

# 2021 Capital Budget Hearing Testimony

Senate Budget and Taxation Education, Capital Budget Subcommittee  
& House Appropriations Capital Budget Subcommittee

Senator Peters, Chair

Delegate Barnes, Chair

March 9, 2021

## Presenters

Dr. Karen Salmon, IAC Chair

Robert Gorrell, Executive Director

Kim Spivey, Deputy Director of Administration

Thank you for your continuing support for public school construction in Maryland, and for the opportunity to report today on the operating budget for the Interagency Commission on School Construction (IAC). The Commission and their staff are tasked with a significant mission to: Provide leadership and resources to local education agencies in the development of school facilities so that all Maryland public school students, teachers, administrators, and staff have safe and educationally supportive environments in which to teach and learn. The overriding goal of the IAC is to promote equity in the educational sufficiency of school facilities throughout the State of Maryland.

In this report we will respond to the analyst's questions, and will provide additional information that may be of interest to the members of the committee.

**With \$10 million in fiscal 2021 general funds due to be awarded by the end of the fiscal year and the 15-year useful life limitations on using GO bonds to support the program, DLS recommends reducing the bond funding for this program in fiscal 2022 by \$5.0 million and reprogramming these funds for other public school construction needs. DLS also recommends that this grant program be administered by MCSS.**

In FY 2020, before funds were identified for reversion because of COVID-19, IAC staff and MCSS began meeting to coordinate allocations of IAC funding and MCSS funding to reduce overlap between the school safety programs. It was agreed that IAC should be responsible for facilities modifications with long-term life spans and that MCSS should be responsible for operational costs and expenses with short-term life spans. In light of the change in FY 22 from using general funds to using bond funding, this differentiation becomes even more important. IAC respectfully requests

that the General Assembly reconsider recommending that MCSS administer funds for public school construction efforts so that the IAC can continue to support the LEAs in their long-term facilities projects and coordinate those efforts with other IAC initiatives.

IAC anticipates allocating LEA level funds for the School Safety Grant Program at their May meeting.

**With \$4.0 million in fiscal 2021 general funds due to be awarded by the end of the fiscal year and the 15-year useful limitations on using GO bonds to support the program, DLS recommends reducing the bond funding for [the Nonpublic School Security Improvement] program in fiscal 2022 by \$1.5 million and reprogramming these funds for other public school construction needs. DLS also recommends that this grant program be administrated by MCSS.**

IAC and MCSS staff have coordinated past programs and agreed that IAC should be responsible for facilities modifications with long-term life spans and that MCSS should be responsible for operational costs and expenses with short-term life spans. In light of the change in FY 22 from using general funds to using bond funding, this differentiation becomes even more important. IAC respectfully requests that the General Assembly reconsider recommending that MCSS administer funds for public school construction efforts so that the IAC can continue to support the LEAs in their long-term facilities projects and coordinate those efforts with other IAC initiatives.

**DLS recommends that IAC clearly identify the balance in the Unreserved Statewide Contingency Account as well as clearly present EGRC Supplemental Grant Program and PSCP contingency balances by fiscal year and LSS in all future quarterly reports.**

The IAC will modify the report as recommended.