



THE INTERAGENCY COMMISSION
ON SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION

SPRING 2023 NEWSLETTER



Grantsville Elementary, Garrett County

Website Improvements

Four new features have been added to the IAC website:

- FY 2023 CIP [Amendment Tracker](#)
- [Interactive map](#) showing facility level Facility Condition Index (FCI) scores displaying the most recent Statewide Facilities Assessment data set published on March 7, 2023
- [Calendar](#) of dates to remember, which can be accessed from the homepage or the LEA Forms & Resources page
- Updated search function which now includes the contents of PDFs in search results

We hope you find these improvements helpful and are always happy to receive website suggestions!

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Add-On Funding for Net Zero Energy Success

Courtesy of the passage of HB 1290 in 2022, Local Education Agencies (LEAs) building Net Zero Energy (NZE) facilities will be eligible for a 5% increase to the State cost share in all IAC funding programs using the State-local cost share formula. This State cost share add-on percentage is designed to incentivize LEAs to design and build to NZE with little to no increase in *local* project budgets despite the increased *total* project budget that NZE could require.

The standard State cost share percentage is set for each LEA based on a number of financial factors and updated every July for the following fiscal year. Cost shares over time can be found on the IAC's website. After any eligible add-on funding is applied, the total State cost share of a project cannot exceed 100%.

Why choose Net Zero Energy for schools?

- Energy cost is the second largest school operation cost below salaries and consumes a significant portion of district operation budgets.
- Money saved on energy costs could be diverted toward other much needed school improvements including facilities maintenance and improvement.
- NZE schools offer opportunities to support and enhance the environmental literacy goals of a school district.
- Schools serve every member of the community, are highly visible, and can contribute to a culture of health and wellness for students and families.

Additional resources:

US Department of
Energy Better Buildings



New Building Institute
Getting to Zero in Schools



For this incentive, NZE is defined as a school facility that has onsite renewable energy that produces as much energy as is used by the school over the course of a year. There are three main components to success:

1

Designing to NZE, which can be done without significant costs or changes to existing design parameters.

2

Providing renewable energy, which in Maryland means photovoltaic panels on the roof or other onsite locations.

3

Operating to NZE, which takes long term dedication to procedures and policies that support the goal.

There are several reasons why Net Zero Energy schools in Maryland make sense:

- Due to the Maryland Green Building Council's High-Performance Building Standards, LEAs have been engaged in energy modeling and energy analysis for decades.
- State requirements already include the submission of energy life cycle costs analysis for LEAs to compare systems options for each major capital project.
- Ground source heat pump HVAC systems (commonly called geothermal) have become commonplace for LEAs throughout the state.
- Today's building standards and codes require high-performance building walls and roofs that already provided the needed insulation value to achieve NZE.
- Though not yet widely used, LEAs have started to develop standards that include Demand Controlled Ventilation (DCV) to deliver fresh air to spaces only as needed to maintain acceptable levels of CO₂, which can provide significant energy savings.

There are currently three operational NZE schools in Maryland:

Graceland Park/O'Donnell Heights PK-8
Baltimore City (2021)

Holabird Academy
Baltimore City (2021)

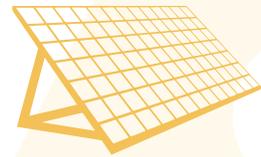
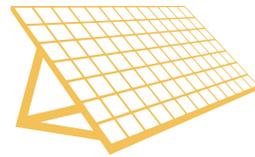
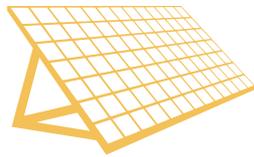
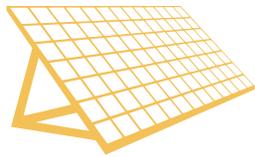
Wilde Lake Middle
Howard County (2017)



Built before the add-on funds were approved, additional funding for these three schools was provided by the Maryland Energy Administration's Net-Zero Schools Program. The Maryland Public Service Commission, which regulates Maryland's utilities, approved the use of \$9 million from a special Customer Investment Fund to enable the design and construction of NZE schools within the Baltimore Gas and Electric service territory.

