



Stephanie Rawlings-Blake  
Mayor

## PLANNING COMMISSION

Wilbur E. "Bill" Cunningham, Chairman

### STAFF REPORT



Thomas J. Stosur  
Director

June 25, 2015

**REQUEST:** City Schools' 2015 Comprehensive Educational Facilities Master Plan (CEFMP)

**RECOMMENDATION:** Approval with one recommendation

**STAFF:** K. Reni Lawal

**PETITIONER:** Baltimore City Public School System (BCPS)

#### BACKGROUND/HISTORY

The Regulations for the Administration of the Public School Construction Program (under the Maryland State Department of Education, or MSDE) require that BCPS annually submit an updated and detailed Educational Facilities Master Plan (EFMP).

Maryland's school districts are expected to have clearly established master plans for their facilities, and the annual EFMP submittal is the means for updating or reporting any changes to the existing master plans.

Traditionally, BCPS has submitted an EFMP that consisted of updating an existing master plan annually; however, with the approval of the 10-year, 21<sup>st</sup> Century Building Plan in 2013, City Schools submitted a *Comprehensive Educational Facilities Master Plan*, or CEFMP, to provide a long range perspective and a set of goals to be realized over the next five to ten years. The 21<sup>st</sup> Century Building Plan's approval has expanded the scope of City Schools' portfolio review. It is more robust and its recommendations are more far-reaching than before. New systems have been developed to capture expansive data from and about schools. This has allowed the portfolio review to align with other reform efforts.

The Building Plan calls for the renovation of 87 buildings, the renovation or replacement of 49 buildings, and vacating of 26 buildings. Currently, BCPS has 162 campuses that house 159 programs. The current capacity of the building portfolio is 98,450 students. Enrollment as of September 30, 2014 was 77,420 for students in grades K-12 in City Schools' buildings. An additional 7,556 students are housed in non-City Schools' buildings.

#### CONFORMITY TO PLANS

This CEFMP is consistent with LIVE EARN PLAY LEARN; the City's adopted Comprehensive Master Plan, in particular, LEARN Goal 1: Improve Public Schools and Libraries, and Goal 3: Encourage a Culture of Learning by Enhancing Educational and Vocational Opportunities for all Baltimoreans. The CEFMP is specifically referenced in the City's Comprehensive Master Plan under Goal 1, Objective 1: Adopt Facilities Master Plan to Better Utilize School Facilities.

## ANALYSIS

The Planning Commission is required to review the Comprehensive Educational Facilities Master Plan (CEFMP) and then, on an annual basis, the updates to that plan. This plan is a requirement of the State of Maryland Interagency Committee on Public School Construction (IAC).

The purpose of the CEFMP is to identify current policies, programs and community changes; serve as a blueprint to guide BCPS decisions on facilities usage and investments; assist BCPS Departments with programmatic changes as they relate to facilities; and identify priority projects for the next five years of the Capital Improvement Program (CIP).

This plan has six sections. They include: 1- District-wide and Facility Planning Goals and Objectives; 2- Community Analysis, 3- Enrollments and Enrollment Projections, 4- Capacity Analysis and Facility Utilization; 5- Facility Condition Analysis; and 6- Policies and Guidance. It also reports on the changes to City Schools' programs and facilities that will be implemented in School Year 2015-2016, and presents the road map, or directions, for future decision-making that will impact school facilities.

The CEFMP reflects Board-approved amendments to City Schools' 10-year 21<sup>st</sup> Century Building Plan, programmatic changes due to alignment with Building Plan amendments and demographic changes, and other annual data updates. The CEFMP also incorporates additional components outlined in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Building Plan MOU among BCPS, Baltimore City, Maryland Stadium Authority, and the Interagency Committee on School Construction (IAC). The two main components included in this year's CEFMP, as required by the MOU, are the System-wide *Facility Utilization Report* and elements of the *Comprehensive Maintenance Plan*.

### *Facility Utilization Report*

A central goal of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Building Plan is to increase the average utilization rate of city school buildings. The utilization rate is calculated by dividing enrollment by building capacity. For new replacement schools or major renovations, a utilization target of 85% is optimal. The current utilization rate is 79%, up 1% from last year. This is relatively low in comparison with other Maryland jurisdictions, but average in comparison to other urban school districts. The lowest utilization rate is among middle, middle-high, and special education schools which have utilization rates of 38%, 60% and 59% respectively. BCPS anticipates meeting its intermediate utilization target of 80% in SY15-16 through the closure of several school buildings as mandated by the MOU.

### *Comprehensive Maintenance Plan*

The BCPS Comprehensive Maintenance Plan (CMP) outlines the process for providing adequately maintained education facilities, and identifies goals and objectives of the maintenance program. These goals include maintaining a healthy, safe, and positive learning environment; maximizing the useful life of the buildings; reducing emergency school closings; operating cost-effectively with a focus on energy conservation; decreasing and preventing vandalism, accidents, fires and other safety and security issues, and leveraging the CIP to reduce the backlog of deferred maintenance and perform life-cycle replacements of major building components. The Board of Commissioners approved additional funding of \$27 million over nine years for maintenance. This coupled with the closings of 26 buildings will result in more funds per square foot to complete preventative maintenance that is not able to be completed with current funding.

This document includes the requisite Required Elements based on City Schools' status as of School Year 2014-2015. It also reports on the changes to City Schools' programs and facilities that will be implemented in School Year 2015-2016. The changes underscore the commitment to reconfigure or close the low-performing schools, and review and increase capacity, if appropriate at the high-performing schools.

The following schools were approved for closure by the School Board Commissioners in December 2014 and are reflected in the building plan:

- Dr. Rayner Browne PK-8, *Program and Building Closure*
- Heritage High School, *Program Closure*
- Inner Harbor East Academy Charter PK-8, *Program Closure*
- Langston Hughes PK-5, *Program & Building Closure\**
- Northeast Middle, *Program Closure*
- W.E.B. Dubois High, *Program Closure*

The following charter or conversion schools received contract extensions:

- Baltimore Leadership School for Young Women M/HS, *3 years*
- Calverton PK-8, *3 years*
- City Neighbors HS, *3 years*
- Independence Local Charter, *3 years*
- SW Baltimore Charter K-8, *3 years*
- Green Street Academy TS, *5 years*
- Tunbridge Public Charter PK-8, *5 years*
- Wolfe Street Academy Conversion Charter ES, *5 years*

The School Board previously approved the following new charter or conversion schools set to open in SY15-16:

- Baltimore Collegiate School for Boys (Grades 4-8)
- Banneker Blake Academy for Arts and Sciences (Grades 6-8)
- Bard Early College High School Baltimore (Grades 9-12)
- Lillie Mae Carroll Jackson School (Grades 5-8)

## **RECOMMENDATION**

The Department of Planning recommends that BCPS conduct a comprehensive review of school zone lines for PK- 5th grade schools. Such an evaluation has not been done for over twenty years and the City has changed dramatically in that time. With the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Building Plan calling for the closure of some elementary schools, students will, in some cases, have to travel further than usual to get to a newly renovated school. Our elementary schools are located with the intention of being neighborhood-based and walkable; however, the district-wide percentage of out of zone K-5th graders is 30% and is dramatically higher in the Southeast and Northeast sectors of the City. As our City population has changed and shifted it becomes necessary to review the school zone lines. Elementary schools can and should be the anchor of a residential community and therefore the zone lines need to be based on population and walkability.

Notification: Baltimore City Public Schools, the Mayor's Office, and partners of the INSPIRE school neighborhood planning program have been notified of this action.



**Thomas J. Stosur**  
**Director**