



Meeting Minutes – October 9, 2025

Call to Order:

Chair Edward Kasemeyer called the video-conference meeting of the Interagency Commission on School Construction to order at 9:00 a.m.

Members in Attendance:

Edward Kasemeyer, Appointee of the President of the Senate, Chair
Linda Eberhart, Appointee of the Speaker of the House, Vice-chair
Secretary Atif Chaudhry, Maryland Department of General Services
Michael Darenberg, Appointee of the Governor
Chuck Boyd as designee for Secretary Rebecca Flora, Maryland Department of Planning
Gloria Lawlah, Appointee of the President of the Senate
Krishnanda Tallur as designee for Dr. Carey M. Wright, State Superintendent of Schools

Members Not in Attendance:

None.

Revisions to the Agenda:

Executive Director Donahue noted changes to the motions in Items 5 and 9, and noted that the presenters for Items 5, 8, and 9 were different from those noted on the published agenda.

Public Comment:

None.

IAC Correspondence:

None.

1. Executive Director's Report – **[Informational Only]**

Executive Director Donahue gave a brief report to the commission which included updates on several topics. He first noted that neither Allegany County Public Schools nor Washington County Public Schools are planning to request emergency funding for emergency restoration projects mentioned at prior meetings. Additionally, he stated that he and IAC Chair Edward Kasemeyer presented information about school-construction needs statewide to Senate President Ferguson. Executive Director Donahue noted that he has also requested time with Speaker Jones to discuss the same topic, and that he will be presenting the updated summary of school construction needs to the Capital Debt Affordability Committee (CDAC). He lastly noted that Agenda Item 3 addresses the rising costs of school construction, and that continuing to identify high-needs facilities and projects is essential to help determine how much of the work can be funded.

2. Consent Agenda – **[Motion Carried]**

Upon a motion by Mr. Darenberg, seconded by Vice-chair Eberhart, the IAC voted unanimously to approve the consent agenda and the motions contained therein.

a. **September 11, 2025 Meeting Minutes**

To approve the draft September 11, 2025 IAC Meeting Minutes, as presented.

b. **Contract Awards**

To approve contract procurements and project reversions as presented.

c. **Revisions to Previously Approved Contracts**

To approve the revisions to previously approved contract awards as presented to accurately reflect the adjustments to the State and local participation in the contract amounts, reversions of funds, and/or corrections to project allocation information.

d. **Project Closeout**

To approve the final State project costs as presented and to revert \$149,827.77 to the Statewide reserve account.

e. **Cancellation of Contract Awards – Anne Arundel County Public Schools**

To approve the cancellation of the contract awards to Grounded Electrical Construction for electrical work for the Anne Arundel County Public Schools (AACPS) Oak Hill Elementary (PSC L02F0107) and Central Elementary (PSC L02F117) electrical projects, totaling \$540,850 and \$676,820, respectively.

f. **Reversion of FY 2024 Capital Improvement Program Funding – Prince George’s County Public Schools – William S. Schmidt Outdoor Education Center (PSC L16F199) Replacement Project**

To amend the prior action taken at the September 11, 2025 IAC Meeting to include the reversion of \$2,488,000 of FY 2024 Capital Improvement Program (CIP) funding prior to the establishment of a revised Maximum State Award (MSA) of \$24,542,000 and the revised FY 2024 CIP funding award of \$21,525,000 for the William S. Schmidt Outdoor Education Center (PSC L16F199) replacement project.

g. **FY 2024 Capital Improvement Program Amendments – Howard County Public School System**

To amend the FY 2024 Capital Improvement Program (CIP) to accurately reflect approved project scopes for nine HVAC-related Howard County Public School System projects by changing the project titles and descriptions as presented.

h. **Property Transfer – Baltimore City Public Schools – Edgewood PK-5 #067 (PSC L30F262)**

To approve the transfer of 3.9 acres at 1900 Edgewood St. Baltimore MD 21216 in Baltimore City from the Baltimore City Board of Education to the Baltimore City Council, contingent upon receipt of a signed Property Transfer Agreement. Baltimore City shall obtain approval of the IAC before transferring any right, title, or interest to any portion of the property.

i. **Land Only Property Transfer – Frederick County Public Schools – Galyn Manor Property**

To approve the transfer of 7.53 acres at Galyn Drive, Brunswick MD 21758 from the Frederick County Board of Education (BOE) to the Frederick County Council. Frederick County shall obtain approval of the IAC before transferring any right, title, or interest to any portion of the property.

