

Kent County Public Schools

Educational Facilities Master Plan

2024

Kent County Board of Education

5608 Boundary Avenue
Rock Hall, MD 21661

July 1, 2024

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Educational Facilities Master Plan (EFMP) is a long-range planning document that allows the Board of Education of Kent County to identify and prioritize the capital improvements that are required to maintain effective and efficient educational facilities. Local school systems in Maryland are required to prepare an EFMP annually by the regulations of the Interagency Commission on School Construction (the IAC, formerly the Interagency Committee on School Construction). The capital needs identified in an EFMP are typically divided into three areas to support the mission of the board of education: projects to improve the performance of buildings in order to provide a safe and healthful environment for instruction; projects to improve the educational adequacy of buildings and spaces; and projects to increase the capacity of facilities so that they can house students without overcrowding.

The 2024 EFMP will provide justification for the funding requests that will be submitted to the IAC and to the County Government in fiscal year 2026 in the Capital Improvement Program (CIP), the Healthy School Facility Fund (HSFF), the Aging Schools Program (ASP) program, and a number of other programs. At this writing, planning approval has been granted by the IAC in addition to the requested design funding from the IAC as well as the Board of County Commissioners for Kent County. The urgency of this last project, the rationale for its submission, and the process that has been used to develop the scope and the educational specification, are described in detail in Part III. At this writing, the level of funding anticipated to be provided by the State and the Board of County Commissioners is not sufficient to allow the project to proceed to construction.

Kent County Public School enrollment has weathered the shock of the pandemic and an overall long-term decline in school enrollment, which mirrors the decline in the total population of the county itself. Local and state forecasts show an increase in the elementary school population in the coming decade. The expansion of PreK to three-year olds may lead to a modest increase to the total school enrollment. A new Kent County Middle School facility may encourage students to remain in the public school system, further enhancing enrollment trends. The present forecast anticipates a modest 2% increase in enrollment over the next decade (see Figure ES-1 below).

The pandemic showed that the need for school facilities will continue and that Kent County Public Schools is well-positioned to sustain both in-person classroom instruction and online instruction. The 1.76% decrease of total enrollment seen in the past year does not imply that KCPS will have excess capacity in the future. It represents a leveling of the extreme decline of 5.77% that was experienced between the fall of 2019 and the fall of 2020, when the Covid-19 pandemic exasperated the decline that KCPS has experienced in recent years. In addition, the requirement in the Blueprint for Maryland's Future legislation to provide prekindergarten instructional opportunities for three-year old children may lead to a modest adjustment of the declining enrollment. Consequently, the task of upgrading building systems and modernizing instructional spaces will continue, and this EFMP provides the background information and projected needs to support that effort.

