

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A. Mission Statement and Goals

The mission of the St. Mary's County Public Schools' system is to "Know the learner and the learning, expecting excellence in both. Accept no excuses, educating ALL with rigor, relevance, respect, and positive relationships."

Building upon this mission, the school system has developed specific educational and facility goals to support its mission statement and has published a six-year comprehensive plan, the "Educational Facilities Master Plan (EFMP)," which serves as the framework for fostering and promoting learning through our facilities.

B. Summary of Process

The EFMP is an ongoing process that results in the creation of an evolving document. The purpose of the plan is to communicate the school system's Capital Improvements Program (CIP) needs to better accommodate and support its current and future educational programs on a regularly updated basis. It serves as a guide for assessing the need for facility improvements and capital improvements projects to implement them. The EFMP, in conjunction with the Comprehensive Maintenance Plan (CMP) for Educational Facilities, will determine the scope of repairs, modernization, upgrades, and/or new construction needed to serve the current and future school facilities' needs of the community. The plan will address a variety of federal, state, and local funding sources and will consider the scope of projects that may reasonably be accomplished within available funds. The planning process is facilitated and supported by the gathering of all relevant data and analysis. The following areas are considered during the review process:

PLANNING

The Educational Facilities Master Plan is an evolving document that changes to meet the needs of a thriving community.

Defining Capacity Needs

As enrollment continues to increase, the school system will meet capacity needs through new schools or addition/modernization to existing schools. During periods of rapid enrollment, relocatables will be utilized to meet student housing needs during construction of permanent facilities. Capacity needs are determined based on the school system's ten-year enrollment projections, housing data trend analysis, and other relevant data.

Defining Educational Program Needs

As current educational programs change or as new educational programs are implemented, instructional methods and the facilities that support them need refining. These spaces may vary from small group instruction areas to large group lecture areas. It is important to analyze the full range of spaces and equipment needed to facilitate current and future educational programs that are adaptable to changes in instructional delivery methods.

Defining Educational Space Environments

As new buildings are constructed or existing buildings are modernized, sustainable and energy efficient building design concepts are encouraged for inclusion based on providing high performance learning environments that promote energy conservation and renewable energy sources as a teaching tool. Per the Public School Construction Program (PSCP) Administrative Procedures Guide, all new schools must meet the requirements for a Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) silver rating.

Condition Assessment of Facilities

Schools within St. Mary's County Public Schools (SMCPS) are designed to house elementary, middle, and high school grade configurations. When preparing the EFMP, it is important to consider the grades to be served, the enrollment levels expected, and the maximum capacity the school could be expected to house if expansion was necessary.

Physical Condition

Each facility is reviewed in conjunction with the development of the CMP for Educational Facilities. This plan outlines the life cycle maintenance or replacement required for key infrastructure components. In addition, a summary of the present utilization and capacity for each school is developed and reviewed.

Code Compliance/Life Safety

Older facilities were designed using codes and ordinances that were applicable to the time of construction and which may be different than current codes. Codes and guidelines from the PSCP are reviewed. Projects are added to address the modifications required to address new code compliances, such as the projects associated with the American's with Disabilities Act (ADA) Transition Plan.

Public Use

SMCPS facilities not only house educational programs, but also serve the community as public resources through a variety of community-based activities. The playfields and courts serve the community as supplemental parks and recreational facilities. Community organizations, both public and private, use the buildings for meetings and other activities.

Demographics

The demographic analysis includes a detailed review of county population and the housing inventory. The basis for the demographic analysis is the historical trends of population growth, private school enrollment, birthrate, employment, and housing. The demographic analysis is enhanced through the utilization of a Geographic Information System, which utilizes a computerized map of the county. This map provides a basis for analyzing study areas and/or school boundaries, projecting enrollments, and forecasting future development. It helps to define areas of population and housing from which students are generated for school enrollment. Demographic studies present data and information in simple, easy-to-read tables and charts. Comparisons are easily made to determine when school capacity will be exhausted by future enrollment growth and when enrollment decline may permit the reorganization of facilities.

At this point, a comprehensive list of school improvements that are required to meet the criteria is developed, including an estimate of new school facilities required to meet current and

projected enrollment growth, along with cost estimates for each project. The project list is then reviewed by both the Board of Education of St. Mary's County (Board) and the Board of County Commissioners for St. Mary's County (BOCC).

C. Historical Perspective

During the 1990's, the school system embarked on an aggressive modernization program to bring the existing public school facilities up to modern educational standards while meeting the needs of our growing student population. Funding from the state PSCP, during that time, was focused on addition/renovation projects and the school system was able to obtain significant state funding for the addition/modernization of seven elementary schools, two middle schools, and all three high school projects. The school system replaced the former Hollywood Elementary School with a larger facility on a new site to accommodate growth in the northern portion of the Lexington Park Development District. In addition to these projects, the school system also continued with its program to address older facilities through systemic modernization including roofs and HVAC systems, as well as the federally mandated ADA initiative.

