

I. Introduction

Frederick County is growing. In the last 25 years, the county has welcomed more people, built more homes, and created more jobs than many jurisdictions in the region. During this time, Frederick County Public Schools (FCPS) has grown by more than 10,000 students. FCPS has worked hard to keep pace with the county's growth focusing intently on adding capacity to serve the community's needs, sometimes delaying modernization of older schools to do so.

While Frederick County's growth has stabilized in recent years, FCPS' work to respond to the county's expansion continues, especially in key growth areas. FCPS has two main needs: to continue to add capacity (especially at the elementary level) and to modernize older schools. As we address these needs, we must also be mindful of new educational services that the state mandates. While we balance growth, modernization and state mandates, our main goal continues to be to provide a safe, caring and engaging environment in which the children of Frederick County can learn. FCPS' Educational Facilities Master Plan (EFMP) speaks directly to that goal by detailing our approach to building, expanding, or modernizing Frederick County's educational facilities over the next decade.

PURPOSE OF THIS PLAN

From a strategic perspective, FCPS projects ten years into the future to allow the time necessary to plan, design, and construct new facilities. Included in the this ten year plan is the six year FCPS Capital Improvement Program (CIP) that serves as the basis for annual capital funding requests to the State and County (see [Appendix A](#)).

Our 10 year master plan is designed to:

- Inform the community, the Board of Education, state and county officials about FCPS' long-range plans for educational facility improvements.
- Document FCPS' long-range enrollment projections and future facility needs.
- Provide a common point of reference to allow FCPS to coordinate future new educational facility locations with county and municipal officials and coordinate future facility needs and funding requirements with state officials.
- Document FCPS' schedule of major renovation and maintenance projects for our existing buildings.
- Comply with state regulations that requires FCPS, and all local jurisdictions, to update its Educational Facilities Master Plan annually.

PLAN APPROVAL PROCESS

FCPS updates its master plan each year in accordance with the requirements in the Maryland State Department of Education's "*Public School Construction Program: Administrative Procedures Guide*." While FCPS writes its own master plan, the state's administrative procedures guide establishes what information the plan should include and how it should be presented.

FCPS' Educational Facilities Master Plan (EFMP) is updated each year by our Operations Division. The update process includes several steps that help to ensure that our facilities' needs and recommendations are as current as possible. These steps are:

1. Update 10-year enrollment projections	April-June
2. Prepare draft EFMP update	May-July
3. Present draft EFMP to the Board of Education	August
4. Present draft EFMP to the Frederick County Planning Commission	September
5. Board of Education Public Hearing	September
6. Board of Education adoption of final EFMP	September

Following approval by the Board of Education, FCPS submits capital project requests (included in the approved EFMP) to state and county agencies in October and November for funding in the next fiscal year (see [Appendix A](#)). Individual county and state agencies maintain procedures for evaluating Board-approved capital project requests (See [Appendix C](#) and [Appendix D](#)).

Close cooperation among state, county and FCPS officials is essential to ensuring that we successfully update and execute the Educational Facilities Master Plan. Public awareness of and involvement in the planning process is also essential.

EDUCATIONAL FACILITY PLANNING – INTERGOVERNMENTAL CONTEXT

This EFMP is informed by the goals established in other planning documents prepared by the Board of Education, Frederick County Government, and the state. While not all these planning documents focus on educational facilities, their goals depend in part on meeting school facility needs. Some of these other plans include:

FCPS Strategic Plan: The Board of Education began work on the Strategic Plan in Spring 2014. Aspirational goals were adopted in December 2014 along with correlating priorities. Work continues on the strategic plan as the Board develops measurable goals. This plan is a dynamic document intended to guide FCPS for the next 5 to 10 years.

Frederick County Comprehensive Maintenance Plan: Approved annually by the Board of Education, this plan establishes a system-wide evaluation of facility conditions and a maintenance management system to increase the life expectancy of building systems.

Frederick County's Future: Many Places, One Community: The county comprehensive plan provides recommendations for long-range development. Included are goals and objectives which seek to direct growth to appropriate areas of the county based on the availability of utilities, environmental concerns, existing land use patterns, etc. This plan also identifies general locations for future school sites. It is essential that this plan and our master plans are consistent.

Frederick County Capital Improvements Program: This 6-year program incorporates capital projects requested by the Board of Education and included in the County Executive's

annual Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). The County CIP is then approved by the County Council. It also includes projects requested by other county agencies and departments. It establishes the parameters and schedules for capital improvement projects. All FCPS capital projects must conform to the requirements of this program.

Maryland “Smart Growth” and Neighborhood Conservation: In 1997, the Maryland General Assembly passed the “*Smart Growth Areas Act.*” It established guidelines for determining what areas of the state would be given priority for funding state projects and programs. Its goals are to discourage urban sprawl, preserve farmland, woodlands, and open space, and improve Chesapeake Bay water quality. State funding for any public project is tied to conformance with this act.

The Educational Facilities Master Plan is also informed by two other foundational documents that govern the administration of FCPS. These are the *Board of Education Policy* and *Board of Education Policies and Procedures Administrative Manual, Volumes I and II*. These documents cover a wide range of specific instructional and program objectives related to such topics as organizational patterns, staffing ratios, transportation, and redistricting guidelines (see [Appendices R-U](#)).

