

**MARYLAND PUBLIC SCHOOL FACILITIES  
EDUCATIONAL SUFFICIENCY STANDARDS**

I. PURPOSE. The purpose of Maryland Public School Facilities Educational Sufficiency Standards (*COMAR 13A.01.02.04*) is to establish acceptable minimum levels for the physical attributes, capacity, and educational suitability of existing public K–12 school facilities. The application of these standards shall be limited to space and attributes needed to support educational programs and curricula—defined by the Maryland State Board of Education—that are sustainable within the operational budgets of the school systems for staffing, maintenance, and full utilization of the facilities. The Educational Sufficiency Standards are dynamic. The Interagency Committee on School Construction (IAC), and includes its successor organization, the Interagency Commission on School Construction, shall periodically review the Standards and recommend changes to the Standards as time and circumstances require.

These Standards are intended for use in the evaluation of existing public school facilities with projected five-year future student counts and are not intended to limit the flexibility of design solutions for new construction and renovation projects. A companion document is the Facilities Planning Guide, which provides guidelines and recommendations for use in the programming and design of new schools, replacement schools, and renovations of existing schools. The Facilities Planning Guide is incorporated by reference into these standards and may be amended by the IAC with adequate notice to and input from the public. *[Code of Maryland (COMAR) references in this document are to certain Title 13A regulations of the State Board of Education for State School Administration, General Instructional Programs, Specific Subjects, Special Instructional Programs, and Supporting Programs.]*

II. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS. These standards are not intended to supersede or omit compliance with applicable building and fire codes or any other code, regulation, law, or standard that has been adopted by State agencies. At the same time, these Standards will not restate the requirements of other codes.

A. Building condition. A school facility must be safe (*COMAR 13A.01.04.03*) and capable of being maintained.

**MARYLAND PUBLIC SCHOOL FACILITIES  
EDUCATIONAL SUFFICIENCY STANDARDS**

1. Structural. A school facility must be structurally sound. A school facility shall be considered structurally sound and safe if the building presents no imminent danger or major visible signs of decay or distress and the building's structural systems support the loads imposed on them.
2. Exterior envelope. An exterior envelope is safe and capable of being maintained if:
  - a) *Walls and roof are weather tight under normal conditions with routine upkeep; and*
  - b) *Doors and windows are weather tight under normal conditions with routine upkeep.*
3. Interior surfaces. An interior surface is safe and capable of being maintained if it is:
  - a) *Structurally sound;*
  - b) *Capable of supporting a finish; and*
  - c) *Capable of continuing in its intended use with normal maintenance and repair.*
4. Interior finishes. An interior finish is safe and capable of being maintained if it is:
  - a) *Free of exposed lead paint;*
  - b) *Free of exposed friable asbestos; and*
  - c) *Capable of continuing in its intended use with normal maintenance and repair.*

B. Building systems. Where present, building systems in a school facility must be in working order and capable of being properly maintained. Building systems include roof, plumbing, telephone, electrical, and heating and cooling systems, as well as fire alarm, two-way internal communication, technological infrastructure, and security systems.

1. General. A building system shall be considered to be in working order and capable of being maintained if all of the following apply:
  - a) *The system is capable of being operated as intended and maintained.*
  - b) *Newly manufactured or cost-effective refurbished replacement parts are available.*
  - c) *The system is capable of supporting the standards established in this rule.*
  - d) *Components of the system present no imminent danger of personal injury.*

**MARYLAND PUBLIC SCHOOL FACILITIES  
EDUCATIONAL SUFFICIENCY STANDARDS**

2. Sanitary facilities. Fixtures shall include, but are not limited to, water closets, urinals, lavatories, and drinking fountains. Restrooms shall be available for general classrooms for grades 3 and below and special needs classrooms without having to exit the building, wherever possible within reasonable cost constraints.
3. Fire alarm and emergency-notification system. A school facility shall have a fire alarm and emergency-notification system as required by applicable State fire codes and emergency procedures.
4. Two-way communication system. A school facility shall have a two-way internal communication system between a central location and each classroom, isolated office space, library media center, physical education space, cafeteria, and other regularly occupied spaces.

III. CLASSIFICATION OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS. The classifications for public schools under these standards are:

- A. Elementary school (PK–5 or any subset thereof)
- B. Middle school (6–8)
- C. High school (9–12)
- D. Combination school (a combination of any grade levels)
- E. Other school (includes early-childhood-education centers, special-education centers, career-technology centers, alternative-education schools, etc.)

