

Maryland School for the Deaf

Fiscal Year 2012 Capital Budget

**Report to:
House Education and Economic Development Subcommittee
March 9, 2011**

**Senate Capital Budget Subcommittee
March 21, 2011**

Background Information

The Maryland School for the Deaf (MSD) provides educational and developmental services for the State's deaf and hard-of-hearing children and youth. The School, founded in 1867, serves this population through its two campuses located in Frederick and Columbia.

MSD's Frederick campus provides a comprehensive primary/secondary school program, with separate departments for Elementary (pre-K through Grade 5), Middle (Grades 6-8), and High School (Grades 9-12). The Frederick Campus also offers a Career and Technology program, which provides students with career skills, including computer and technical courses. The Life-Based Education program is also offered at Frederick for High School-age students with additional learning and behavioral disabilities.

The Columbia Campus also provides a comprehensive primary/secondary school program for Elementary and Middle School-age students that include Essential and Life-Based educational programs.

MSD's Family Education/Early Childhood (FE/EC) program works with families of deaf and hard-of-hearing infants and toddlers to develop early language skills for their children. Because the optimum time for language development is from birth to age three, children given early communication training have a much greater opportunity for social and academic development in later years. MSD's FE/EC teachers work with approximately 70 children and their families throughout Maryland, through in-home and group sessions, to help ensure that these children will be prepared to learn at grade-level when they enter school.

MSD is requesting funding for the following project:

The fire alarm system at the Frederick Campus is original to the building construction, each having its own system installed when each building was constructed. The School has been diligent in maintaining the alarm systems but age is beginning to cause system failures. Some parts are obsolete and repairing the existing equipment is becoming difficult and expensive. Many parts are obsolete, so when replacement parts are located, they are very expensive to purchase. The Fire Alarm System has not been updated for

code changes, which has specifically been updated for visual fire alarms. One system is needed to accommodate system maintenance throughout the entire campus through the central Support Service Building.

A current fire alarm system only sends one message to evacuate. However, during some emergencies it might be more appropriate to shelter in place. Alternative methods of notification need to be installed so all students and staff get all the information they need to ensure they take the right action in response to any emergency. Mass notification systems must also provide visible notification to serve deaf and hearing impaired students and staff. The system will include visual textual messages using various mediums, such as message boards, computer screens, and personal devices.

Recommended DLS Actions

The School concurs.