A common feature of NZE schools is allowing the facility to work in tandem with programmatic offerings, through the use of a "living laboratory" with visible energy dashboards to build environmental literacy programs focusing on the energy efficiency and renewable energy utilized within the facility. This is helpful for educating the school population about the NZE efforts and getting buy-in from students, staff, and faculty. Without individuals committed to reducing energy consumption as well as proper maintenance procedures for NZE systems and trained staff to implement them, even the most ideal NZE design can fail to achieve the goal.

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So where can LEAs start?

- Choose the right project. Likely candidates are new construction projects under 150,000 gross square feet on sites that can support a ground source heat pump system.
- Become familiar with standards and energy usage. It's recommended that a facility should set a goal of below 25 Energy Use Index, or 25 kBTUs/sf/year for a NZE school.
- Engage all stakeholders in the effort. Since operating at NZE is likely the biggest challenge for most LEAs, engaging stakeholders to achieve consensus and buy-in is important early in the process.

LEAs can contact IAC staff to assist in exploring NZE goals and the resources available to support the effort.



Wilde Lake Middle in Howard County

In addition to +5% NZE add-on, State cost share add-ons are also possible for schools with top Maintenance Effectiveness Assessment (MEA) ratings and for schools in areas with high concentrations of poverty:

- +5% for projects in facilities with "Superior" or "Good" on the most recent MEA
- +5% for projects in facilities with "Adequate" on the most recent MEA if the average achieved lifespan of all systems is at least 120% of the expected useful lifespan (per the IAC's Statewide Facilities Assessment)
- +5% for projects in facilities with a Concentration of Poverty between 55% and 80%
- +10% for projects in facilities with a Concentration of Poverty 80% or greater

Incentives can stack up to 100% of the eligible project cost!

Legislative Update

The 2023 Legislative Session concluded at midnight on Monday, April 10. Just a few bills impacting the IAC passed in the General Assembly and are slated to be presented to Governor Wes Moore for his signature. Bill signings for all legislation passed during this Session take place during April and May, with the exact signing dates for the bills listed below still to be determined.

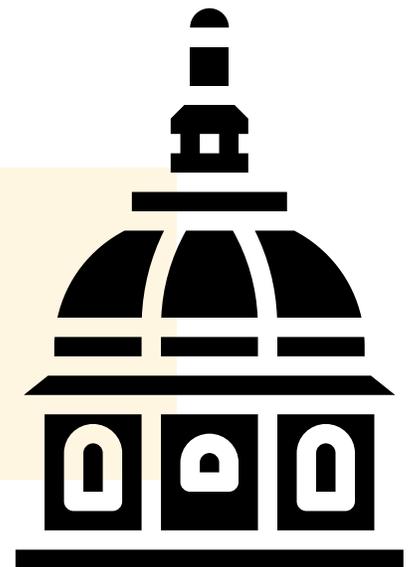
HB458, Public School Construction - Programs, Approvals, and Administration - Alterations, has passed in the legislature. If signed by Governor Moore, the IAC will be established as an independent unit of State government as of July 1, 2023 (currently the IAC operates as a unit of the Maryland State Department of Education). This bill also makes alterations to school construction approvals by the State Superintendent and Board of Public Works and to provisions related to a public-private partnership agreement in Prince George's County. HB458 can be read [on the General Assembly website](#).

[HB366/SB175](#), Maryland School for the Blind - Public School Construction Program - Eligibility, has also passed in the General Assembly. If signed by Governor Moore, the termination date on the eligibility of the Maryland School for the Blind for IAC funding (which is currently for FY 2013 to 2029 only) will be repealed.

