Meeting Minutes – September 10, 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
Secretary Rebecca Flora, Maryland Department of Planning
Gloria Lawlah, Appointee of the President of the Senate
Dr. Carey M. Wright, State Superintendent of Schools

Members Not in Attendance:
Manish Kothari, Appointee of the Governor

Revisions to the Agenda:
None.

Public Comment:
None.

IAC Correspondence:
None.

Agenda Items:

1. **Executive Director's Report** – [Informational Only]
   Executive Director Donahue gave a report consisting of three topics. First, he thanked the staff members of the IAC's Maintenance Effectiveness Assessment (MEA) team on their work on the MEA report and the assessments performed across the state over the past fiscal year. He noted that LEAs remediated all but 153 minor deficiencies and all major deficiencies, noting that this is a significant improvement over prior years. Next, he gave an update on the scope of facilities needs statewide. He cited numerous data giving evidence on the backlog of deferred capital maintenance and facilities renewal, and presented slides illustrating the significant number of HVAC and roof projects needed in the state, as well as needs for larger renewal projects in the state. The presented slides showed data indicating that four out of ten school facilities have a depleted condition of 60% or greater; in three out of ten school facilities, more than half of the major building systems have an observed remaining useful lifespan of 5 or fewer years, indicating these facilities are in need of significant capital maintenance, if not a facility renewal or replacement in the near term; 60% of all facilities have HVAC systems with an observed remaining useful lifespan of 5 or fewer years, 43% of all facilities (or 814 total) have roofs with observed remaining useful lifespans of 5 or fewer years, or 587 total facilities. He stated that the presented numbers demonstrate that there are a significant number of facilities

with deferred maintenance, in particular for roof and HVAC assets, but also that there is a larger need for full facility replacements and renewals and addressing multiple systems within each facility. Executive Director Donahue stated that in the coming year staff will continue to convey this severe need to the Governor, Department of Budget and Management, and fiscal committees, including providing a list of top-priority projects that must be completed to preserve functionality of LEA facilities. Finally, Executive Director Donahue commented on the joint effort undertaken by Baltimore City Schools and the Maryland Stadium Authority in identifying heating and air conditioning issues with recently built schools in Baltimore City. He stated that $19 million was appropriated from the Strategic Energy Investment Fund (SEIF) with the express purpose of improving failing HVAC systems in Baltimore City. While HVAC problems are being diagnosed by engineers and options are being identified for long term solutions, the top priority of the IAC is to prevent as many shutdowns of facilities as is possible in the coming two years, and this funding can support smart and quick repairs to these systems to prevent shutdowns. He finally added that procedures for the Baltimore City HVAC Repair Fund would be brought to the next IAC meeting for review and approval by the Commission.

Chair Kasemeyer asked whether there is sufficient staff capacity within the IAC to manage the additional workload if additional funding is appropriated. Executive Director Donahue stated that agency capacity is not sufficient, and that staff are overstretched as it is. He added that IAC staff are in the process of requesting additional staff positions from the Department of Budget and Management, and that additional staff capacity would be needed to deal effectively with any additional funding.

Mr. Darenberg asked whether the office physically has the space available for additional staff. Executive Director Donahue stated that yes, between hybrid work, shared desk spaces, and existing unused desks there is enough room for additional employees.

Secretary Flora asked for clarification on a slide shown by Executive Director Donahue that displayed information on current facilities in need of investment, asking whether the 434 or 32% of facilities that are in need of renewal or large capital maintenance projects includes the facilities needing HVAC and roof projects in two of the other percentages displayed. Executive Director Donahue responded affirmatively and said that the slide was intended to demonstrate that the need for systems replacement is greater than just HVAC and roof projects, but that buildings in their entirety are worn out and frequently need renewal or replacement. Secretary Flora asked whether a portion of the HVAC percentage are standalone HVAC needs and whether a portion were part of a larger need for renewal in a facility and if those are also on a six year time frame, similar to the HVAC systems. Executive Director Donahue confirmed that the HVAC number was made up of both standalone needs for HVAC and larger projects in some facilities, and that the five-year timeline is for HVAC but likely will not apply to all other building systems - stating that the lifespan for the structure of a building is likely longer and may have 10-15 years left, however, the HVAC system replacement would outlast the life of the building as a whole. He added that while previous spending was focused on capacity improvements, current spending on facilities is primarily allocated toward addressing condition issues. Secretary Flora asked whether the problem would need to be funded over the next ten years, and whether the amortization would occur over the next 10-20 years. Executive Director Donahue noted that the calculations weighing replacing a single system versus a building are complicated and hard to measure exactly, but that the amount associated with replacing all roofs that need to be replaced is in the $1 billion to $2 billion range. He stated that, while the cost associated with full replacement of school buildings is far higher, spending that amount on roofs would limit the ability to spend funding on needed major capital improvements; whereas, if full replacements or renewals were to occur, those roof and HVAC systems would be replaced as part of those projects. Secretary Flora

commented that, in regard to capacity projects versus condition projects, there is debate in some areas regarding which to focus on, and that the leveling of capacity systemwide is an interesting topic to discuss, as population distribution is not ideal, with significant growth in some areas and small or no growth in others. Executive Director Donahue stated that staff is working to advise districts on addressing both capacity and condition needs in an integrated way and the problems must be solved together.

