Chapter 3

Facility Planning Objectives

MCPS Vision, Mission, and Core Values

The adopted *FY 2027 Capital Budget and the FY 2027–2032 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: *www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/strategic-plan-2025-2030/*

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. Given recent and projected enrollment shifts, the near-term focus will be on balancing capacity and utilization across schools. In areas with declining enrollment, MCPS will prioritize non-capital strategies—such as boundary adjustments and program realignments—before considering new school construction or building additions.
- 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. These projects will increasingly emphasize renovation and renewal of aging infrastructure to extend useful life and ensure safety, functionality, and sustainability before expanding overall system capacity.
- Priority #5—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 25, 2025 the Board of Education adopted technical revisions to Policy FAA, *Educational Facilities Planning* to indicate that the Facility Condition Index (FCI) is now being used to determine the need for major capital projects.

See Appendix Q for Board of Education 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	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[a]
Grades 9–12 High	25:1[b]
Special Education, ELD, Alternative Programs[c]	

[a]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).

[b] 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).

[c]Special Education, ELD 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 on 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 during the years of steady enrollment growth. 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 schools most heavily affected by poverty and English language deficiency. These schools are now identified in the staffing model as “Tiered Schools” (formerly called “Focus, and Non-Focus Schools”). 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.

2025–2026 Focus and Title I Schools	
Elementary Schools	
Arcola	Maryvale
Lucy V. Barnsley	Thurgood Marshall
***Bel Pre (preK–2)**	**S. Christa McAuliffe**
Brookhaven	Meadow Hall
Brown Station	Mill Creek Towne
Burnt Mills	*Montgomery Knolls (HS–2)
Burtonsville	***New Hampshire Estates (HS–2)**
Cannon Road	***Roscoe R. Nix (preK–2)**
Clearspring	*Oak View (3–5)
Clopper Mill	William T. Page
Cloverly	*Pine Crest (3–5)
***Cresthaven (3–5)**	*Piney Branch (3–5)
Capt. James E. Daly	**Judith A. Resnik**
Damascus	**Dr. Sally K. Ride**
Dr. Charles R. Drew	Rock View
East Silver Spring	**Rolling Terrace**
Fairland	Rosemary Hills
Fields Road	**Rosemont**
Flower Hill	Bayard Rustin
Forest Knolls	Sequoyah
Fox Chapel	Carl Sandburg Learning Center
Gaithersburg	**Sargent Shriver**
Galway	Flora M. Singer
Georgian Forest	**South Lake**
Germantown	**Stedwick**
William B. Gibbs, Jr.	***Strathmore (3–5)**
Glen Haven	**Strawberry Knoll**
Glenallan	**Summit Hall**
Goshen	*Takoma Park (preK-2)
Great Seneca Creek	**Harriet R. Tubman**
Greencastle	**Twinbrook**
Harmony Hills	Viers Mill
Highland	**Washington Grove**
Highland View	**Waters Landing**
Jackson Road	**Watkins Mill**
Kemp Mill	**Weller Road**
Lake Seneca	**Wheaton Woods**
JoAnn Leleck at Broad Acres	**Whetstone**
	Woodlin
Middle Schools	
Benjamin Banneker	**Montgomery Village**
Forest Oak	**Odessa Shannon**
Francis Scott Key	**White Oak**

All schools in this table are receiving additional staff to reduce class sizes in Grades K–2 except for the Grades 3–5 schools and the middle schools.
*These schools are paired, either Grades K–2 or Grades 3–5.
Schools in **bold** are also Title I schools in the 2025–2026 school year.

Tier	Percentage of Students Receiving FARMS
Base	9%–19.9%
Tier 1	20%–34.9%
Tier 2	35%–69.9%
Tier 3	70%–100%

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 teachers 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 now as "Tiered Schools" based on the percentage of students receiving Free and Reduced-Price Meals (FARMS) shown in the table. The State of Maryland does not contribute additional funding toward the MCPS Class Size Reduction initiative as it is not recognized across the state in terms of state-rated capacity.