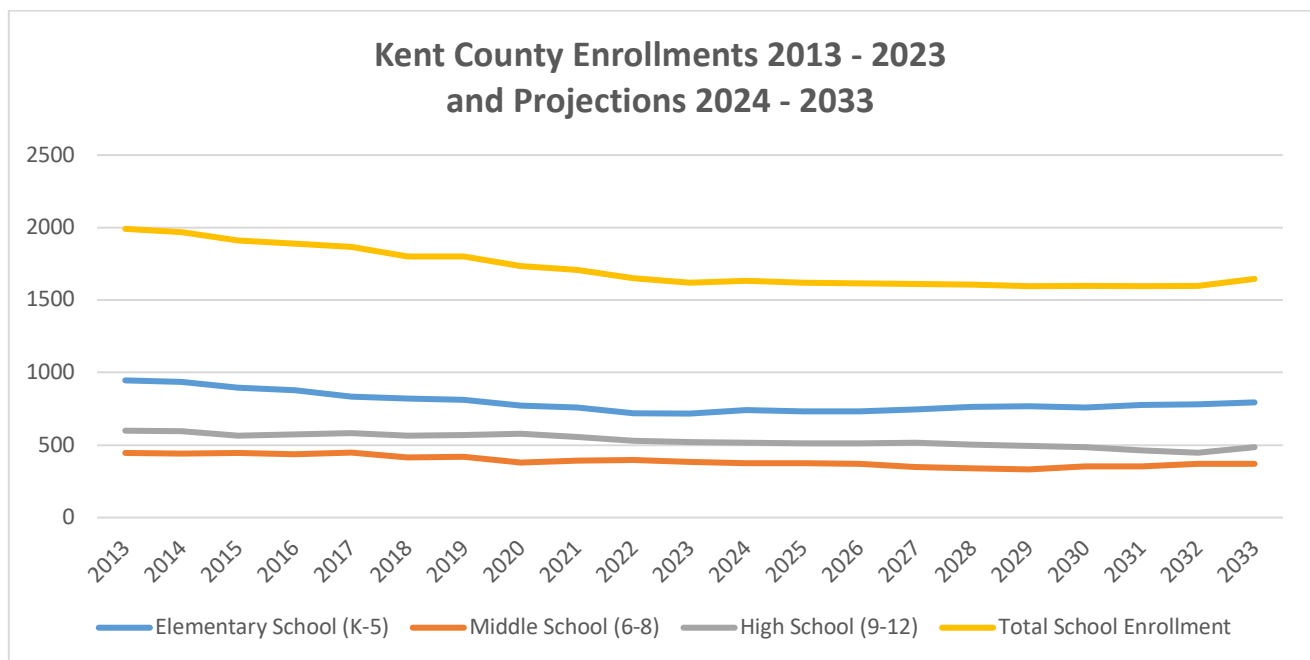
In combination with the age of the school buildings, the enrollment trends noted above call for a facility strategy that improves on the efficiency of the school facility plant, while preserving the capacity for possible increases in the student population at a future time. The Six-Year Strategic Facilities Plan, approved in February 2018 and described in detail in the Introduction, has already led to nine completed projects and one more now in planning. In the coming years, it will continue to show its value in guiding the capital investments of the school system toward an efficient and effective facility plant, particularly through the replacement of Kent County Middle School.

Enrollment trends have a bearing on school facilities in a number of ways: in the allocation of State funding, which is based on student enrollment projections; in the size of classes and other school activities; on school schedules; on the utilization of spaces within buildings to address students with special needs; on transporting students to and from school; and on the revenues available to local governments to support capital improvements.

At this date, it is uncertain whether the FY 2026 Capital Improvement Program request that will be submitted to the State of Maryland in October 2024 will include a request for funding for the modernization of Kent County Middle School. If so, changes in the enrollment patterns will have an impact on the amount of funds the State may indicate for the project. Other factors, for example the total amount of State funding that is available as well as the possible outcome of the State facilities assessment, will also have a considerable bearing on the State approvals.

There will be an ongoing need to continue the capital projects that have already been started and to initiate new projects that will ensure the performance of the school buildings and the health and safety of the building occupants. Most important are the future decisions by the Board of County Commissioners and the State of Maryland about funding the replacement of Kent County Middle School: as this project will have a lasting impact on the educational programs of all schools in Kent County for decades to come, the decisions as to the grade bands that will be supported by the project, its scope and size, and its location have been made with thorough attention to the educational, community, and fiscal impacts, and only require the approval of funds in order to proceed.

Figure ES-1: Kent County Enrollments 2013-2023 and Projections 2024-2033



County Demographic Trends

It appears that many of the factors that have produced significant population growth in other counties on the Eastern Shore have so far had limited impact in Kent County. These factors include the improved access from the Western Shore following construction of the two Bay Bridges and improvements to beach route highways, the growth of industrial and commercial employment, and the development of significant residential communities for workers who commute to jobs outside the county. There has been little internal growth of significant institutions like Washington College, and even the expansion of one of the major employers, Dixon Valve, has not to date led to any noticeable changes in the county population or the public school enrollments.

