

2021 Operational Budget Hearing Testimony

Senate Budget and Taxation Education, Business and Administration
Subcommittee & House Appropriations Education and Economic
Development Subcommittee

Senator Zucker, Chair

Delegate Barnes, Chair

February 11, 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.

Based on this completion schedule and the availability of 100% of FCI data by July 15, 2021, the Department of Legislative Services (DLS) recommends the adoption of budget bill language for IAC to submit a draft of the final SFA report by September 1, 2021. This report should incorporate the contractor's preliminary report and provide the following information: (1) details of the assessment pilot and a copy of the final assessment rubric; (2) FCI data on all school facilities assessed; and (3) detail of project expenditures by object and subobject.

The IAC will provide a preliminary draft final report as requested.

Because of the requirements of Chapter 14 and the significant delay in filling staff positions that preceded the COVID-19 hiring freeze, DLS recommends that the budget committees add budget

bill language restricting funds specifically for the purpose of filling 3 vacant positions at IAC by October 1, 2021.

IAC and MSDE staff continue to work to fill vacant positions. Unfortunately, for its technical field positions, hiring sometimes takes a long period of time. IAC has no objections so long as the necessary funding is available when positions are able to be filled. The IAC continues to work with MSDE and DBM to identify and/or create appropriate job classifications for its unique and often technical positions and to utilize available PINs to meet the agency's evolving needs. Filling these six positions is critical to the agency's operations, as the agency is currently short staffed for its critical work and many agency responsibilities are prolonged or not fulfilled.

Additionally, DLS recommends IAC and MSDE submit a status report to the budget committees by December 15, 2021, on IAC hires and vacancies in calendar 2021. This report should include (1) current salary data and classification for all IAC personnel; (2) an updated organizational chart with current vacancies and additional personnel needed to meet Chapter 14 requirements; (3) pending reclassifications and funds remaining for new hires; and (4) MSDE's future plans to request funds for additional personnel.

IAC and MSDE will provide the report as requested. Although MSDE is the fiscal agent, IAC will be responsible for requesting additional funds for personnel to meet statutory requirements.

Due to the continued delay in procurement and implementation with IMFAL, DLS recommends the adoption of committee narrative for IAC to submit a status update on this project by August 1, 2021.

IAC will provide the report as requested.