

**The Superintendent's
FY 2028 Capital Budget
and Amendments to the FY 2027–2032
Capital Improvements Program**



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October 14, 2026

Ms. Grace Rivera-Oven, President
and members of the Board of Education
15 West Gude Drive, Suite 100
Rockville, Maryland 20850

Dear Ms. Rivera-Oven and Members of the Board of Education,

For your consideration, I am writing to submit to you my Recommended Fiscal Year (FY) 2028 Capital Budget and Amendments to the Fiscal Years 2027–2032 Capital Improvements Program.

Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) is entering a new chapter in how we plan for the future of our schools. Prekindergarten–Grade 12 preliminary September 30, 2026, enrollment is at 151,967 students, a decrease of 4,083 students from the 2025–2026 school year.

A decline of this magnitude is more than significant. It represents the largest annual enrollment decline since the 2019–2020 to 2020–2021 school year, when MCPS enrollment decreased by 4,703 students during the COVID-19 pandemic. Prior to the global pandemic, MCPS had not experienced a one-year enrollment decline of more than 4,000 students since the 1978–1979 to 1979–1980 school years. This dynamic is not unique to Montgomery County; regionally and nationally, public school enrollment is declining as the birth rate declines and immigration patterns are disrupted.

These numbers make clear that the enrollment landscape of Montgomery County is changing. After decades of growth and a planning environment of expansion, MCPS now must plan for a school system in which enrollment is declining in many communities, while other areas continue to experience growth. This requires us to think differently about how we use our facilities, allocate our resources, and plan for the future of our schools.

Last year, the Montgomery County Board of Education made a historic request for investment in the physical infrastructure of Montgomery County Public Schools. The Board's Requested FY 2027 Capital Budget and FY 2027–2032 Capital Improvements Program (CIP) totaled \$2.78 billion; an increase of more than \$1 billion than the previously approved CIP.

That request reflected a simple reality: MCPS has an extensive and longstanding backlog of facility needs. For decades, capital investment has not kept pace with the age, condition, and renewal needs of our schools and other facilities. We have many buildings that require significant renovation, renewal, or replacement, as well as critical building systems that must be replaced to ensure safe, modern, and effective learning environments for our students and staff.

The County Council ultimately approved \$1.854 billion for the six-year CIP. While this represents an important investment in our schools, it is significantly less than the Board's request and does not fully address the scope or pace of investment needed across our facilities portfolio. It is even further

away from the “Hard Truth” that we also shared, which is that the full extent of our capital needs exceeds \$5 billion—a figure which likely is closer to \$6 billion with a year of inflationary cost increases and further facility deterioration. While we recognize that capital resources are limited, the reality of the facility conditions in our schools and offices is not lessened.

Our responsibility is to make the most of the resources available to us while continuing to address the underlying challenges facing our facilities. It also is our responsibility to present our needs for your consideration, and for consideration by the Montgomery County Council.

Because FY 2028 is an amendment year under the County’s biennial CIP process, I am respecting that process and recommending that we bring back **only two critical amendments** that were not approved in the full cycle last year for approval in the adopted CIP. Together these two amendments total \$25 million.

The first recommended amendment is \$23 million to build out leased space for a centralized MCPS warehouse. This project was included in the Board’s FY 2027 request but was removed from the approved CIP. Our existing warehouse is our most deteriorated facility, and also is undersized for our needs, requiring extensive offsite storage. A centralized warehouse would provide a modern, safe, and efficient facility designed specifically to support the material management needs of the State’s largest school system. It would improve operational efficiency, reduce delivery times and thousands of vehicle miles traveled each year, conserve resources, and reduce our carbon footprint.

The second recommended amendment is \$2 million to facilitate exploration of a Public-Private Partnership (“P3”) approach. Traditional public financing clearly cannot keep pace with the extent of our capital needs, and the scope of what is required to support the operational infrastructure of our school system would further outpace what the public taxpayers can bear. This starting investment will support work to identify options that could reduce the immediate impact on capital requests.

In an effort to prioritize within our existing approved capital resources, we will dedicate funding already appropriated in the School Safety and Security project to explore weapons detection systems for our secondary schools. Given the evolving nature of the technology in this arena, we will initiate the competitive solicitation processes that can inform our approach and understanding of what systems would most benefit our school communities.