Secretary Chaudhry added that, regarding staff capacity, the Department of General Services has had success using contractual staff during the initial establishment of new programs or funding, and that once established those staff were not always retained and that contractual positions like this may have more available funding down the road.

2. **Consent Agenda** – [Motion Carried]
   Upon a motion by Secretary Chaudhry, seconded by Krishna Tallur, the IAC voted unanimously to approve the consent agenda.
   a. **August 13, 2026 Meeting Minutes**
      To approve the draft August 13, 2026 IAC Meeting Minutes, as presented.
   b. **Contract Awards**
      To approve contract procurement 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. **Change of School Name – Washington County Public Schools – Salem Avenue Elementary (PSC L21F033) –** [Informational Only]

3. **FY 2026 Maintenance Effectiveness Assessment Annual Report** — [Motion Carried]
   Assessment and Maintenance Manager Scott Snyder, Lead Maintenance Assessor David Bailey, and Assessment and Maintenance Administrator Brooke Finneran presented the annual FY 2026 Maintenance Effectiveness Assessment Annual Report. The report covered how school buildings are rated for their maintenance effectiveness, the types of major and minor deficiencies, and the LEA and Statewide average scores for Maintenance Effectiveness.

   Mr. Darenberg asked whether IAC staff were currently conducting conferences or meetings with LEAs on maintenance best practices or whether staff plan to do so in the future, and whether this would assist in reducing the number of deferred maintenance items. Executive Director Donahue stated that IAC staff are already doing so, and that LEA staff are familiar with the maintenance needs of facilities. He added that he is currently exploring meetings with local Boards of Education and County budget decision-makers to have conversations about the budgetary need for funding these maintenance issues. Mr. Darenberg followed up by asking whether there is a Computerized Maintenance Management System (CMMS) that has been determined to be the most effective. Executive Director Donahue stated that there are several different kinds used by districts, and while some previous systems have not remained effective, some newer developments in the industry, including some systems now using AI, are showing development is moving in the right direction.

   Secretary Flora asked whether there was any correlation between areas most underfunded and behind schedule in maintenance and population growth in those areas, and whether a loss of population has resulted in a smaller tax base and less funding for this maintenance. Executive Director Donahue stated that staff has started looking into this information over the past year but currently don't have

enough granular data to perform calculations such as this. He stated that what we can see shows a difference between LEAs with similar condition levels, and that districts with high growth have worse conditions for the age of their facilities than those with slower growth. However, he added that there are other factors that impact condition outcomes, including how willing an LEA is to fund maintenance and operations and other factors. Secretary Flora asked whether there is a potential to require maintenance spending at the LEA level prior to significant condition deterioration, such as requiring a certain level of funding commitment. Executive Director Donahue stated that there is a model in Arkansas that requires a minimum of 9% of a school district's operating budget be allocated to facilities maintenance. He said that the program has proven to be so effective that many school districts in the state voluntarily increased their annual M&O spending to an average of 11%. He added that at least one member of the Maryland General Assembly has been investigating the idea for consideration as a policy proposal, and that we would support conversations around that topic, but that it's still very early in the process.

Chair Kasemeyer agreed with Secretary Flora and stated that unfortunately in many districts there is not enough funding for effective maintenance programs. He asked if there are counties that have appropriate resources but choose not to fund maintenance at an adequate level. Executive Director Donahue stated that there are some counties achieving better outcomes than others - but that he would caution against overgeneralizing when looking at a single or a few factors as to why an LEA may be seeing facility condition deteriorate, as there are many factors as to why a building condition may be what it is.

Vice-chair Eberhart asked whether county wealth was a significant factor in maintenance levels for facilities. Executive Director Donahue stated that yes, this was a notable factor. Vice-chair Eberhart added that balancing the choice of maintenance spending versus assisting with other funding to alleviate poverty levels is likely to be challenging for school boards.

Upon a motion made by Secretary Chaudhry seconded by Mr. Darenberg, the IAC voted unanimously to approve the final draft of the FY 2026 report, Maintenance of Maryland's Public School Buildings, dated October 1, 2026, pending non-substantive edits by staff.

4. **Pass-Through Grant Funding Amendment – Baltimore County Public Schools** — [Motion Carried]
Field Operations Administrator LaQuay Fleming presented a request from Baltimore County Public Schools to realign Pass-Through Grant Funding totaling $10 million. She stated that BCPS requested that $4 million in funding originally awarded to the Dundalk High School addition project and $6 million in funding for the Lansdowne High School replacement project be rescinded for the purpose of awarding an additional $10 million to the Pine Grove Middle School renovation/addition project, resulting in a new total award of $11 million for the project.

   Upon a motion made by Vice-chair Eberhart, seconded by Secretary Chaudhry, the IAC voted unanimously to realign a total of $10 million of Pass-Through Grant funding, including $4 million awarded to the Baltimore County Public Schools (BCPS) addition project at Dundalk High School (PSC L03F140) and $6 million awarded to the BCPS replacement project at Lansdowne High School (PSC L03F149) to the BCPS Pine Grove Middle School (PSC L03F001) renovation/addition project, for a new total award of $11 million.

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Announcements:

None.

Adjournment:

Upon a motion by Vice-chair Eberhart, seconded by Secretary Flora, the IAC voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 9:48 am.