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 locations are shown in Appendix L. The *Blueprint for Maryland's Future*, House Bill 1300 passed in 2020, was vetoed by the governor, and then became law following a veto override in the Maryland General Assembly 2021 session. The Blueprint for Maryland's Future Act (House Bill 1372), updated portions of House Bill 1300, passed in February 2021. These two pieces of legislation are considered landmark generational pieces of education reform in the state of Maryland and, with respect to prekindergarten, will expand and increase access through a mixed delivery system, including both public and private programs. Additional information can be found at the following MCPS website: *www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/info/blueprint/*.

Regional Programs: (Beginning in the 2027-2028 School year)

All high schools will include one or more Regional Program Center(s) that provide specialized academic pathways aligned to regional program themes. These programs are designed to expand student access to rigorous, engaging, and industry-connected learning opportunities while ensuring comparable programming across the district's six regions. Regional Program Centers integrate specialized coursework, instructional strategies, and real-world learning experiences into the broader high school program and may include both interest-based and criteria-based pathways. Some Regional Program Centers require specialized instructional spaces, laboratories, equipment, performance areas, or industry-standard learning environments to support program implementation. High schools may require facility modifications or enhancements to accommodate Regional Program Centers, either through major capital projects or countywide capital improvement projects.

Signature and Academy Programs

Many high schools have developed and implemented local 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. The theme or focus becomes the vehicle for teaching the traditional high school curriculum in a fresh, interesting, and challenging way. These themed options are designed to engage students through a small learning community approach, and to raise student engagement and achievement by matching programs with student interests.

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. New schools, as well as numerous additions to existing schools have been constructed to accommodate the growth in enrollment. This year, MCPS operates a total of 211 school facilities, including: 137 elementary schools, 40 middle schools, and 25 high schools; 1 career and technology high school; 5 special schools; 1 alternative education center with one satellite center; and 2 Early Childhood Centers.

Long-term Space Needs

MCPS will continue to invest strategically in capital projects that balance space needs with the renewal and modernization of existing facilities. This year's official September 30th enrollment was 156,050 students. Based on current projections, enrollment is now expected to decrease to approximately 149,706 students by the 2031–2032 school year, a reduction from last year's projection of 162,178 students. While the overall outlook shows declining enrollment, there may continue to be pockets of localized growth that require close monitoring. These areas may need to be addressed through both capital strategies—such as new schools—and non-capital approaches, including boundary studies. Due to high utilization in some schools, boundary changes may help relieve specific overcrowding. For a summary of approved capital projects, see the table in Chapter 1.

To develop long-term space plans for schools, there is an annual review of the space available at schools to compare enrollment projections with program capacity in the sixth year of the CIP planning period. When the enrollment exceeds the program capacity of a school, several strategies may be considered 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.
- The impact of school utilization on the county's Growth and Infrastructure Policy is also reviewed.

Planning and/or construction funds are planned for several major capital projects as part of the adopted FY 2027 Capital Budget and the 2027–2032 CIP. All capital projects are listed on the following table, along with the number of additional classrooms and the completion dates.

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 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 projected opened. When enrollment started to increase again in 2008, the number of relocatable classrooms started to increase. Now MCPS is starting to experience declining enrollment which will decrease the number of relocatables again. See Appendix H for the list of relocatable classrooms by school location.

Non-Capital Actions

Non-capital actions were approved as part of the FY 2027 Capital Budget and the FY 2027–2032 Capital Improvements Program as follows:

On March 26, 2026, the Board of Education approved a two-phase process: (Phase 1) a study to evaluate potential school consolidations and closures, followed by (Phase 2) a countywide boundary study to review and adjust elementary school attendance areas and middle school boundaries that are affected by consolidations and closures.

- Phase 1 consists of developing data-driven analysis and recommendations regarding potential school consolidations and closures. MCPS will conduct a portfolio review and recommendations regarding potential school consolidations, closures, or changes to existing program delivery models, such as paired schools. These recommendations will be brought to the Board of Education for appropriate review and decision processes.
- Phase 2 consists of conducting a countywide elementary school boundary study, inclusive of any impacted middle schools, informed by the outcomes of Phase 1.

