



HOWARD COUNTY OFFICE OF COUNTY EXECUTIVE

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Howard County Board of Education
10910 Clarksville Pike
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Dear Chairperson Cutroneo and Members of the Board of Education (BOE):

Thank you for your ongoing efforts toward finalizing a proposed capital budget for the upcoming fiscal year (FY24). We appreciate of role that the BOE plays in establishing our future school construction priorities, and the challenges associated with balancing our many competing needs to provide our students and educators with the best teaching and learning environment possible.

As you are aware, we worked earlier this year with our State delegation, specifically Senator Guy Guzzone, to secure \$35 million in additional State funding for school construction in Howard County. This grant is unique in that it requires no local matching funds, may only be applied to projects selected by each County Government and that the application establishing the allocation of these funds (“Pass-Through Funding Application”) must be submitted by each Local Education Agency (LEA) to the State’s Interagency Committee on School Construction (IAC).

In accordance with the [guidelines governing this State grant](#), we are requesting that the Pass-Through Funding Application be submitted to the IAC **before the close of business on September 22nd**. Confirmation of projects selected by County Government for inclusion in the Pass-Through Funding Application should inform consideration of your proposed FY24 Capital Budget on September 29th, will allow consideration of the Pass-Through Funding Application by the IAC at their October 13th meeting, and will provide residents with a clear understanding of all available resources for school construction in the next fiscal year and beyond.

As referenced above, funds may only be applied to projects selected by each County Government. To that end, please see the projects listed below that we have selected to ensure submission of the Pass-Through Funding Application to the IAC by September 22nd:

- **Faulkner Ridge Center: \$21.725 Million**

The State’s Blueprint for Maryland’s Future (“The Blueprint”) legislation requires the provision of full-day prekindergarten services across Maryland, creating an immediate need for these facilities in Howard County order to comply with the legislation. As an existing facility that has been out of service for many years, Faulkner Ridge presents a unique

opportunity to address the Blueprint's full-day prekindergarten requirements through land and a building already under our ownership.

We have steadfastly supported the Blueprint, and firmly believe that ensuring access to early childhood education for our youngest learners is critical to expanding opportunity, hope and promise to all our students. The \$21.725 million will fully fund the Faulkner Ridge Center renovation based on the Superintendent's Proposed Capital Budget, and provide the full-day prekindergarten resources contemplated by the Blueprint.

- **Systemic Renovations For Oakland Mills High School: \$9.975 Million**

The Superintendent's Proposed Capital Budget for FY24 has re-scoped a planned renovation project for Oakland Mills High School to add 400 new seats, and deferred the beginning of funding for this project from FY26 to FY33. We have concerns about the proposal to defer funding for this project, supported by the years of feedback received from the residents of the Oakland Mills community about the pressing renovation needs at Oakland Mills High School, including an HVAC system that hasn't been replaced in nearly 50 years, indoor environmental quality issues, needed school security upgrades, and other concerning issues.

To provide support for our Oakland Mills community who have endured ongoing maintenance issues and seen needed upgrades deferred many times, \$9.975 million will be allocated to address immediate renovations and repairs at Oakland Mills High School. While we are fully supportive of the renovation and addition project in the proposed Capital Budget, and would request that it not be deferred beyond FY26, we are hopeful that this State grant will ensure that conditions are stabilized and improved at Oakland Mills High School in the short-term. Additionally, using State funds for systemic renovations that are typically funded entirely by the County has the added benefit of conserving local taxpayer dollars, allowing those funds to be freed up to address other needs.

- **Systemic Renovations - Indoor Environmental Quality Repairs, School Security Measures and Special Education/Regional Program Needs: \$3.3 Million**

Across our school system, systemic renovation projects provide critical repairs and upgrades that ensure we provide our students and educators with the best learning environment possible. Indoor Environmental Quality Projects reduce the negative environmental impacts associated with flood damage and humidity conditions, maintain building envelopes and resolve foundation issues and settlement cracks. School Security Measures ensure compliance with the Maryland Safe to Learn Act. Special Education/Regional Program Needs allow for the placement of new or relocation of existing Special Education programs based on student needs and capacity. The \$3.3 million allocation will fully fund the request for each of these items in the Superintendent's Proposed Capital Budget.

Additionally, as indicated in our prior correspondence, we remain strongly supportive of the High School #14 project in Elkridge and are hopeful that the BOE will re-insert this project into the Long-Range Master Plan as it did during the FY22 Capital Budget process. Since 2019, we have re-engaged the High School #14 Task Force, selected Troy Park as the future site of High

School #14 and reached an agreement to purchase and preserve Camp Ilchester, which will provide a significant amount of the acreage needed to meet State park conversion requirements for building High School #14 at Troy Park. We are committed to continuing our progress on this important project.

Moreover, we are pleased to see transformative projects like the Oakland Mills Middle School Renovation and Addition, Dunloggin Middle School Renovation and Addition and Elementary School #43 positioned to begin receiving funding in the Superintendent's proposal for the FY24 capital budget.

We look forward to the continuation of your process and your proposed FY24 Capital Budget on September 29th. Thank you for your attention to this matter.



Calvin Ball
County Executive

Cc: Dr. Michael Martirano, HCPSS Superintendent
HCPSS Staff
Howard County Council
Howard County Delegation