



Meeting Minutes – July 16, 2026

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
Manish Kothari, Appointee of the Governor
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:

None.

Public Comment:

Antoinette Murray with the Mandala School gave public comment regarding the reimbursement process of the Nonpublic Aging Schools Program, requesting funding be delivered directly to vendors as multiple progress payments rather than as reimbursement.

IAC Correspondence:

None.

Agenda Items:

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

Executive Director Alex Donahue gave a report on several items of note. He first acknowledged the end of the fiscal year, and thanked IAC staff and partner staff at the Maryland State Department of Education, Department of General Services, and Department of Planning staff for their coordination and assistance.

He next stated that the strategic work of school districts and the IAC around planning complex, costly, and valuable portfolios is incredibly challenging, particularly considering many school districts are facing changing demographic factors, shifts in demand, continually aging facilities, increasing costs, challenges in staffing, and resource constraints at both the State and local levels. He added that the IAC will continue to support strategic efforts in part by sharing available data with school districts, and assisting counties in performing cost-benefit analyses required to identify the most advantageous

courses of action. He stated that he and other staff have been visiting and will continue to visit LEAs to discuss how best to achieve educationally sufficient and fiscally sustainable school facilities.

Lastly, Executive Director Donahue thanked members of the Commission for their commitment and constant support of the IAC's work, and remarked that their help has made strides toward improvements in both present and future school facilities.

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.

a. June 11, 2026 Meeting Minutes

To approve the draft June 11, 2026 IAC Meeting Minutes, as presented.

b. Contract Awards

To approve contract procurement as presented.

c. Executive Director Approvals of Extensions to Special Funding Programs – [Informational Only]

d. Cancellation of Contract Awards – Dorchester County Public Schools – South Dorchester PreK-8 (PSC L09F012) HVAC/Fire Safety

To approve the cancellation of the Dorchester County Public Schools (DCPS) FY 2024 Capital Improvement Program South Dorchester PreK-8 (PSC L09F012) HVAC/Fire Safety project contract awards to T&G Moving Company for \$24,801 and AIM Service, Incorporated for \$28,000.

e. Change of Educational Function – Baltimore City Public Schools – George McMechen Property (PSC L30F074) – [Informational Only]

f. Change in School Name – Anne Arundel County Public Schools – [Informational Only]

3. Revisions to FY 2026 Nonpublic Aging Schools Program Awards – [Motion Carried]

Krishnanda Tallur, Deputy Superintendent and Chief Operating Officer for the Maryland State Department of Education, presented an Item that revised the award amounts for the Nonpublic Aging Schools Program for FY 2026. Mr. Tallur stated that an unexpected technical issue that impacted seven applications occurred in January of 2026. Six of those applicants were able to resubmit applications, however, the seventh school, Good Shepherd Preschool, was unable to resubmit due to a communication error. This issue was discovered only after awards were granted in March 2026. Since the school submitted the application on time, and the error was not on their part, OSF has determined that the award calculation should include the application from this school. This in turn would adjust all prorated maximum award amounts to facilities receiving Nonpublic Aging Schools Grants for FY 2026.

Upon a motion made by Secretary Chaudhry seconded by Vice-chair Eberhart, the IAC voted to approve amendments to the FY 2026 Senator James E. "Ed" DeGrange Nonpublic Aging Schools Program project awards to 176 nonpublic schools as presented, totaling \$3,499,999.78. Mr. Tallur recused himself from voting on this Item. All other members voted in the affirmative.

4. FY 2028 Capital Improvement Program Target Allocations – [Motion Carried]

Funding Programs Manager Arabia Davis presented preliminary Capital Improvement Program target allocations for each LEA, for the purpose of assisting LEAs with the planning of future school construction projects. She stated that the targets are determined by statewide enrollments for each LEA, with adjustments for local county wealth. Ms. Davis stated that the targets are calculated with a minimum LEA allocation equal to at least 1% of the total base CIP funding, and that adjustments to

target allocations above the traditional calculations are being recommended for Cecil County, Kent County, and the Maryland School for the Blind in order to meet cash flow needs to keep projects within these three LEAs on track for completion. Additionally, a \$5 million reserve account for unseen project costs is also recommended. She noted that final CIP awards are contingent on project eligibility and the final capital budget for FY 2028.

Mr. Darenberg asked if the target allocations included P3 funding for Prince George's County Public Schools. Executive Director Donahue clarified that P3 funding is provided separately and is not included in the target allocations presented. Mr. Darenberg asked how much of an increase Frederick County saw as a result of enrollment growth and about the total funding for the Enrollment Growth and Relocatable Classrooms program. Deputy Director Cassandra Viscarra clarified that the funding allocations in this item do not include the enrollment growth related funding, but that the EGRC program is allocated a total of \$80 million in funding each year. Regional Planner Graham Twibell added that the target for Frederick County Public Schools under the CIP decreased by \$400,000 from last year, but that this may be due to funds held for specific projects.