The school construction program focus then shifted to meet the changing needs of the school system. The school system continued with the program of addition/modernization by completing one elementary school and the career and technology center. The George Washington Carver Elementary School was replaced with a new facility that was located outside of the Air Installation Compatible Use Zone (AICUZ). The new facility was built larger to meet the student population needs of the Lexington Park Development District in combination with the addition/renovation of Lexington Park Elementary School, which had been previously completed in 2001. The ability to construct the required additional capacity to meet the needs of a growing community was analyzed at the remaining schools, which had not yet received an addition/renovation. Based on site constraints and location to the proposed student populations to be served, it was determined that a program would be developed around a new school construction plan. The first school to receive planning approval was Evergreen Elementary School, which opened for the 2009 - 2010 school year. The school is located in California, Maryland and is within the Lexington Park Development District. This school has a capacity of 644 students in PreK through 5th grades. The site for Evergreen Elementary School was master planned to include the potential for a primary building in the future.

The school system worked collaboratively with the BOCC to secure a multi-use site adjacent to the Leonardtown Development District for the location of the Captain Walter Francis Duke Elementary School. Ownership of the elementary school site was transferred to the Board in July 2012. The remainder of the property is proposed to house county recreational facilities, as well as a possible middle school site in the future. The site has been annexed into the Town of Leonardtown. The new elementary school site received site approval from the Interagency Committee on Public School Construction in February 2010, planning approval in January 2011 as part of the FY 2012 CIP, and construction funding approval in the FY 2014 CIP. Construction of the school began in October 2013. Captain Walter Francis Duke Elementary School is scheduled to open for the 2015-2016 school year.

A local capital improvements project for site acquisition was approved in the FY 2013 capital improvements budget so that sites for planned future projects may be obtained, including a third new elementary school in the Lexington Park Development District, and a high

school site. These schools are needed in the next six years. The school system is actively working to secure these sites.

To date, the school system has completed the expansion and modernization of eight elementary schools, three middle schools, all three high schools, and one career and technology center and has built three new elementary schools:

Elementary Schools Modernized (8 out of 17)

Benjamin Banneker (1999), Dynard (1990), Leonardtown (2006), Lettie Marshall Dent (1991), Lexington Park (1999), Green Holly (1999), Park Hall (1992), Piney Point (1995)

Middle Schools Modernized (3 out of 4)

Esperanza (1997), Margaret Brent (1998), Leonardtown (2011)

High Schools Modernized (3 out of 3)

Chopticon (1997), Great Mills (1994), Leonardtown (1998)

Career and Technology Center Modernized

Dr. James A. Forrest Career & Technology Center (2001)

New School Construction

Hollywood Elementary School (1991), George Washington Carver Elementary School (2003), and Evergreen Elementary School (2009)

In addition, in 2007 the Chesapeake Public Charter School was opened. This facility serves Kindergarten through eighth grade.

The school system is meeting the needs of the schools which have not been fully modernized through other construction project opportunities including: state-funded projects such as limited renovations, roof replacements, HVAC renovations, science lab modifications, Technology in Maryland projects, PreKindergarten (PreK) classroom additions, Kindergarten classroom additions, lighting projects, energy conservation projects, security projects, and gymnasium additions. In addition to the state-funded projects, the school system also meets the needs of the physical environments of our schools with locally funded projects, including: ADA, asbestos abatement, clean air, heating, ventilation, air conditioning, roof replacement, parking, relocatable classrooms, well replacements, sewer plants, playgrounds, and meeting educational program requirements.

D. Accomplishments

- All three high schools have been completely modernized, as well as the career and technology center
- Average age of facilities was reduced from 38 years to 25 years in 2013
- Six PreK classrooms were completed under a state initiative
- All elementary schools have separate gymnasiums

