

November 9, 2023

Mr. Alex Donahue
Executive Director
The Maryland Interagency Commission (IAC) on School Construction
200 West Baltimore Street
Baltimore, MD 21201

Dear Mr. Donahue:

This joint signature letter supports the Prince George's County Board of Education's proposed FY 2025 capital budget State funding and planning approval requests, with modifications for the New Northern Area HS project, High Point High School Replacement project, and staged renovation projects for schools in the south region of the County, and identifies the projects that this County considers most critical. Support for this funding request is consistent with the County's priorities – construction funding for projects that have received State planning approval and approval of planning/construction funding requests for new schools or major modernizations.

The Board and the County are working to address two primary issues with school facilities throughout the County: 1) the facilities are amongst the oldest in the State based on the average age of the square footage; and 2) right-sizing school facilities based on projected enrollment to more effectively optimize the use of limited resources and to ensure that the learning environment provides adequate space for the educational programs and is safe, modern, and operationally efficient. The Board and County are addressing these issues through the construction of new schools and staged renovation projects throughout the County.

The Board's FY 2025 State funding request of \$69.4 million focuses on major school modernization projects. The County shares this focus and has modified the funding request to shift \$12.0 million in funding from the New Northern Area HS project to the High Point High School Replacement project and staged renovation projects for schools in the south region of the County. The County is concerned about the planned enrollment capacities for the New Northern Area HS and the High Point High School Replacement projects given recent enrollment trends. Therefore, the County supported request shifts \$12.0 million from the New Northern Area HS project to other needs based on the assumption that a smaller facility is ultimately constructed and costs are lowered accordingly. The funding requests reflect the advancement of a comprehensive modernization program aligned with the FY 2024 Educational Facilities Master Plan (EFMP). All other projects will be addressed through local funding.

The first priority group is for continued State funding for those multi-year, major projects that have received State planning approval and prior year construction funding. While the County is concerned with the overall increased cost, we continue to support the campus modernization at Suitland High School; the expansion of the Cool Spring ES/Annex-Judith Hoyer Center which is

required to start the next project on the list; and the New Northern Area High School project which will relieve the critical levels of overcrowding in our high schools in the north region of the County.

BOE Priority	County Priority	Project	BOE State Funding Request	County Supported Request
1	1	Suitland HS Campus Replacement	\$28,000,000	\$28,000,000
2	2	Cool Spring ES Renovation/Addition	\$21,400,000	\$21,400,000
3	3	New Northern Area HS	\$20,000,000	\$8,000,000
		SUB-TOTAL	\$69,400,000	\$57,400,000

The second priority group addresses projects that require both planning approval and are in need of State planning/construction funding. Included in this group are the replacement of the High Point High School facility in the north region and staged renovation projects in the south region. These projects are a priority for community leaders at the County and State levels as we continue to modernize aging facilities throughout the County and address capacity issues in the north region of the County.

BOE Priority	County Priority	Project	BOE Request	County Supported Request
4	4	High Point High School Replacement	Planning Approval Only	Planning and Funding Approval \$2,000,000
	5	Staged Renovation Projects (South Region)		Planning and Funding Approval \$10,000,000
		SUB-TOTAL	Planning Approval Only	Planning and Funding Approval \$12,000,000

The third priority group addresses projects that are being designed using County funds and in need of State planning approval. Included among this group are the next set of projects that seek to implement the long-range vision for modernization. We continue to address critical capacity issues through our alternative financing construction projects and certain CIP high school projects, while using limited renovations to address a number of older schools that do not have a major capacity element. Granting planning approval for these projects will enable the County to move forward on these new construction projects. These projects include:

BOE Priority	County Priority	Project	BOE Request	County Supported Request
5	6	New International HS @ Langley Park	Planning Approval Only	Planning Approval Only
6	7	Thomas Johnson MS Staged Renovation (Limited Renovation)	Planning Approval Only	Planning Approval Only
7	8	Berwyn Heights ES Staged Renovation (Limited Renovation)	Planning Approval Only	Planning Approval Only
		SUB-TOTAL	Planning Approval Only	Planning Approval Only

Total BOE State Funding Request and County Supported Request

BOE State Funding Request	County Supported Request
\$69,400,000	\$69,400,000

The County supports the Board’s sequentially prioritized FY 2025 State and County funding request with the modifications for the New Northern Area HS project, High Point High School Replacement project, and staged renovation projects for schools in the south region of the County and remains prepared to continue to provide significant local resources for school facilities. We are hopeful that the State will join in this effort. If you have any questions, please contact members of our staff. We appreciate your past support and look forward to working with the State again this year to ensure full support for the extensive needs of the school system.

Sincerely,

Angela D. Alsobrooks
County Executive

Thomas E. Dernoga, Council Chair
Prince George’s County Council

- cc: Members, Prince George’s County House and Senate Delegations
Members, Prince George’s County Council
Judith Mickens Murray, Chair, Board of Education
Members, Board of Education
Millard House II, Superintendent, Board of Education
Stanley A. Earley, Director, Office of Management and Budget