



Fiscal Year 2027 Capital Budget

**HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE
CAPITAL BUDGET SUBCOMMITTEE
CHAIRPERSON, DELEGATE MALCOLM RUFF
March 2, 2026**

&

**SENATE BUDGET AND TAXATION COMMITTEE
CAPITAL BUDGET SUBCOMMITTEE
CHAIRPERSON, SENATOR CRAIG ZUCKER
March 3, 2026**



Class of 2025

The Maryland School for the Deaf provides an inclusive, language-rich environment for deaf and hard-of-hearing students from birth through age 21. Rooted in a bilingual education approach, we ensure full access to American Sign Language (ASL) and English across comprehensive academic, extracurricular, and student life programs. In partnership with families and communities, we empower students to think critically and develop a sense of self and belonging.

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. MSD, founded in 1867, serves this population through its two campuses located in Frederick and Columbia.

MSD is an independent State agency governed by its 19-member Board of Trustees, which is appointed by the Governor and approved by the Senate. Approximately 86% of MSD's operating budget is provided from State general funds, while the remaining 14% is provided through federal grants, various special funds (e.g., employee food sales, out-of-state tuition, and county participation fees), and reimbursable funds (Enhanced Program of Services) from the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE). Students who are residents of Maryland attend MSD at no cost. Students from outside Maryland may be admitted on a tuition basis.

MSD utilizes the Maryland State Curriculum and the Maryland College and Career Ready Standards, offering its graduating high school seniors the Maryland State High School diploma. In 2018, MSD went through the accreditation process for the Middle States Association - Commissions on Elementary and Secondary Schools (MSA-CES) and received a recommendation for full accreditation through May 2027.

MSD's instructional programs operate on a 180-day school year, from the end of August through mid-June. Extended School Year (ESY) programs and enrichment camps are offered at MSD during the summer months. Approximately 21% of the Frederick Campus students and 25% of the Columbia Campus students reside on campus during the week, returning to their homes on weekends and during school breaks.

MSD's Frederick Campus provides a comprehensive elementary/secondary school program, with separate departments for Elementary (Pre-kindergarten through Grade 5), Middle (Grades 6-8), and High School (Grades 9-12). The Frederick Campus also offers a Career and Technical Education (CTE) program, which provides students with career skills, including computer and technical courses. In addition to providing instruction to deaf and hard-of-hearing students, the campus provides additional support and services for students with additional learning and behavioral disabilities. Since 2023, MSD has successfully implemented the Oriole's Career Academy (OCA) for students aged 18-21 who have not received a high school diploma, but can benefit from additional life skills training, employment training, problem-solving skills, and self-advocacy skills.

The Columbia Campus provides a comprehensive elementary/secondary school program for elementary and middle school age students. In addition to providing instruction to deaf and hard-of-hearing students, the campus provides additional support and services for students with additional learning and behavioral disabilities. MSD's Family Education and Early Childhood Department (FEECD) works with families of deaf and hard-of-hearing infants and toddlers to develop early language skills for their children. The optimum time for language development is from birth to age three; therefore, children that are given early communication training have a much greater opportunity for social and academic

development in later years. MSD’s FEECD teachers work with approximately 74 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.

The Enhanced Services serves deaf students with other moderate to severe disabilities. Generally, students in this program require educational and developmental services of a more extensive and individualized nature. There are currently 55 students receiving enhanced services in the current school year.

Student enrollment (representing 22 of 23 counties, and Baltimore City) has reached 492 students in the current school year.

Student Enrollment by Place of Residence

County	# Students	% Students	County	# Students	% Students
Allegany	1	0.2%	Howard	15	3.0%
Anne Arundel	40	8.1%	Kent	0	0.0%
Baltimore City	28	5.7%	Montgomery	35	7.1%
Baltimore County	53	10.8%	Out of State	0	0.0%
Calvert	4	0.8%	Prince George’s	33	6.7%
Caroline	1	0.2%	Queen Anne’s	2	0.4%
Carroll	13	2.6%	Somerset	2	0.4%
Cecil	4	0.8%	St. Mary’s	3	0.6%
Charles	1	0.2%	Talbot	1	0.2%
Dorchester	1	0.2%	Washington	27	5.5%
Frederick	214	43.5%	Wicomico	2	0.4%
Garrett	2	0.4%	Worcester	1	0.2%
Harford	9	1.8%	Grand Total	492	100.0%

Funding Request

New Student Residences (Frederick)

The Maryland School for the Deaf is requesting \$1,611,000 in capital funding in FY 2027 to support the continuation of the New Student Residences (Frederick) project.