Budget

The Operating ([HB200](#)) and Capital ([HB201](#)) FY 2024 budgets have also passed and been signed by Governor Moore.

To be notified of future action on these bills, sign up for email updates from the IAC.



Grantsville Elementary Spotlight

This January saw the reopening of Grantsville Elementary School in Garrett County after a comprehensive renovation project 43 years after its original opening in 1980. The 43 years of life saw a 1998 roof installation, a 14,222 square foot addition in 2009, a 2015 window replacement project, and an energy improvement project in 2016.

The renovation project tackled the need to close off a facility that was almost entirely open space, utilizing pods with two classes in each. The school had few walls to divide spaces and manage acoustics and security, relying instead on furniture to provide visual separation and break up spaces. These issues were resolved by creating individual classrooms as well as enclosing the media center; this enclosure required space adjustments to accommodate the upgrades, but also allowed for the construction of a small group instruction room and reworking the location of administrative services to become adjacent to the main entrance area of the building.



The renovation also upgraded flooring to vinyl tile and lighting to LED fixtures, updated finishes in corridors and student lockers and cubbies, completed asbestos abatement, and a full replacement of the roof with upgraded insulation. Energy efficiency was also taken into account in the designs for the mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems which emphasized the facility's function and program goals. A Variable Refrigerant Flow (VRF) HVAC system was used, with a combined VRF/Energy Recovery Ventilation system in administration to allow for isolated operation of the administration area during the summer. New direct digital controls were integrated with the existing building management system with high priority on safety, security, easy maintenance, and working clearances.

Without standalone swing space, student relocation was used during the project, with the elementary school students temporarily relocated to Northern Middle.

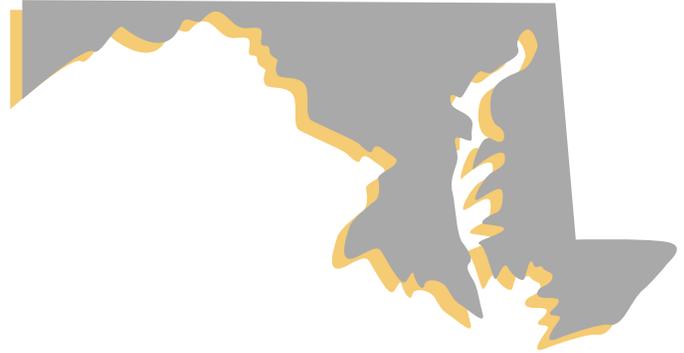
A total budget of \$6.5 million accomplished this project, which was procured through intergovernmental cooperative agreements.

Welcome to New IAC Members and Staff!

The change of administration in Annapolis has led two two new members joining the IAC. We welcome Secretary of the Department of General Services **Atif Chaudhry** and Secretary of the Department of Planning **Rebecca Flora** to the Commission! We also eagerly await Governor Wes Moore's appointment of another member to the Commission and congratulate long time IAC Member **Linda Eberhart** on her confirmation as IAC Vice-chair.

We are happy to introduce several [new staff](#) who recently joined the IAC team. Please continue to use iac.pscp@maryland.gov for submissions to ensure prompt routing to the appropriate staff member.

David Bailey, Swing Assessor
Kenneth Johnson, Lead Facilities Assessor
Daniel McBee, Facilities Assessor
Diego Mora, Facilities Assessor
Soulihe Nida, Facilities Assessor
Popi Paragios, Finance Administrator
Lisa Vaughn, Capital Projects Manager
Sean Vorsteg, Capital Projects Manager
Melissa Wilfong, Capital Projects Supervisor



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IAC Job Openings

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Dates to Remember

May 31, 2023

FY 2022 CIP - Deadline for BOE Contract
Approval

June 8, 2023 9:00am

IAC Meeting, Virtual

June 30, 2023

FY 2023 Aging Schools Program - Deadline for
Projects to be Under Contract

July 1, 2023

Educational Facilities Master Plans Due