While factors such as these have stimulated the growth of the school-age population in neighboring counties, in Kent County the oldest cohort of residents is projected to increase significantly due to immigration, while the child-bearing cohort and the cohort of school-age residents will decline modestly but steadily between now and 2040. Causes for this pattern likely include the attractiveness of the county's waterfront communities to retirees, in combination with the absence of major employment centers providing jobs for younger people and the relative remoteness of employment centers in other parts of Maryland and in Delaware.

Given the goal of the County to retain its rural, agricultural quality, and of the major town, Chestertown, to retain its small-town historical quality, the pattern of population change outlined here is likely to continue. Factors that may alter this pattern include increases in the construction of housing in the lower and middle ranges of the market, changes in household composition, transportation improvements that will make Kent County more accessible to job markets, and the generation of employment opportunities within the county through private sector initiatives or local government investment in programs and infrastructure.

Residential Construction Trends

Following a period of growth up to 2008, a significant drop in the creation of new housing lots occurred between 2009 and 2012, reflecting the national and regional impact of the economic recession on residential development. Although in 2013 the number of new lots increased, very few subdivision lots were approved in 2014 through 2022, and this trend appears to have continued into 2023. The slow pace of lot development is mirrored by the noticeable decline in the number of new housing units that have been approved within the unincorporated county and the towns. Several residential developments were poised to proceed but have not done so to date. In the current situation, the outlook for residential development is not promising.

A critical question for planning public school facilities is whether there will be any changes in the housing types and occupancy by owners and/or renters that have school age children. The historical data and projections of overall population and school age population do not reflect such changes. However, due to the small size of the total Kent County population and the relatively small public school enrollment, even a slight change in housing trends may induce a large relative change in the public school population. The same factors that might lead to an increase in employment and in the number of market rate housing units oriented toward lower income brackets, could also promote a larger student population.

Student Enrollment Trends

The Maryland Department of Planning (MDP) predicts that the K-12 public school enrollment in Kent

County will remain in the range of 1,540 to 1,610 during the coming decade (Table IV-7). These projections do not include prekindergarten students. The student population is projected to decrease from the current 1,621 to 1,540 in 2027 and then gradually increase again to 1,610 by 2033. These enrollment projections are consistent with the projected slow growth in the 0 to 17 age population in Kent County, as published by MDP and recognized by the Kent County Department of Planning, Housing, and Zoning. In the 10 year period from 2023 to 2033, the net decrease in the K-12 enrollment will be 11 students, or less than 1% of the student body.; in effect, the school system will achieve relative long-term stability. These projections are consistent with the projections developed independently by Kent County Public Schools, which are within 5% of the MDP projections in every year (but which show instead a modest growth of 27 K-12 students by 2033, or 2%).

Continued monitoring of new residential development within the incorporated towns and the unincorporated areas is necessary. Even as growth is unlikely, a small change could have a significant impact on the future facility and educational needs of the Kent County Public Schools, and changes should be reflected in future updates of the Educational Facilities Master Plan.

The Maryland Blueprint

Legislation passed in the 2020 session of the General Assembly brings new curricular and administrative requirements to Maryland schools, many of them with facility implications. The expansion of prekindergarten to include all 4-year old children in certain income tiers, and to include many 3-year old children, will put increased demands on classroom space. Expanded requirements for teacher planning also have implications for increasing the number of spaces in all schools. The expansion of the replacement middle school to house grades 5-8 will free classroom space in the elementary schools for any anticipated growth in the prekindergarten enrollments.

Many dimensions of the Blueprint initiative remain uncertain, including the number of eligible children and the number and capacity of private providers in the county. Officials in Kent County Public Schools are assessing whether the school system is well positioned to receive these new PreK students. The legislation also includes a requirement for teachers to devote 40% of their school day to professional learning, small group instruction, and/or individual instruction. This is a facilities concern, as it will require that school systems hire more teachers (thus needing more classrooms) and provide adequate space for them. The educational specification for the proposed modernization of Kent County Middle School, approved by the Board of Education on April 5, 2023, provides space dedicated to teacher planning and coaching as well as a number of small spaces of various sizes to support small group instruction.