IV. SCHOOL SITE. A school site shall be of sufficient size to accommodate safe access, parking, drainage, and security (*COMAR 13A.01.04.03*). Additionally, the site shall be provided with an adequate source of water and appropriate means of effluent disposal.

- A. Safe access. A school site shall be configured for safe and controlled access that separates pedestrian from vehicular traffic. If buses are used to transport students, then bus loading/unloading areas shall be separated from vehicular-traffic areas wherever possible. Dedicated student drop-off and pickup areas shall be provided for safe use by student passengers arriving or departing by automobile.

**MARYLAND PUBLIC SCHOOL FACILITIES  
EDUCATIONAL SUFFICIENCY STANDARDS**

B. Parking. A school site shall include a maintainable surfaced area that is stable, firm, and slip resistant and is large enough to accommodate 1.5 parking spaces/staff FTE and one student space /ten high school students. If this standard is not met, alternative parking may be approved after the sufficiency of parking at the site is reviewed by the IAC using the following criteria:

1. Availability of street parking around the school;
2. Availability of any nearby parking lots;
3. Availability of public transit;
4. Number of staff who drive to work on a daily basis; and
5. Average number of visitors on a daily basis.

C. Drainage. A school site shall be configured such that runoff does not undermine the structural integrity of the school buildings located on the site or create flooding, ponding, or erosion resulting in a threat to health, safety, or welfare.

D. Security.

1. All schools shall have safe and secure site fencing or other barriers with accommodations for safe passage through openings to protect students from the hazards of traffic, railroad tracks, animal nuisance, and steep slopes.

V. SITE RECREATION AND OUTDOOR PHYSICAL EDUCATION. A school facility shall have area, space and fixtures, in accordance with the standard equipment necessary to meet the educational requirements of the public education department, for physical education activity. *(COMAR 13A.01.02.05 and 13A.04.13, Physical Education only)*

A. Elementary school. Safe play area(s) and playground(s) including hard surfaced court(s) and unpaved recreation area(s) shall be conveniently accessible to the students. Play area(s) and appropriate equipment for physical education and school recreational purposes shall be provided based on the planned school program capacity. For schools that serve students in grade 5 and below, a protected play area shall be provided. Play-equipment areas shall have surfacing materials that meet or exceed safety specifications for shock-absorbing qualities as outlined by the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission.

B. Middle school. Hard surfaced court(s) and playing field(s) for physical education activities shall be provided. Playing field(s) and equipment shall be based on the planned school program capacity.

**MARYLAND PUBLIC SCHOOL FACILITIES  
EDUCATIONAL SUFFICIENCY STANDARDS**

- C. High school. A playing field for physical education activities shall be provided. Playing fields and equipment shall be based on the planned school program capacity.
- D. Combination school. A combination school shall provide the elements of the grades served by Subsections A, B and C above without duplication, but shall meet the highest standard.
- E. Other school. Other schools shall provide the elements above necessary to meet the educational requirements of the specific programs and capacity of the schools.

**VI. ACADEMIC CLASSROOM SPACE.** All classroom space shall meet or exceed the requirements listed below:

- A. Area of classroom spaces. Classroom spaces, including those for physical education, shall be sufficient for educational programs that are appropriate for the class-level needs.
- B. Classroom fixtures and equipment
  - 1. With the exception of physical-education spaces, each general and specialty classroom shall contain a work surface and seat for each student in the classroom. The work surface and seat shall be appropriate for the normal activity of the class conducted in the room.
  - 2. Each general and specialty classroom shall have an erasable surface and a surface suitable for projection purposes, appropriate for group classroom instruction, and a display surface. A single surface may meet one or more of these purposes.
  - 3. Each general and specialty classroom shall have storage for classroom materials or access to conveniently located storage.
  - 4. With the exception of physical-education spaces and music-education spaces, each general and specialty classroom shall have a work surface and seat for the teacher and for any aide assigned to the classroom. The classroom shall have secure storage for student records that is located in the classroom or is conveniently accessible to the classroom.
- C. Classroom lighting
  - 1. Each general and specialty classroom shall have a light system capable of maintaining at least 50 foot-candles of well-distributed light. Provide appropriate task lighting in specialty classrooms where enhanced visibility is required.
  - 2. The light level shall be measured at a work surface located in the approximate center of the classroom, between clean light fixtures.

**MARYLAND PUBLIC SCHOOL FACILITIES  
EDUCATIONAL SUFFICIENCY STANDARDS**

**D. Classroom temperature and relative humidity**

1. Each general and specialty classroom shall have a heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) system capable of maintaining a temperature between 68 and 75 degrees Fahrenheit and a relative humidity between 30 and 60% at full occupancy.
2. The temperature and humidity shall be measured at a work surface in the approximate center of the classroom.