On March 28, 2023, the Board of Education approved the boundary study scope to create the service area for the reopening of Charles W. Woodward High School. The scope of the boundary study included the following high schools: Bethesda Chevy-Chase, Montgomery Blair, Albert Einstein, Walter Johnson, John F. Kennedy, Northwood, Wheaton, and Walt Whitman. The scope also includes the following middle schools: Argyle, Eastern, A. Mario Loiederman, Newport Mill, North Bethesda, Parkland, Thomas W. Pyle, Odessa Shannon, Silver Creek, Silver Spring International, Sligo, Takoma Park, Tilden, and Westland. No elementary schools were included in the boundary study.

As part of the adopted FY 2025–2030 CIP, the completion date for the Northwood High School project was delayed one-year due to an extension of the construction timeline. As a result of Northwood High School remaining at Charles W. Woodward High School, its holding facility, for one additional year, the approved completion date for the reopening of Charles W. Woodward High school is August 2027. On March 19, 2024, the Board of Education approved a revised timeline for the approved boundary study scope to align with the reopening of Charles W. Woodward High School. Information regarding this boundary study is available on the MCPS website at the following link: *www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/departments/facilities/boundary-study/*

On March 19, 2024, the Board of Education approved the boundary scope to create the service area for the new Crown High School and the expansion of Damascus High School. The scope of the boundary study included the following high schools: Winston Churchill, Clarksburg, Damascus, Gaithersburg, Richard Montgomery, Northwest, Poolesville, Quince Orchard, Seneca Valley, Watkins Mill, and Thomas S. Wootton. The scope also includes the following middle schools: John T. Baker, Cabin John, Roberto W. Clemente, Forest Oak, Robert Frost, Gaithersburg, Herbert Hoover, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Kingsview, Lakelands Park, Montgomery Village, Neelsville, John Poole, Ridgeview, Rocky Hill, Hallie Wells, and Julius West. No elementary schools were included in the boundary study.

Based on declining enrollment, a 27th high school is not needed to open at this time. As a part of the March 26, 2026 boundary study decision, the Board approved a relocation for Thomas S. Wootton High School to move to the new facility being built on the Crown Farm site. This relocation will occur in August 2027.

The approved FY 2027-2032 CIP includes the design and construction of a major capital project for Damascus HS, with design to begin in FY 2027. This replacement project will be built with additional capacity to relieve overutilization in adjacent clusters. The approved completion date for the building is August 2031, followed by sitework completion in August 2032. Information regarding this boundary study is available on the MCPS website at the following link: *www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/departments/facilities/boundary-study/*

OBJECTIVE 3: Sustain and Upgrade Facilities

he 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. Over the next 20 years, the goal is to pursue a sustainable funding plan and strategic roadmap that incorporates the following lifecycle benchmarks, as newly defined below:

- **Renovation, every 25 years—**Upgrading at least 5 major systems (HVAC, roof, plumbing, electrical, flooring, life safety, windows, doors/hardware, etc.). Proactively addresses aging infrastructure, enhances comfort and functionality, and protects the asset's value.
- **Renewal, every 50 years—**A comprehensive interior reconstruction, down to the structural frame, retaining the slab and shell of the building when in good condition. The result is a facility that feels "like new", but can be more cost-effective than a replacement.
- **Replacement, every 50 years (if a Renewal will not work)—**Complete demolition and reconstruction when the slab or structure is in poor condition, or when the site cannot meet current or future needs by keeping the existing building in place.

In the coming years, more funds will be directed to major capital projects that sustain and upgrade facilities in good condition.

The Board of Education, Superintendent of Schools, and school community recognizes that even well-maintained facilities eventually reach the end of their useful life span and require upgrades to the infrastructure building systems and the need to address programmatic needs. The school system is conducting a comprehensive facility assessment for all schools, offices, and holding centers that were built prior to 2023. The initial batch of schools were assessed at the end of the 2024–2025 school year, with the remaining schools and facilities to be assessed over the 2025–2026 school year. These assessments will establish a detailed baseline for each facility, covering all major systems and site features. The Facility Condition Index (FCI) is the primary metric used to evaluate a building's overall condition. The FCI will also provide detailed evaluations of major building systems such as roofs, heating, air conditioning, plumbing, and electrical. The data collected is vital to understand the current needs of our schools and strategically target resources to address those needs. It will also inform our educational facility planning work, allow us to proactively address aging infrastructure, and protect our assets and our ongoing efforts to sustain the useful life of our schools.

