwell ES—Damascus Cluster.....	4-19
Rocky Hill MS—Clarksburg Cluster	4-14
Rolling Terrace ES—Downcounty Consortium.....	4-24
Rosemary Hills ES—Bethesda-Chevy Chase Cluster	4-5
Rosemont ES—Gaithersburg Cluster	4-35
Bayard Rustin ES—Richard Montgomery Cluster.....	4-49
Carl Sandburg—Special Education Centers	4-101

	Page
Seneca Valley HS—Seneca Valley Cluster.....	4-78
Sequoyah ES—Col. Zadok Magruder Cluster	4-45
Seven Locks ES—Winston Churchill Cluster.....	4-10
Shady Grove MS—Col. Zadok Magruder Cluster.....	4-45
Odessa Shannon MS—Downcounty Consortium.....	4-24
Sherwood ES—Northeast Consortium and Sherwood Cluster	4-54, 4-83
Sherwood HS—Sherwood Cluster	4-83
Sargent Shriver ES—Downcounty Consortium.....	4-24
Silver Creek MS—Bethesda-Chevy Chase Cluster.....	4-5
Silver Spring International MS—Downcounty Consortium	4-24
Flora M. Singer ES—Downcounty Consortium	4-24
Sligo MS—Downcounty Consortium	4-24
Sligo Creek ES—Downcounty Consortium.....	4-24
Snowden Farm ES—Clarksburg and Damascus Clusters.....	4-14, 4-19
Somerset ES—Bethesda-Chevy Chase Cluster	4-5
South Lake ES—Watkins Mill Cluster	4-86
Springbrook HS—Northeast Consortium.....	4-54
Stedwick ES—Watkins Mill Cluster	4-86
Stephen Knolls—Special Education Centers	4-101
Stone Mill ES—Thomas S. Wootton Cluster	4-96
Stonegate ES—Northeast Consortium.....	4-54
Strathmore ES—Downcounty Consortium	4-24
Strawberry Knoll ES—Gaithersburg Cluster	4-35
Summit Hall ES—Gaithersburg Cluster	4-35
Takoma Park ES—Downcounty Consortium	4-24
Takoma Park MS—Downcounty Consortium	4-24
Tilden MS—Walter Johnson Cluster	4-40
Travilah ES—Thomas S. Wootton Cluster.....	4-96
Harriet R. Tubman ES—Gaithersburg Cluster	4-35
Twinbrook ES—Richard Montgomery Cluster.....	4-49
Viers Mill ES—Downcounty Consortium	4-24
Washington Grove ES—Gaithersburg Cluster	4-35
Waters Landing ES—Seneca Valley Cluster	4-78
Watkins Mill ES—Watkins Mill Cluster	4-86
Watkins Mill HS—Watkins Mill Cluster	4-86
Wayside ES—Winston Churchill Cluster.....	4-10
Weller Road ES—Downcounty Consortium	4-24
Hallie Wells MS—Clarksburg and Damascus Clusters	4-14, 4-19
Julius West MS—Richard Montgomery Cluster	4-49
Westbrook ES—Bethesda-Chevy Chase Cluster	4-5
Westland MS—Bethesda-Chevy Chase Cluster	4-5
Westover ES—Northeast Consortium.....	4-54
Wheaton HS—Downcounty Consortium	4-24
Wheaton Woods ES—Downcounty Consortium.....	4-24
Whetstone ES—Watkins Mill Cluster	4-86
White Oak MS—Northeast Consortium	4-54
Walt Whitman HS—Walt Whitman Cluster.....	4-91
Wilson Wims ES—Clarksburg Cluster	4-14
Earle B. Wood MS—Rockville Cluster	4-74
Wood Acres ES—Walt Whitman Cluster.....	4-91
Woodfield ES—Damascus Cluster.....	4-19
Charles W. Woodward HS—Bethesda-Chevy Chase Cluster, Downcounty Consortium, Walt Whitman, and Walter Johnson Clusters	4-5, 4-24, 4-40, 4-91
Woodlin ES—Downcounty Consortium.....	4-24
Thomas S. Wootton HS—Thomas S. Wootton Cluster.....	4-96
Wyngate ES—Walter Johnson Cluster	4-40

Cluster Service Areas 2024-2025



Division of
Capital Planning
and
Real Estate
October 2024

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.

FY 2025 was a full CIP review year and resulted in the County Council adoption of the FY 2025–2030 CIP in May 2024. FY 2026 is an off-budget or amendment year. As a result, the county executive and County Council will consider amendments to the adopted FY 2025–2030 CIP that requests appropriations for the FY 2026 Capital Budget and that change expenditures for the FY 2026–2030 out-years of the adopted CIP.

This document contains the following sections:

Chapter 1, *The Superintendent's Recommended FY 2026 Capital Budget and Amendments to the FY 2025–2030 Capital Improvements Program (CIP)*, is a review of the major factors that have influenced the development of the recommended projects in the FY 2026 Capital Budget and Amendments to the FY 2025–2030 CIP. This chapter includes a table summarizing the recommended amendments to the 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 adopted CIP actions.

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, 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.