**E. Classroom acoustics**

1. With the exception of physical-education spaces, each general and specialty classroom shall be maintainable at a sustained background sound level of less than 55 decibels.
2. The sound level shall be measured at a work surface in the approximate center of the classroom.

**F. Classroom air quality**

1. Each general, science, and fine arts classroom shall have an HVAC system that continually moves air and is capable of maintaining a CO<sub>2</sub> level of not more than 1,200 parts per million.
2. The air quality shall be measured at a work surface in the approximate center of the classroom.

**VII. GENERAL USE CLASSROOMS. (ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS/LITERACY, MATHEMATICS, SOCIAL STUDIES AND WORLD LANGUAGES (*COMAR 13A.03, General Instructional Programs and 13A.04, Specific Subjects*)).**

**A. Cumulative classroom net square foot (sf) requirements, excluding in-classroom storage space and any in-classroom toilet rooms, shall be at least:**

- |    |                 |                   |
|----|-----------------|-------------------|
| 1. | Prekindergarten | 50 net sf/student |
| 2. | Kindergarten    | 50 net sf/student |
| 3. | Grades 1 – 8    | 32 net sf/student |
| 4. | Grades 9 – 12   | 25 net sf/student |

**B. At least 2 net sf/student shall be available for dedicated, in-classroom storage and may be provided vertically to avoid the need for additional floor area.**

**C. Sufficient number of classrooms shall be provided to meet state and local board mandated student/staff ratio requirements.**

**MARYLAND PUBLIC SCHOOL FACILITIES  
EDUCATIONAL SUFFICIENCY STANDARDS**

**VIII. SPECIALTY CLASSROOMS.**

A. Special education (*COMAR 13A.05.01, 13A.05.02*) Maryland assures a free appropriate public education for all students with disabilities, birth through the end of the school year in which the student turns 21 years old, in accordance with the student's Individualized Education Program. Early Intervention Services for children from birth through two years is typically provided through the Maryland Infants and Toddlers Program. To the maximum extent appropriate, students with disabilities are educated in the least restrictive environment with students who are not disabled. A continuum of alternative placements shall be provided.

1. If a special-education space for pull-out purposes other than calming is provided and the space is required to support educational programs, services, and curricula, the space shall not be smaller than 450 net sf.
2. When the need is demonstrated by the LEA, additional space in the classroom shall be provided with, or students shall have an accessible route to: an accessible unisex restroom with one toilet, sink, washer/dryer, and shower stall/tub, as needed, and at least 15 net sf of storage.
3. When the need is demonstrated by the LEA, in 6<sup>th</sup> grade classrooms and above, a kitchenette of least 30 net sf shall be provided.

B. Science (*COMAR 13A.04.09*)

1. For grades PK through 5, no additional space is required beyond the classroom requirement.
2. For grades 6 through 12, 4 net sf/student of the specialty program capacity for science is required. The space shall not be smaller than the average classroom at the facility. This space is included in the academic classroom requirement and may be used for other instruction. The space shall have science fixtures and equipment, in accordance with the standard equipment necessary to meet the educational requirements of the Maryland Science Content Standards.
3. For grades 9 through 12 only, at least 40 net sf of space is provided for securable, well-ventilated storage/prep space for each science room having science fixtures and equipment. Storage/prep room(s) may be combined and shared between more than one classroom.

**MARYLAND PUBLIC SCHOOL FACILITIES  
EDUCATIONAL SUFFICIENCY STANDARDS**

C. Fine-Arts Education. (*COMAR 13A.04.16*) A school facility shall have classroom space to deliver fine-arts education programs. Fine arts subjects include art, music, dance, and theater. Classroom space(s) for fine-arts education shall not be smaller than the average classroom at the facility. Fine-arts education classroom space(s) may be included in the academic-classroom requirement and may be used for other instruction.

1. Elementary school. Fine-arts education programs may be accommodated within a general use or dedicated arts classroom. Provide one dedicated classroom for each fine-arts subject area staffed with greater than 0.5 full time fine-arts teacher. Provide additional dedicated fine-arts program storage of at least 60 net sf for each subject area per facility.
2. Middle school. Classroom space(s) for fine-arts education programs shall have no less than 4 net sf/student of the specialty program capacity for fine-arts subjects. Provide one dedicated classroom for each fine-arts subject area staffed with greater than 0.5 full time fine-arts teacher. Provide additional 60 net sf of storage for each fine-arts program subject.
3. High school. Classroom space(s) for fine-arts education programs shall have no less than 5 net sf/student of the specialty program capacity for fine-arts subjects.
4. Combination school. A combination school shall provide the elements of the grades served by paragraphs (1), (2) and (3) above without duplication but meeting the higher standards.
5. Other school. Other schools shall provide the elements above necessary to meet the educational requirements of the specific programs and capacity of the schools.