3. Informational Only – School Construction Cost Inflation – **[Informational Only]**

Executive Director Donahue presented data on increases in school construction costs in Maryland as compared with general construction costs nationally and general and local consumer prices via the U.S. Department of Labor’s Consumer Price Indices. He stated that State appropriations fluctuated between \$100 million and \$700 million between 1970 and 2022, with 2022 bringing a boost of funding due to the Built to Learn (BTL) program. He stated that with the increase in the cost per square foot of construction, both nationally and in Maryland, has resulted in an increase in school construction costs

from \$139 in 2003 to a projected \$431 in 2026, purchasing power has been significantly reduced, and has resulted in LEAs being able to execute less than half the amount of school construction projects compared to 20 years ago with the same budgets. He noted that needed work that the LEAs cannot afford accumulates into a backlog and has driven a steady decline in condition, and that market indicators currently visible show that school construction costs will continue to rise faster than general inflation; school districts and the State must work together to identify strategies to achieve and maintain educational sufficiency of school facilities.

Mr. Darenberg asked if IAC policies had an impact on the cost of construction. Executive Director Donahue stated that while the IAC's policies don't have as much of a direct impact as things such as market forces, demand, inflation, and now tariffs, non-IAC policies, such as environmental policies, can add additional cost. He stated that delivering education also costs more now than it has in previous years, and that the IAC has tried not to add to costs, such as being more conservative when setting the IAC's cost per square foot. Mr. Darenberg followed up to ask if net-zero carbon goals and policies are adding cost to construction. Executive Director Donahue stated that while it may add some cost, it's not a significant amount, and the cost of making a school net-zero that's already being renewed or rebuilt has gone down significantly. Mr. Darenberg lastly asked if there is a singular State policy that impacts the cost of school construction. Executive Director Donahue stated that the overall cost increase is due to multiple factors, including both policies and various market forces.

Vice-chair Eberhart asked if the addition of Pre-K classrooms has caused some of the significant increase in the past few years. Executive Director Donahue stated that they have not.

4. Fiscal Year 2025 Annual Report – [Motion Carried]

Administrative Services Manager Hannah Sturm presented the IAC's FY 2025 Annual Report, stating that content within the report includes photos and information on ten new school facilities opened during FY 2025, the specific features of community schools, an overview of facility condition data, and the timeline of a school construction project from planning to construction.

Chair Kasemeyer, Mr. Tallur, and Mr. Darenberg all thanked IAC staff, and remarked on the photos and engaging content contained within the Annual Report.

Upon a motion made by Vice-chair Eberhart, seconded by Mr. Darenberg, the IAC voted unanimously to approve the final draft of the comprehensive IAC Fiscal Year 2025 Annual Report, pending non-substantive edits by staff.

5. FY 2026 School Safety Grant Program Applications – Eligibility of Projects in Schools Scheduled for Replacement – [Motion Carried]

Executive Director Donahue presented a policy matter for discussion that dealt with when School Safety Grant Program (SSGP) projects could be funded in schools planned to be replaced. Executive Director Donahue stated that in reviewing LEA funding requests, IAC staff identified eight funding requests for projects in six school facilities that are scheduled to be replaced in the next two to four years. He stated that while there is no law or regulation explicitly prohibiting the IAC from granting SSGP funds to these schools, the IAC has historically held the position that funds should not be expended on systems that are planned to be replaced prior to the end of, or majority of, their useful life. Executive Director Donahue stated that in this funding cycle, requests of this type add up to nearly \$250,000, and that staff determined this matter should be brought to the Commission due to the

increasing school facility needs and increased scarcity of State resources. He proposed the below documented motion.

Chair Kasemeyer stated while no children should be put at risk due to safety concerns, Executive Director Donahue had discussed the existing policy with the Chair, and that permitting these projects to move forward with State funding, while still factoring in the funding those projects received as a debit on future replacement projects seemed like the best solution. Mr. Darenberg agreed, stating that this was a smart solution for safety and fiscal responsibility, and put best practices in place. Vice-chair Eberhart also agreed with the decision, and stated that school security is a high priority, and that this policy would be good for both today and in the future.

Upon a motion made by Mr. Boyd, seconded by Mr. Darenberg, the IAC voted unanimously to amend the IAC's Administrative Procedures Guide (APG) and COMAR to state that the IAC shall reduce the MSA for a project to replace or renew an existing facility by the cost of the awards made through the School Safety Grant Program (SSGP) to that facility within the five fiscal years prior to the fiscal year in which the IAC approves the first construction funding for the project.

6. FY 2026 Capital Improvement Program Rescission – Queen Anne's County Public Schools – Kennard Elementary (PSC L17F012) HVAC Project – [Motion Carried]

Capital Projects Manager Lisa Vaughn presented a request from Queen Anne's County Public Schools (QACPS) to cancel and rescind funding under the FY 2026 Capital Improvement Program (CIP) for the Kennard Elementary (PSC L17F012) HVAC project. Ms. Vaughn stated that the LEA had a scope study performed for the project, which revealed that additional work would be required to complete the full replacement of the HVAC system, resulting in a higher associated cost. Due to this higher cost, Ms. Vaughn stated that the LEA would instead be requesting the project in a future CIP.