Current Status of School Facilities

Thoughtful and careful master planning of both the educational programs and the facilities that house them will position the school system to maintain its educational standards in the face of flat or declining enrollments, while ensuring resiliency for future growth and demographic changes, should they occur.

During the 2023-2024 school year, following the closure of two elementary schools in the fall of 2017, the Kent County Public School system operated a total of five (5) public school buildings. There were three (3) elementary schools, one (1) middle school and one (1) high school. All of the schools were located in Priority Funding Areas (PFAs). All of these buildings were constructed over forty years ago, and until implementation of the Strategic Plan began, had received few major renovations. Kent

County High School was the last new school built in Kent County (1971). Since then, there has been only one building-wide modernization/renovation project, of Kent County Middle School in 1976. In 2005 and 2006 Kent County High School received system upgrades and renovation of specific instructional and support areas, and in the period 2019 to 2022 Rock Hall Elementary and Galena Elementary received renovations of targeted spaces to support instructional or support needs. However, the school buildings have been well maintained, and there have been numerous State- and County-funded projects that have improved or modernized individual building systems and/or components in the schools. Kent County Public Schools has one (1) portable classroom building installed on the Kent County High School site that serves students in the Kent Alternative Program. There is a pressing need to bring all of the school facilities to modern, 21st Century standards of educational appropriateness and building performance.

In the 2023-2024 school year, Kent County Public Schools' elementary school facilities were moderately underutilized, and the secondary facilities significantly so; this situation is forecasted to persist based on the pattern of school enrollments projected by the Maryland Department of Planning and the staff of the Board of Education (see chart below). Educational facilities that are significantly underutilized represent an unnecessary expenditure of maintenance and operational (M&O) funds that could be better used for instructional or other purposes. An underutilized facility may also be difficult to supervise and secure, and it may not be possible to provide a full support staff or the complete range of educational offerings for a small student population.

However, an underutilized facility does not necessarily contain unused instructional spaces, and consolidation with another facility to improve utilization can carry a very significant capital cost, may place students in a facility that is not suited to their educational needs, and may unacceptably increase transportation ride times. The utilization of the secondary schools was a component of the planning process for the middle school. The educational specification for the Kent County Middle School modernization project has been written for a school that is appropriately sized for a student body of 520 in grades 5-8.

The approval by the Board of Education in March 2017 to close two elementary schools represented an important step toward "right-sizing" the school system in order to align facility capacity with student enrollments and the operating budget. This followed on previous efforts, particularly the decision in 2010 to consolidate all middle school students into a single facility in Chestertown, the conversion of the former Rock Hall Elementary School into Board of Education offices, and the transfer of ownership of the former Board of Education Administrative Building in Chestertown to Washington College. The transfer of Millington Elementary School to the County government further reduced the total school plant and the demands on the operating budget. The former Worton Elementary School has been converted into the Kent County Public Schools bus depot and also serves as the location of Kent County's Blended Learning Academy. Table ES-1 shows the current and projected utilization of the schools in the system (see Section V, Facility Needs Analysis, for an explanation of capacity (SRC) and utilization).