Upon a motion made by Mr. Tallur, seconded by Secretary Chaudhry, the IAC voted unanimously to approve the FY 2028 Local Education Agency (LEA) CIP target allocations as presented.

5. 2027 Cost per Square Foot for School Construction – [Motion Carried]

Lead Capital Projects Manager Lisa Vaughn gave a presentation on the proposed cost per square foot increase for construction only for calendar year 2027. She stated that IAC staff were recommending a 4% increase to \$448 from last year's cost per square foot of \$431. Ms. Vaughn added that new construction projects that require site development receive an additional 19%, which would result in a total cost per square foot of \$533. She stated that staff arrived at this increase based on key industry sources and regional comparisons. She added that due to the IAC's ability to increase individual Maximum State Awards, staff are conservative with their recommended increase in an effort to avoid overfunding projects.

Mr. Darenberg asked if any LEAs were impacted by the Project Labor Agreements related to the Governor's Executive Order and stated that he believes other State contracts have been impacted by the cost increases. Executive Director Donahue stated that in some, but not many or all, jurisdictions PLAs have been adopted. He added that he doesn't believe this to be a significant factor across the State, as changes such as this take a significant amount of time to roll out across LEAs, and impacts may be delayed. Mr. Darenberg asked if it was cost-dependent, and if project costs were required to be over \$20 million. Executive Director Donahue stated that it is a negotiated agreement at the local level, and that local eligibility requirements are established. He also reiterated that there have not been enough use cases of PLAs to have an accurate average cost increase of projects.

Chair Kasemeyer asked about the source of the 19% figure for site development. Executive Director Donahue stated that the increase to 19% was made a few years ago due to an overall increase of site development costs, which varies between projects, but for which 19% serves as a good average benchmark.

Upon a motion made by Vice-chair Eberhart, seconded by Mr. Darenberg, the IAC voted unanimously to adopt the Calendar Year 2027 Statewide per-square-foot school construction cost of \$448 for building only.

6. Capital Improvement Program Instructions, Application Development Process, and FY 2028 Schedule — [Motion Carried]

Funding Programs Manager Arabia Davis and Capital Projects Director Melissa Wilfong presented revised Capital Improvement Program instructions and the proposed FY 2028 CIP cycle schedule for vote. Ms. Davis stated that as a result of the passage of the IAC's Departmental Bill SB 48, the 75% award stage has been replaced with three status reports provided to each LEA, followed by anticipated recommendations in February for the 90% CIP. Ms. Davis and Ms. Wilfong also gave a presentation on the new CIP Application Development Process in the IAC's Business Management System which replaces legacy excel based application forms.

Mr. Tallur asked how LEAs are being assisted in the rollout of this change, and if there will be technical review sessions. Ms. Wilfong stated that staff have discussed various means for LEA training, and that she anticipates both BMS support hours and hands-on meetings with each LEA to walk through the process. Executive Director Donahue added that a meeting has been scheduled for September with facility planners from all LEAs, and the agenda will include a discussion regarding their use of the process.

Mr. Darenberg asked how the use of the BMS will impact IAC staff. Executive Director Donahue stated that the BMS has made staff review more efficient because it supports prioritization and centralized information. He added that he believes that if every LEA has not yet experienced the same, they will in the coming months as they get more used to the system. Ms. Wilfong added that although this is a big change for both staff and LEAs, staff is proactively seeking out collaboration to prevent application submission issues and ensure greater accuracy.

Chair Kasemeyer clarified that staff have already met with three LEAs about the new process and asked when the remaining LEAs will be met with. Ms. Davis stated that all LEAs will be met with at the meeting scheduled for September; Ms. Wilfong stated that LEAs were made aware of these changes at the prior facility planner meeting in May and in routine monthly meetings with IAC staff. Additional meetings will be scheduled during August for one-on-one assistance with applications. Chair Kasemeyer asked if there will be any alternatives or extensions for LEAs with submission issues. Ms. Wilfong stated that if there are technical issues, submissions can be completed by staff on the LEA's behalf based on information they provide. Executive Director Donahue stated that the IAC requires requests to be submitted by the October deadline, followed by eight weeks for assistance with any issues before amendments are required to be submitted at the end of November.

Upon a motion made by Secretary Chaudhry, seconded by Mr. Darenberg, the IAC voted unanimously to approve the FY 2028 Capital Improvement Program (CIP) schedule and the revised CIP instructions as presented.

7. FY 2027 Nancy K. Kopp Public School Facilities Priority Fund Procedures — [Motion Carried]

Deputy Director Cassandra Viscarra presented the proposed procedures guide for the FY 2027 Nancy K. Kopp Public School Facilities Priority Fund, created by the Built to Learn Act. Ms. Viscarra stated that the fund will operate differently in FY 2027, due to statutory requirements specific to this fiscal year cycle. She also noted that the budget language for FY 2027 specified seven LEAs to receive \$69 million of the available funding, with the remaining one million to be competitive between the remaining LEAs; IAC staff anticipates the one million to be sufficient for only a single project.