D. Technology Education and Computer Science (*COMAR 13A.04.01*)

1. For grades K through 5, no additional space is required beyond the classroom requirement.
2. For grades 6 through 8, 3 net sf/student, and 4 net sf/student for grades 9 through 12, of the specialty program capacity for technology education and family and consumer science is required. The space shall not be smaller than the average classroom at the facility. This space is included in the academic classroom requirement and may be used for other instruction.
3. The space shall have technology fixtures and equipment, in accordance with the standard equipment necessary to meet the educational requirements of the Maryland Technology Education Content Standards, and in high school, the requirements of Maryland Advanced Technology Education electives where such electives are offered.
4. Provide at least 80 net sf for securable, well-ventilated storage/prep space for each technology education room having technology fixtures and equipment. Storage/prep room(s) may be combined and shared between more than one classroom.

**MARYLAND PUBLIC SCHOOL FACILITIES  
EDUCATIONAL SUFFICIENCY STANDARDS**

- E. Career and Technology Education (*COMAR 13A.04.02 and 13A.04.10*)
1. Elementary school. No requirement.
  2. Middle school. Space shall be provided for career-development and career-exploration activities. Each program lab or classroom space shall be no smaller than 650 net sf.
  3. High school. Career and technology education programs space shall be provided with no less than 4 net sf/student of the specialty program capacity of the school for career education. Each program lab or classroom space shall be no smaller than 650 net sf. Spaces for programs requiring licensing, certification, or accreditation by a state board or agency shall meet all applicable health and safety standards. Cosmetology and barber programs shall comply with the sanitation requirements of the State Board of Cosmetologists and the State Board of Barbers, respectively.
  4. Combination school. A combination school shall provide the elements of the grades served by Paragraphs (1), (2) and (3) above without duplication, but meeting the higher standards.
  5. Other school. Other schools shall provide the elements above necessary to meet the educational requirements of the specific programs and capacity of the schools.

IX. SCHOOL LIBRARY/MEDIA CENTER. (*COMAR 13A.05.04*) A school facility shall have a unified school library/media program for the use of all students which shall include an organized and centrally managed collection of instructional materials and technologies and direct instruction. Provide space for collections, reference, circulation, instruction, workroom for staff, and storage.

- A. Elementary school. The area for stacks and seating space shall be at least 3 net sf/student of the planned school program capacity. The instructional space shall not be smaller than the average classroom at the facility. In addition, office/workroom space and secure storage shall be provided.
- B. Middle or high school. The area for stacks and seating shall be at least 3 net sf/student of the planned school program capacity. The space shall not be smaller than the average classroom at the facility. In addition, office/workroom space and secure storage shall be provided.
- C. Combination school. Provide the elements of the grades set out in Paragraphs (A) and (B) above without duplication, but meeting the higher standards.

**MARYLAND PUBLIC SCHOOL FACILITIES  
EDUCATIONAL SUFFICIENCY STANDARDS**

D. Other school. Other schools shall provide the elements above necessary to meet the educational requirements of the specific programs and capacity of the schools.

X. PHYSICAL EDUCATION. *(COMAR 13A.01.02.05, 13A.04.13, and 13A.06.04)*

A. General requirements. Each school shall provide an instructional program in physical education each year for all students in grades PK-8. Each school shall offer a physical-education program in grades 9–12 which shall enable students to meet graduation requirements and to select physical education electives. The following minimum spaces are required: gymnasium, teacher office or planning area, equipment storage, and outdoor instructional playing field.

1. Elementary school. Provide a gymnasium with at least 2,200 net sf. This space may have multi-purpose use in accommodating other educational program activities such as art program performances.
2. Middle school. Provide a gymnasium with a minimum of 5,200 net sf plus an additional 4 net sf times 40% of the enrollment of the school devoted to bleacher seating.
3. High school. Provide a gymnasium with at least 6,500 net sf plus an additional 4 net sf times 40% of the enrollment of the school devoted to bleacher seating..
4. Combination school. Provide the elements of the grades served by Paragraphs (1), (2) and (3) above without duplication, but meeting the higher net sf standards.
5. Other school. Other schools shall provide the elements above necessary to meet the educational requirements of the specific programs and capacity of the schools.