MSD's Frederick Campus was originally designed as a residential campus. Currently, three buildings house the dormitories on the Frederick Campus (Foxwell-Moylan Hall, Faupel Hall, and Klipp-Redmond Hall). The buildings were built between 1964 and 1973 before the development of DeafSpace principles. Each building was built with the same basic design and footprint. A fourth building (Barry Hall) was demolished to accommodate the new cafeteria building. The design of the original dormitories is barracks style with open showers. The shape of the dormitories limits sightlines and makes the supervision of students difficult. The dormitories were built at the largest period of residential enrollment of the school and are now over capacity for current enrollment needs.

The existing dormitory buildings are also inadequate by today's codes and standards. The buildings do not meet the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). To be fully ADA compliant, the buildings would need elevators, upgraded doorways, permanent ramps, and many other modifications. In addition, the dormitories would need to be updated to meet current requirements for fire suppression, sprinklers, and egress from the building. They do not meet requirements for insulation and energy efficiency and need lighting upgrades and energy efficient windows. There is no central air conditioning in the buildings. Some of the rooms have individual window units, but the electrical capacity of the buildings will not accommodate a unit in every window. Individual air conditioning units are also not energy efficient. Finally, the current dormitories do not comply with the Climate Solutions Now Act requiring State buildings to eliminate reliance on fossil fuels for heating.

The schematic design phase for the new dormitories project is complete and the design development phase has just begun. Subsequent phases include the development of construction documents, bidding, and construction. The overall project is expected to be complete in July 2030, with Phase 1 of construction (flex dorm) expected to be complete in July 2028. The proposed procurement method of Construction Management at Risk (CMAR) for pre-construction services is currently underway and expected to be awarded this spring/summer. The total estimated cost for the project is \$91,573,000.

A program modification was approved on February 23, 2026 to incorporate changes made during the schematic design phase of the project. These changes included the construction of four new buildings instead of three and an increase of just under 5% in the gross square footage from 68,800 GSF to 72,237 GSF. The primary change is one, larger combined residence hall to house the boys and girls in separate wings, with a shared main entrance and common spaces, including a lobby, residence life offices, and communal kitchen. This configuration reduces the number of kitchens from two smaller facilities to one larger, shared, more efficient kitchen and improves student oversight and operational efficiency.

The creation of this larger combined residence hall prompted the separation of the health center and student center to preserve the architectural massing characteristics of the community, improve wayfinding for emergency personnel and visitors unfamiliar with campus, better support campus circulation, and respect the numerous site constraints.

Student stakeholder feedback regarding equity and inclusion also impacted the design process for the student center. It is important to remember that the Part I/II Program was developed during the COVID-19 pandemic when students were not on campus. Now that MSD has returned to pre-COVID operations, the student stakeholders expressed concerns over the student center being attached to either the boys' or girls' dormitory. This was important information for the architects, DGS, and MSD to consider for the end-users. To avoid the appearance of favoring one group over another and to ensure long-term equity for all students, the student center was redesigned as a standalone facility.

Similarly, privacy concerns and ease of ambulatory access became driving factors for separating the health center into its own small building. Currently, a student being transported by ambulance from the health center must be wheeled on a gurney through the campus. This provides very little privacy for anyone who needs these services. The MSD entrance off Market Street at the maintenance building provides the perfect opportunity to increase privacy for students or staff needing ambulance services at the health center. Schematic design plans detail the health center with an ambulance door off the Market Street entrance to the MSD campus. This allows the ambulance to pull up directly to the new health center and transfer the patient from the health center directly into an ambulance without pushing the gurney through the campus. Patient privacy is improved through this design. Separating the health center into a standalone building also eliminates the future concern of inequity, like those concerns expressed by students regarding the student center.

Recommended Actions

MSD concurs with the Governor's allowance and the DLS recommendation to approve all general obligation bond authorizations and preauthorizations.