Upon a motion made by Vice-Chair Eberhart seconded by Mr. Tallur, the IAC voted unanimously to establish the Administrative Procedures Guide (APG) for the FY 2027 Nancy K. Kopp Public School Facilities Priority Fund.

8. School Safety Grant Program Administrative Procedures Guide — [Motion Carried]

Ms. Viscarra presented the School Safety Grant Program Administrative procedures guide for use beginning in FY 2027. Ms. Viscarra stated that the procedures have been reformatted to be compliant with web accessibility guidelines and consistent with other IAC Program APGs. She also noted a few substantive changes, including LEA allocation amounts, the schedule, and changes to the design review process to be consistent with statutory requirements.

Chair Kasemeyer asked if the IAC and its staff have the relevant knowledge to evaluate these types of projects. Executive Director Donahue stated that since the IAC has had a number of years with the program, staff are very familiar with project types and are aware of the types of components school districts are looking to fund. He added that while the IAC staff are not the State's experts in school safety, due to the way the law is structured the IAC is responsible for the implementation of the program. Mr. Tallur added that some SSGP projects may have impact on the arrangement of student occupied spaces, which triggers MSDE review, and MSDE is in coordination with MCSS and are intending to release a facility guideline on security vestibules and school entry systems which should help with review as these projects come forward.

Vice-chair Eberhart asked whether there is any follow up on the reliability and funding of AI weapons detection systems after discussing it around a year ago. Executive Director Donahue stated that there has been no update recently from MCSS, and that their agency was responsible for doing a review of AI based weapons detection. He added that staff would follow up with the agency.

Upon a motion made by Mr. Darenberg, seconded by Mr. Kothari, the IAC voted unanimously to adopt the new School Safety Grant Program Procedures as presented for use beginning in FY 2027.

9. FY 2025 Capital Improvement Program Cancellation Request – Baltimore County Public Schools – New Northeast Area High School (PSC L03F225) — [Motion Carried]

Lead Capital Projects Manager Lisa Vaughn presented a request from Baltimore County Public Schools to cancel funding for the New Northeast Area High School Project. She stated that when funding was awarded, the specific location of the new high school was not yet known. BCPS has since determined that Overlea High School would be the project location but deferred the start of design and plan to request State funding in a future CIP year.

Upon a motion made by Mr. Darenberg, seconded by Vice-chair Eberhart, the IAC voted unanimously to rescind the FY 2025 Capital Improvement Program (CIP) award to the Baltimore County Public Schools (BCPS) Overlea High New project and to transfer the \$250,000 in project development and design services funding to the LEA Reserve Fund Account.

10. FY 2025 Capital Improvement Program Project Cancellation Request – Allegany County Public Schools – Flintstone Elementary (PSC L01F020) Underground Storage Tank — [Deferred]

Ms. Vaughn presented a request from Allegany Public Schools to cancel the FY 2025 CIP funding for the Flintstone Elementary School underground storage tank project. She stated that only one project bid was received and it came in significantly higher than estimated. ACPS informed IAC staff that they have decided to defer the project until it can be reevaluated and requested in a future CIP.

Mr. Darenberg asked what is stored in the tank, if there is risk of a leak, and if a leak could result in a significant clean up project at a later date. Executive Director Donahue stated that there is not currently a leak, nor a high risk of a leak that would pose environmental risks. He added that staff will provide additional information about the tank contents at the August meeting.

The Commission deferred further discussion on the item to the August 13, 2026 IAC meeting.

11. Final Action – COMAR 14.39.02 Revisions – Small County Cost Share Adjustment – [Motion Carried]

Policy Analyst Victoria Howard presented the Final Action on revisions to COMAR 14.39.02 that create the Small County Cost Share Adjustment and update cost shares for the 2028 and 2029 fiscal years, which were originally approved at the March 12, 2026 and April 9, 2026 meetings and published in the May 15, 2026 Maryland Register. She stated that the motion to approve the COMAR revisions was passed unanimously, the revisions were published in the Maryland Register for the required 30 days, and IAC staff received one public comment from Baltimore City Schools but made no revisions as a result of this public comment.

Upon a motion made by Mr. Tallur, seconded by Vice-chair Eberhart, the IAC voted unanimously to adopt the final COMAR revisions as published in the May 15, 2026 Maryland Register (Volume 53, Issue 10, Page 465).

12. Closed Session

Upon a motion made by Mr. Darenberg, seconded by Vice-chair Eberhart, the IAC voted unanimously to close the meeting for the purposes of discussing a personnel matter and for the IAC to consult with counsel to obtain legal advice at 10:14 am.

During the closed session no motions were made.

Announcements:

None.

Adjournment:

Upon a motion by Mr. Kothari, seconded by Vice-chair Eberhart, the IAC voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 11:11 am.