Table ES-1: School Facility Utilization (Current and Projected), Based on Current Facilities

School	SRC (revised 4/3/19)	Actual P3/PK-12 Enroll- ment 2023 (FTE)	Percent Utilization 2023	Projected P3/PK-12 Enroll- ment 2028 (FTE)	Percent Utilization 2028	Projected P3/PK-12 Enroll- ment 2033 (FTE)	Percent Utilization 2033
Galena ES	438	291	66.4%	302	68.9%	313	71.5%
H.H. Garnett ES	426	329	77.2%	356	83.6%	374	87.8%
Rock Hall ES	317	208	65.6%	224	70.7%	227	71.6%
Kent MS	645	382	59.2%	339	52.6%	369	57.2%
Kent HS	1,070	522	48.8%	504	47.1%	484	45.2%
Totals	2,896	1,732	59.8%	1,725	59.6%	1,767	61.0%

For the near-future, the Six-Year Facilities Strategic Plan adopted by the Board of Education in February 2018 outlined a process to address the capacity and size of the middle school through development of an educational specification and a feasibility study, and a separate process to study the efficient use of the high school. At this writing, the educational specification and feasibility study for the middle school have been approved, with a final scope for replacement of the KCMS facility being approved by the Board of Education in October 2023.

Near Term Capital Projects and Long Term Strategic Planning

The Six-Year Facilities Strategic Plan did not call for any further school closures. Consideration of the generally advanced age of the facilities also indicates the urgency of developing a comprehensive program of renovation or replacement projects (incorporating the previously executed building improvements wherever possible). A program of this magnitude, which will affect portions of every school building, will be difficult to fund under any circumstances. The recommendations in the Six-Year Strategic Facilities Plan, approved by the Board of Education on February 12, 2018, were intended to maintain the school buildings in good condition and to initiate long-term planning to support the delivery of the educational programs. A number of these projects have been achieved. Form 101.3 in Section V shows remaining projects that will be proposed in order to achieve these objectives.

Concurrent State Requirements

The 2024 EFMP is being developed with consideration of three new requirements that have resulted from the *Blueprint for Maryland's Future* legislation ((HB 1300; see the Introduction for further information):

Expanded Prekindergarten. The *Blueprint* requires that the LEA provide a description of the approach that will be taken to meet the Prekindergarten requirements of the Act.

Expanded Teacher Planning Time. The *Blueprint* will increase the time that teachers are allotted for planning. This requirement will require additional spaces for planning, a consideration that has entered into formulation of the Kent County Middle School educational specification.

Career and College Readiness. The replacement Kent County Middle School project will

support alignment between the middle school and programs in the Kent County High School, particularly in the Career and Technical Education area. These alignments will offer exposure of CTE programs to middle school students, allowing them to make early choices about their academic careers.

The EFMP also takes account of Chapter 608 of 2021 (HB 630), requiring each LEA to provide an approved energy policy. The approach that KCPS is taking to this requirement is described in the Introduction.

INTRODUCTION

Kent County Overview¹

Kent County is a quiet rural county located on the Eastern Shore of Maryland. It has a long and rich history dating back to the earliest periods of English settlement in Maryland. Captain John Smith explored the area in 1608 and 1609. The Isle and County of Kent was created in 1642 as the second civil division in the Province of Maryland, the first being St. Mary's County. At that time, Kent County was the first county established on the Eastern Shore and included all of the Eastern Shore north of the Choptank River. Eastern Neck, now a 2,285 acre natural wildlife refuge, was the site of one of the first permanent Eastern Shore settlements.² Settlement of Kent County proceeded along the Chester River and its tributaries. Grants for large estates were made and tobacco production became the key economic activity. Twenty years before the laying out of Baltimore in 1729, Chestertown was already a well-known port of entry and was the center of trade for the upper Eastern Shore.

The early settlers of Kent County were largely of English descent. New Yarmouth, the County's first town, was established in 1675 on Gray's Inn Creek. The original county court house and jail were located here, along with the county's first two shipyards. Since the late 18th century, African Americans have played an important role in the development of the County—as businessmen, farmers, watermen, Civil War veterans, and community leaders. There are intriguing questions associated with the historic black population of Kent County, for example, whether many of the County's black settlements were established before the Civil War for free African-Americans.