B. Additional physical education requirements in addition to space requirements in Subsection A:

1. Elementary school. One office shall be provided. Separate physical education equipment storage shall be provided.
2. Middle school. One office shall be provided. Separate physical education equipment storage space shall be provided.
3. High school. Two dressing rooms shall be provided, with lockers, showers and restroom fixtures. Two offices shall be provided. Separate physical education equipment storage space shall be provided.
4. Combination school. A combination school shall provide the elements of the grades served by Paragraphs (1), (2) and (3) above without duplication, but meeting the higher standards.

**MARYLAND PUBLIC SCHOOL FACILITIES  
EDUCATIONAL SUFFICIENCY STANDARDS**

5. Other school. Other schools shall provide the elements above necessary to meet the educational requirements of the specific programs and capacity of the schools.

**XI. FOOD SERVICES (*COMAR 13A.06.01*)**

- A. Dining. A school facility shall have a space to permit students to eat within the school outside of general classrooms. This space may have more than one function and may fulfill more than one sufficiency standards requirement. Schools are encouraged to provide sufficient lunch periods that are long enough to give all students enough time to be served and to eat their lunches. The dining area shall be sized to accommodate no less than one third of the planned school program capacity of the school. The dining area shall have no less than 15 net sf/seated student.
- B. A serving area shall be provided in addition to a dining area.
- C. Kitchen. A kitchen shall have a telephone, plumbing providing potable water, a sink suitable for use both in preparing food and washing utensils, and a separate hand-washing sink. Kitchen and equipment shall comply with either the food preparation kitchen or the serving kitchen standards defined as follows:
1. Food preparation kitchen. Provide at least the greater of 1) a minimum of 2 net sf/meal served during the single largest serving period or 2) no fewer than 2 sf per enrolled student eligible for free or reduced-price meals.
  2. Serving kitchen. Where food is not prepared, there shall be a minimum of 200 net sf.

**XII. OTHER FACILITY AREAS.**

- A. Administrative space. A school facility shall have space to be used for the administration of the school. The space shall consist of a minimum of 150 net sf, plus 1 net sf/student of the planned school program capacity.
- B. Faculty workroom/lounge. A school facility shall have workspace/lounge available to the faculty. This space is in addition to any workspace/lounge available to a teacher in or near a classroom. The space shall consist of 1 net sf/student of the planned school program capacity with no less than 150 net sf. The space may consist of more than one room and may have more than one function. This space shall include a break area with a sink.

**MARYLAND PUBLIC SCHOOL FACILITIES  
EDUCATIONAL SUFFICIENCY STANDARDS**

C. Health services. *(COMAR 13A.01.02.05 and 13A.05.05.10A)* A school facility shall have a dedicated health services space with areas for waiting, examination and treatment, resting, storage, and an accessible toilet room. There shall be a separate room for private consultations and for use as a health service professional's office. Provide lockable cabinets for medical records and medications and at least one sink in addition to the sink in the toilet room. All sinks must provide both hot and cold water. Provide a minimum of 500 net sf.

D. Pupil services. *(COMAR 13A.05.05)* A school shall provide a coordinated program of pupil services for all students which shall include, but not be limited to, school counseling, pupil personnel, school psychology, and health services. The school facility shall provide a minimum of 120 net sf for each discipline, except school health services, staffed with greater than a 0.5 full time professional.

XIII. GENERAL STORAGE (EXCLUDES LOCKERS, JANITORIAL, KITCHEN, GENERAL CLASSROOM, SPECIALTY CLASSROOMS, AND ADMINISTRATIVE STORAGE). For storage, at least 1 net sf/student of the planned school program capacity may be distributed in or throughout any type of room or space, but may not count toward required room square footages. General storage must be securable and include textbook storage.

XIV. MAINTENANCE AND JANITORIAL SPACE. Each school shall designate 0.5 net sf per student of the planned school program capacity for maintenance and janitorial space. Janitorial space shall include a janitorial sink.

XV. STANDARDS VARIANCE.

A. The IAC may grant a variance from any of the Sufficiency Standards if it determines that the intent of the standard can be met by the school system in an alternate manner or if a variance is required for appropriate programmatic needs as demonstrated by the school system. If the IAC grants the variance, the school system shall be deemed to have met the standard.

**MARYLAND PUBLIC SCHOOL FACILITIES  
EDUCATIONAL SUFFICIENCY STANDARDS**

B. The IAC's Facilities Planning Guide includes the appropriate Sufficiency Standard in each functional section defining design minimums, and the State maximum funding participation is included as the State Funding Participation Goals provided by the total gross square footage per student by enrollment level. Additional State funding above the Funding Participation Goals will be granted only pursuant to a project-specific variance granted by the IAC.

End of Standards