The CIP decision-marking framework incorporates multiple factors to ensure equitable and effective investment of resources. The criteria provides a framework for making informed, transparent, and strategic decisions about capital investments across the school system. Key factors include:

- The Facility Condition Index: the physical condition of a building and its major systems.
- Educational Adequacy: the extent to which the facility supports modern instructional practices and program requirements.
- Enhanced Student Needs: the unique requirements of student populations, including specialized programs and support services.
- Facility Utilization: Enrollment projections as compared to program capacity.

The CIP decision-making framework helps determine schools for a possible Major Capital Project (MCP) that will be either a renovation, a renewal, or a replacement. Once a school is identified, the scope for the project will be determined based on the individual building system and programmatic and capacity needs for each school. The following table identifies schools that have been approved or adopted for a MCP with planning and/or construction funding included in the Major Capital Projects—Elementary or Major Capital Projects—Secondary projects. The chart below also includes new school projects, as well as replacement projects for existing schools.

Number of Rooms Planned New, Replacement, and Major Capital Projects

School	Number of Rooms Planned*	Completion Date
Burtonsville ES (Replacement)	47	8/26
JoAnn Leleck ES at Broad Acres (Replacement)	48	8/26
Thomas S. Wootton at the Crown Farm site	106	8/27
Northwood HS (Replacement)	107	8/27
Charles W. Woodward HS (Reopening)	105	8/27
Eastern MS (Replacement with expansion)	77	8/30
Damascus HS (Replacement with expansion)	108	8/31
Burning Tree ES (Replacement)	34	8/34
Cold Spring ES (Replacement)	26	8/34
Highland View ES (Replacement)	32	8/34
Piney Branch ES (Replacement)	31	8/34

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 dual purpose rooms).

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. 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.

MCPS has many systemic projects designed to address systems near or over their expected useful life. 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. On some projects, local, state, and federal man- dates affect the scope and cost of the effort required.

MCPS has deepened its commitment to long-term sustainability and conservation of resources in the design and operation of all facilities by adopting Policy ECA, Sustainability. This policy sets a target for an 80% reduction of greenhouse gases (GHG) by 2027 and 100% by 2035, aligning with the county target for GHG reductions, by increasing efficiency and reducing the consumption of nonrenewable resources.

The Sustainability and Compliance Team (SCT) works collaboratively across the system to promote responsible and efficient use of energy and natural resources. Their efforts focus on reducing consumption and waste through energy audits, and active recycling/food recovery programs. SCT also partners with schools and offices to implement recognition and award programs for conservation, sharing data on energy usage and recycling, supporting local school initiatives for energy and environmental education, and developing conservation-focused operations and procedures. By engaging students, teachers, staff, and the community, SCT fosters environmental stewardship and works toward reducing the carbon footprint of MCPS.

MCPS has earned recognition for its environmental efforts through the Maryland Green School and National Green Ribbon Schools Awards. As of 2025, 113 MCPS schools have achieved and continue to maintain Maryland Green School certification, representing 53% of all MCPS schools—surpassing the 50% target set by Montgomery County's Climate Action Plan. The U.S. Department of Education's National Green Ribbon Schools (ED-GRS) Award, launched in the 2011–2012 school year, honors schools, districts, and higher education institutions that reduce environmental impact, improve the health and wellness of students and staff, and provide effective sustainability education. Since the award's inception, twelve MCPS schools have received this prestigious national recognition. In 2013, MCPS was also honored with the District Sustainability Award from the U.S. Department of Education for its district-wide commitment to sustainability. In 2025, one MCPS school was selected as a Maryland Nominee for the National Green Ribbon Schools Award, further highlighting the district's continued dedication to environmental stewardship.

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.

To also focus on buildings not slated for capital improvements, in 2023, MCPS began implementing energy and utility-saving measures across its portfolio of existing facilities. This initiative provided an opportunity to address deferred maintenance by leveraging the utility savings generated from the projects. A total of 50 schools were audited, leading to the initiation of 244 energy and water conservation projects, including upgrades to lighting, water conservation, and weatherization at all 50 schools. Additional improvements, implemented at one or more schools, included mechanical and building automation system upgrades or optimization, solar photovoltaics, and other energy conservation measures.