Kent County has been a Code Home Rule jurisdiction since 1970, with a government consisting of three commissioners. Most of the land in Kent County remains in agricultural use, with field crops and dairy as the primary types of agricultural activity. The Kent County *Comprehensive Plan* adopted by the Commissioners on April 17, 2018 states, "Agriculture is the linchpin that buttresses the County's economy, culture, history, and everyday experiences."³ With over 130,000 acres devoted to corn, soybeans, and nursery crops, Kent County in 2006 had the highest percentage of land dedicated to agriculture of any county in Maryland, and was located in a region deemed the ninth most threatened agricultural area in the United States.⁴

The county contains five municipalities: Betterton, Chestertown, Galena, Millington, and Rock Hall. Chestertown, the county seat, was incorporated in 1805, followed by Galena in 1858, Millington in 1890, Betterton in 1906, and Rock Hall in 1908.⁵ In addition, Kent County has eleven villages, six with municipal water and sewer service, and nine settlements that are considered to be hamlets.⁶ Kent County retains much of its historical character and charm, with many historic buildings and sites located throughout the unincorporated County, the smaller towns, and Chestertown. Today, Rock Hall remains an active port. Betterton, though no longer a destination for steamboat excursions, retains its resort character. Galena and Millington continue with little change as service centers for prosperous agricultural and residential surroundings; Galena has been somewhat influenced by a

¹ The majority of the information in this Section is taken from the *Kent County Comprehensive Plan*, June 2016, "Background Document".

² U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, *Eastern Neck National Wildlife Refuge: History of Eastern Neck Island*, August 2009

³ *Comprehensive Plan*, April 2018, page 1.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Maryland General Assembly website, "Kent County, Maryland, Municipalities"

<http://msa.maryland.gov/msa/mdmanual/36loc/ke/chron/html/kechron.html>.

⁶ *Comprehensive Plan*, page 17.

rapid expansion of the pleasure boating industry at nearby Georgetown, Maryland, on the Sassafras River.

Chestertown is the largest town in the county and is the county seat. One of Maryland's oldest seaports, Chestertown is also the location of Washington College. The town grew rapidly from its founding as a center for the shipping business and the plantation economy focused on trade with the West Indies, Spain, the Azores and Madeira. Local manufacturing and warehousing followed, with attendant wealth reflected in the building of brick manor houses. Less oriented toward waterborne commerce than formerly, Chestertown has turned to trade, manufacturing and tourism to become the largest town in the county.

Kent County has had a relatively stable population in recent decades. As of the 2010 census, the total population of the county was 20,197, an increase of 1,000 persons from the 2000 census; with the 2020 census, the total population declined by 4.9% to 19,198 persons, almost exactly the number that was recorded in 2000. The County has seen a recent in-migration of retired persons who have settled in the County's waterfront areas. Kent County has continued as an educational and cultural center, especially with the continuing high reputation of Washington College. Although employment opportunities in the county are limited, particularly for younger people in the child-raising years, the county has access to several employment centers, including Annapolis in Maryland, Dover and Wilmington in Delaware, and the I-95 corridor in Cecil County. The completion of the limited access, four-lane Route 301 in Delaware, including a by-pass of Millington, in early 2019 has provided improved connections to the north and northeast.

Kent County is surrounded on three sides by water. The Sassafras River is on the north, the Chester River is on the south, and the Chesapeake Bay is on the west. These three bodies of water provide over 265 miles of tidal shoreline. The State of Delaware forms the eastern border of Kent County, with Cecil County, Maryland to the north and Queen Anne's County to the south. The Chesapeake Bay continues to be an important resource for Kent County. Commercial fishing by local "watermen" who harvest crab, oyster, clam and fish continues, but has declined in importance. However, the waters of the Bay are very important as a prime recreational resource, both for local residents and a growing tourism and water recreation industry. The Sultana Downrigging festival in late October or early November every year offers a vivid experience of historic life on the water. Kent County has beaches and wildlife areas, as well as 20 marinas that serve local residents and visitors at various times of the year.