- Six Kindergarten classrooms were completed, enabling implementation of full-day Kindergarten at all schools one year prior to required implementation
- Great Mills High School addition/renovation project received Governor Parris N. Glendening's Smart Growth Award for project planning in 2000
- Obtained a donated site for the replacement of George Washington Carver Elementary School
- EFMP received Governor Parris N. Glendening's Smart Growth Award for Public Education and Awareness in 2001
- Smart Growth Summit: Understanding our Future received Governor Parris N. Glendening's Smart Growth Award for Public Education and Awareness in 2001
- Lexington Park Elementary School Addition/Renovation received Governor Robert L. Ehrlich, Jr.'s Vision Award in 2003 for project planning
- Purchased a multi-use site adjacent to the Lexington Park Development District to serve as the site for the new Evergreen Elementary School site
- Achieved gold LEED certification for Evergreen Elementary School
- Evergreen Elementary School was awarded MD Chapter of the U.S. Green Building Council 2010 Project of the Year Award
- In collaboration with the BOCC, acquired a multi-use site in Leonardtown for the second new elementary school and potentially a future middle school
- Completion of the upgrade of the Ridge Elementary School playground (2011)
- Received a Project Sunburst grant from the Maryland Energy Administration (MEA) for the installation of a 500 kWh solar photovoltaic generating system at George Washington Carver Elementary School
- Received a FY 2015 locally funded CIP budget totaling \$11,240,918 and a state budget totaling \$12,103,088
- Completion of the limited renovation project at Leonardtown Middle School (2011)
- Six schools and one center received Maryland Association of Environmental and Outdoor Education (MAEOE) Green School certification/recertification in 2014, bringing the total of certified facilities to 23 schools, including all elementary schools, and two environmental centers
- Completion of a site improvement project at Oakville Elementary School, including coordinating with the State Highway Administration regarding safety concerns



- Completion of the Dynard Elementary School Aging School project, providing air conditioning in the gymnasium
- Completion of a locally funded parking lot reconfiguration at Mechanicsville Elementary School improving traffic flow and safety
- Acquisition of property adjacent to Lettie Marshall Dent Elementary School for future use as a parking lot expansion
- Completion of the Dynard Elementary School playground renovation under the Qualified Zone Academy Bond program
- Replaced the gymnasium lighting with high efficiency fixtures in all three high schools under the FY 2012 Supplemental Appropriation
- Completion of the first phase of projects under the FY 2013 Energy Efficiency Initiative (EEI)
- Completion of the first phase of projects under the FY 2014 Security Initiative (SI)

E. Current Findings

Demographic data indicates that St. Mary's County will continue to grow and subsequently there will be a need for additional school facilities. The county's population was 105,151 persons in the 2010 Census. This was an increase of 18,940 persons since the last Census and represented a growth rate considered historic by the Maryland Department of Planning State Data Center. The annual population estimates since the 2010 Census indicate a slowing of the rate of growth, with an estimated growth of 4.3% since the 2010 Census as of July 2013. The population is projected to reach 125,150 persons by the year 2020. The Southern Maryland region is projected to grow by 54,661 persons over this time frame, with St. Mary's representing 20,000 persons or 37% of that growth. Within the projection for 2020, the 0-4 age group is expected to increase by 970 persons and the 5-19 age group is expected to increase by 2,385 persons. These trends are also indicated in the birth data. Over the next six years there is a projected increase of 80 births per year reaching a projected total of 1,450 births per year by 2018. While these growth patterns are less than previously projected, they will still result in increases in the number of students entering the school system in the next six years. Enrollment projections indicate that by the 2019 - 2020 school year there will be a total of 18,893 students in the county. Of this there will be an additional 619 elementary school students, an additional 685 middle school students, and an additional 741 high school students. These additional students, coupled with existing capacity shortfalls, indicate the need for planned facilities, particularly at the secondary level. The CIP is fluid and adjusted, as growth patterns change and student enrollment is impacted.

Projected Student Growth

Based on current enrollment projections, the school system will receive 619 new elementary school students, 685 new middle school students, and 741 new high school students in the next six years, necessitating the inclusion of a third new elementary school and a new high school within the six-year capital improvements program.

F. Proposed Plan

Based on the current projected enrollment needs, the proposed capital improvements plan includes a third new elementary school and a new transitional high school. The new facilities will be located in the county to serve designated growth areas. Other elementary schools with overcrowding will receive relief from the centrally located new facilities via redistricting. In the interim, facility plans will continue to rely on relocatable classrooms to accommodate growth until completion of scheduled capital improvements projects occur, which is requested based on the state process for school construction. Site acquisition for the third new elementary school is programmed for FY 2015, with project planning in FY 2016, and the first year of construction in FY 2017.

As the elementary school enrollment continues to increase, additional capacity at the secondary level will be required as a result of the students moving through the grade levels. At the secondary school level, a capital improvements project is programmed for a new transitional high school within the current CIP. To meet these needs at the high school level, the school system will utilize capacity in the instructional pathways, such as the Dr. James A. Forrest Career and Technology Center, dual college enrollment, and relocatables, until the school is completed. As an option, the transitional high school may open as a middle school and will transition to a high school. This plan would allow the middle school to be constructed after the high school and would aid in creating the student populations for both new schools. Site acquisition for the new high school is programmed for FY 2014, with project planning in FY 2019, and the first year of construction in FY 2021.

The school system will also seek projects via the Aging Schools Program (ASP), Qualified Zone Academy Bond Program (QZAB), Energy Efficiency, Security, and other state funding initiatives.