In keeping with the spirit and intent of the amendment year biennial process, I am not recommending revisiting the many other projects that were deferred, delayed, or removed from the Board’s original request (though it would be my desire to do so). In this request we are focusing on the most necessary action, the two targeted investments that will improve the efficiency of MCPS operations for years to come.

But the most significant work ahead of us this year is not a capital project. It is making better decisions about how we use the facilities we already have.

MCPS will begin exploring a countywide review of our facility portfolio as we enter our Closure and Consolidation Study. Our schools are not simply buildings; they are critical community assets.

But every facility requires ongoing investment to operate, maintain, renovate, and eventually replace. When resources are limited, we have a responsibility to carefully evaluate how those resources are being used and whether our existing portfolio reflects the needs of today's students and the students we expect to serve in the future.

This work will require us to look honestly at enrollment, building utilization, facility condition, educational adequacy, student programs, transportation, the costs associated with maintaining our facilities, and other factors identified by the broader community, yet to be determined. It will not be easy, and we recognize that conversations about school closures or consolidations are deeply personal for students, families, staff, and communities. We will approach this work with transparency, care, and respect.

At the same time, MCPS must address how students are distributed across our schools. After decades of enrollment growth, MCPS now is experiencing overall declining enrollment. Next school year, following the outcomes of the closure and consolidation processes, we will begin a countywide elementary and middle school boundary study to better balance enrollment across the district and make more effective use of available capacity. This work will be an important part of ensuring that our schools have the resources and staffing necessary to provide an excellent educational experience for every student.

These efforts are connected. We cannot responsibly plan the future of our facilities without understanding where students will attend school, and we cannot make thoughtful boundary decisions without considering the condition, capacity, and long-term viability of our facilities.

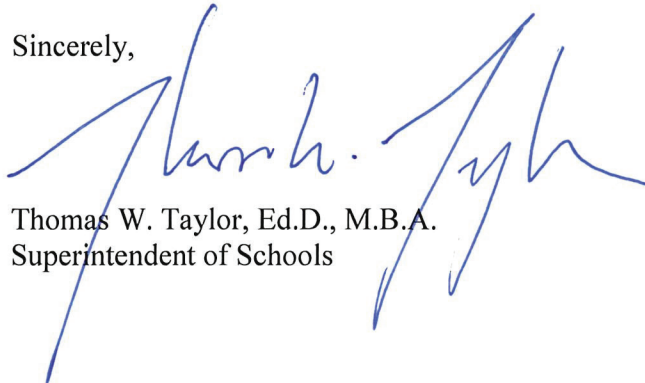
The challenges before us are significant. But so is the opportunity.

The FY 2027–2032 CIP began an important shift in how MCPS approaches capital investment; from a primary focus on adding capacity to a strategy that prioritizes the renewal of existing facilities, critical infrastructure, operational efficiency, and long-term sustainability. The work underway this year will build on that strategy by helping us determine where our limited resources can have the greatest impact.

We have a responsibility to be good stewards of the public resources entrusted to us. That means advocating strongly for the investments our students and schools need, while also making difficult and strategic decisions when the resources available to us do not meet the full scope of those needs.

This year, we will continue that work, one project, one facility, and one community at a time, with the goal of building a stronger, more sustainable school system for the students we serve today and for generations to come.

Sincerely,



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

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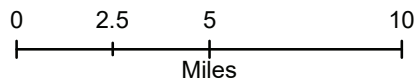
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Cluster Service Areas 2026-2027



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 2027 was a full CIP review year and resulted in the County Council adoption of the FY 2027–2032 CIP in May 2026. FY 2028 is an off-budget or amendment year. As a result, the county executive and County Council will consider amendments to the adopted FY 2027–2032 CIP that requests appropriations for the FY 2028 Capital Budget and that change expenditures for the FY 2028–2032 out-years of the adopted CIP.

This document contains the following sections:

Chapter 1, *The Superintendent's Recommended FY 2028 Capital Budget and Amendments to the FY 2027–2032 Capital Improvements Program (CIP)*, is a review of the major factors that have influenced the development of the recommended projects in the FY 2028 Capital Budget and Amendments to the FY 2027–2032 CIP. This chapter includes a table summarizing the recommended amendments to the FY 2027–2032 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, *Adopted 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 that while cluster organization is used for presentation of information, planning decisions often cross cluster boundaries to meet program and facility needs for students.