Upon a motion made by Secretary Chaudhry, seconded by Vice-chair Eberhart, the IAC voted unanimously to cancel and rescind the FY 2026 Capital Improvement Program (CIP) funding for the Queen Anne's County Public Schools (QACPS) Kennard Elementary (PSC L17F012) HVAC project totalling \$1,925,000, and transfer the rescinded funds to the LEA's Reserve Fund Account.

7. Disposal of State-Owned Relocatable Units and Funding for Demolition – Calvert County Public Schools – [Motion Carried]

Ms. Vaughn also presented a request from Calvert County Public Schools for approval and funding to demolish four State-owned relocatable units. Ms. Vaughn stated that all four units were built over 35 years ago, and have reached the end of their useful life. She stated that the LEA is currently performing a replacement project at the same school, and has requested a quote for demolition of the units, which was quoted as \$24,500 for all four. Funding of demolition at the 61% State cost share would result in the State paying \$14,945 for the demolition.

Mr. Darenberg stated that due to the significant cost, age, and sole use by LEAs for substantial periods of time, resulting in the units not being used temporarily by LEAs, the State should pursue selling units directly to the LEAs, and should no longer be responsible for the funding of demolition. Executive Director Donahue stated that Mr. Darenberg is correct that the State-owned fleet is quite old, and is past its useful lifespan, resulting in a cost liability for the State. However, he added that the relocatable units are owned by the Maryland Department of General Services (DGS), and determining their future ownership is a responsibility of DGS. He also stated that historically, the IAC has provided partial

funding for the demolition based upon the State-cost share formula that LEAs have used for other construction projects.

Secretary Chaudhry stated that DGS is open to discussion about disposition procedures and costs as these units approach or exceed their useful lifespans; noting that the State has traditionally contributed to some degree to disposition costs for State-purchased structures.

Chair Kasemeyer asked that Executive Director Donahue and Secretary Chaudhry prepare recommendations for the next IAC meeting regarding State-owned relocatable current inventory and uses as well as disposal procedures, including how a change to State contributions towards disposal could impact LEA procedures and actions.

Upon a motion made by Vice-chair Eberhart, seconded by Secretary Chaudhry, the IAC heard the motion to approve, contingent upon the approval of the disposal of the units by the Department of General Services, the disposal of State-Owned Relocatable Units #43718, 43720, 44062 and 533-4 stationed at Northern Middle School (PSC L04F006) in Calvert County for the purposes of demolition; and, to provide demolition funding totaling \$14,945 from the Statewide Relocatable Repair Fund, a subset of the Statewide reserves. The motion was passed, with all members voting in the affirmative except Mr. Darenberg, who voted in the negative.

8. FY 2026 Nonpublic Aging Schools Program Administrative Procedures Guide – [Motion Carried]

Myron Mason, Administrator for the Office of School Facilities, MSDE, presented the Administrative Procedures Guide (APG) for the Senator James E. “Ed” Degrange Nonpublic Aging Schools Program. Mr. Mason indicated that small changes have been made to reflect any new changes in policy and to provide updated information about the program’s current fiscal year and steps to apply and request reimbursement through the program.

Upon a motion made by Secretary Chaudhry, seconded by Mr. Boyd, the IAC voted unanimously to approve the Administrative Procedures Guide (APG) for the Nonpublic Aging Schools Program (NASP) for FY 2026; to authorize the Executive Director of the Maryland State Department of Education’s Office of School Facilities (MSDE OSF) to approve extensions for applicants and changes in the scope of approved projects until no later than June 30, 2028; and, to authorize IAC and MSDE OSF staff to make non-substantive revisions as needed.

9. Executive Director Authority to Approve Schedule Extensions for the Aging Schools Program, Healthy School Facility Fund, and School Safety Grant Program – [Motion Carried]

Funding Programs Manager Arabia Davis presented an Item which would authorize the Executive Director of the IAC to approve LEA requested extensions to the Aging Schools Program, Healthy School Facility Fund, and School Safety Grant Program deadlines. Ms. Davis stated that due to LEA staffing constraints and unpredictability in the construction times, extensions are becoming more frequently requested, and are more often time-sensitive. Allowing the Executive Director to approve these revisions on a case-by-case basis would ensure no additional slow-downs in projects.

Upon a motion made by Secretary Chaudhry, seconded by Vice-chair Eberhart, the IAC voted unanimously to authorize the Executive Director to approve schedule extensions for the healthy School Facility Fund (HSFF), Aging Schools Program (ASP), and School Safety Grant Program (SSGP) on a case-by-case basis, and to direct the Executive Director to report any Extensions granted to the IAC within 45 days.



Announcements:

None.

Adjournment:

Upon a motion by Mr. Boyd, seconded by Mr. Darenberg, the IAC voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 9:50 am.