These energy and utility conservation projects were primarily funded through guaranteed savings resulting from reduced utility consumption and financed via a loan from a contracted lease purchase provider. Additional funding sources included Sustainability Initiatives Capital Improvement Project and the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief, a grant from the Montgomery County Green Bank, plus incentive and rebate programs from the federal, state, and local governments and utilities.

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 regarding uses that complement the educational program. Multipurpose uses of schools that promote family and community partnerships are also 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 as guided by Board Policy KGA. 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 classrooms while DHHS arranges for the lease of the childcare classroom to a private childcare provider.

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 and social 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 throughout the county.

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.

In spring 2006, the School Based Wellness Center Planning Group (SBWCPG) 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, High School Wellness Centers (HSWC) have opened at several high schools.

As part of the adopted FY 2023 operating budget and also the adopted FY 2023 Capital Budget and FY 2023–2028 Capital Improvements Program, the County Council approved the implementation of non-somatic services at high schools currently without HSWCs. This initiative, called Bridges to Wellness, provides the mental health, social service supports, and positive youth development components of the HSWC model at all schools that currently do not have a HSWC.

A standalone Wellness Center at Springbrook High School has undergone a feasibility study and is funded to move forward with an undetermined completion date.

Information regarding all DHHS programs at schools can be found in each Cluster of Chapter 4, within the Facility Characteristics of Schools Table.

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 receiving special education services in the general education environment. The Fiscal Year 2024 proposed target requires 71.50 percent of students to receive special education services in the general education environment. As a result of this mandate, the Department of Special Education Services (DSES) and the Department of Special Education Prekindergarten and Related Services in collaboration with the Division of Facilities Management and the Division of Specialized Support Services plan and coordinate the identification of services sites and locations to address the diverse needs of students receiving special education services. This process is designed to ensure the delivery of special education services to the maximum extent appropriate in the school the student would attend if nondisabled.

Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) chooses locations for special education services by focusing on the delivery of services in the student's home school or in the school, cluster, or region of the county closest to where the student resides.

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

- Special education Home School Model (HSM) services are offered in all elementary schools to students in Grades kindergarten–5.
- Secondary Learning and Academic Disabilities (LAD Services and Transition Services are provided in all secondary schools for students in grades 6-12.
- Physical Disabilities Services including occupational therapy, physical therapy and assistive technology training
- Speech and Language Services

The following regional services are available to students as appropriate:

- Interdisciplinary Augmentative and Alternative Communication Services (InterACT)
- Autism Spectrum Disorders Services
- Secondary Autism Resource Services
- Autism Connections Services
- Bridge Services
- Prekindergarten and Elementary Physical Disabilities Services
- Elementary Learning Centers
- Extensions Services
- Enhanced Social Emotional Special Education Services (E-SESES)
- Twice Exceptional 2e Services
- Montgomery County Infants and
- Toddlers Program (MCITP)
- Learning for Independence (LFI) Services

- Preschool Education Program (PEP)
- Prekindergarten Language Classes
- School/Community-based (SCB) Services
- Social Emotional Special Education Services (SESES)
- Longview and Stephen Knolls schools
- Carl Sandburg Learning Center
- Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services
- Preschool Vision Class
- John L. Gildner Regional Institute for Children and Adolescents (RICA)
- Rock Terrace School

Birth through 5 Years of Age Special Education Growth

The Montgomery County Infants and Toddlers Program (MCITP) offers early intervention services to assist parents/caregivers of children between birth and the start of the school year following the fourth birthday with their efforts to address their child's developmental and special needs. Upon eligibility assessment, each family is assigned to one of MCITP's five regional sites in Montgomery County. Then, each family works with the team to discuss the child's strengths and needs.

Early intervention services are provided in the child's natural environment (home and community settings where a child is during the day). Services are based on each individual child and parent/caregiver's needs and may include services such as specialized instruction, speech/language therapy, occupation and/or physical therapy, and family counseling.