History of Public Education in Kent County

The first free school in Kent County was established at Chestertown in 1707 under the supervision of the rector of St. Paul's Parish. In 1723 this school became the nucleus of the Kent County Free School, and in 1782 it evolved into Washington College. Washington College was the first college established in Maryland and currently serves approximately 1,400 students from 23 nations in both undergraduate and graduate programs.⁷

Kent County Public Schools currently has five school locations, including three elementary schools, one middle school, and one high school. The school system was desegregated in 1967, but because of delays in the construction of Kent County High School, the school system was not fully integrated until 1969. At the time the high school opened, the elementary feeder schools were already

⁷ Washington College website, <http://www.washcoll.edu/about>

integrated.⁸

The Educational Facilities Master Plan and its Purpose

Kent County Public Schools faces the challenge of a gradually declining student population, but with the possibility of future enrollment growth in some parts of the jurisdiction that will require accommodation. Thoughtful and careful master planning of both the educational programs and the facilities that house them will position the school system to maintain its educational standards in the face of declining enrollments while ensuring resiliency for future growth and demographic changes, should they occur. The Superintendent's January 2017 recommendations to the Board of Education on the closure of two elementary schools represented a first step toward "right-sizing" the school system in order to align facility capacity with student enrollments and the operating budget. In the summer of 2017 the Superintendent and staff established a Facilities Strategic Planning Committee and began a process of stakeholder meetings to gather community input into development of a long-term facility strategy for the county schools. The approved Six Year Facilities Master Plan, approved by the Board of Education in January 2018, is reflected in this 2024 Educational Facility Master Plan (EFMP) and has been actualized through the Capital Improvement Programs from FY 2019 to 2025, an effort that will continue in subsequent years.

It is essential to maintain school buildings in good condition for an extended period of time in order to support the delivery of the current and projected educational programs and services. This 2024 Educational Facilities Master Plan is intended to provide the Board of Education with the means of identifying and prioritizing the capital improvements that are required to maintain effective and efficient educational facilities. The EFMP will enable the Kent County Board of Education to plan proactively for the near-future, rather than reacting with solutions as situations present themselves. The 2018 Six-Year Facilities Strategic Plan that was completed and approved by the Kent County Board of Education in February 2018 set the stage for the updates included in subsequent EFMPs. This Master Plan has been prepared utilizing the guidelines of the Interagency Commission on School Construction (IAC), which are contained in COMAR 14.39.02.02.

Where necessary capital improvements or repairs are identified through the EFMP, careful planning can assure that the taxpayer's funds are wisely used to receive the greatest value. The limited financial resources available to the public schools must be allocated among many different needs. School facilities, the subject of this EMFP, represent one of those needs. These needs are typically divided into three areas: the ability of buildings to provide a safe and healthful environment for instruction; the adequacy of buildings and spaces to support the educational mission of the board of education; and the capacity of facilities to house students without overcrowding.

The 2024 EFMP will provide technical support to project requests in the FY 2026 Capital Improvement Program (CIP) to be submitted to the State in autumn 2024, and in the Aging Schools Program (ASP) and other programs that may be approved by the General Assembly.

Principle elements included in this EFMP are as follows:

1. State Public School Construction Program - Review of funding criteria (*Introduction*)

⁸ Maryland General Assembly website, "Kent County Historical Chronology"
<http://msa.maryland.gov/msa/mdmanual/36loc/ke/chron/html/kechron.html>; Wikipedia, "Kent County, Maryland" February 21, 2017

2. Summary of the Board of Education goals, objectives and policies as they may affect educational facilities (*Section I*), including:
 - Policies for co-location, shared use, and shared cost of existing and planned school facilities;
 - Policies to address school capacity needs in planned growth areas or to address adequate public facilities ordinance (APFO) requirements; and
 - Policies addressing current and planned transportation for students, administrators, and teachers.
3. Community Analysis, including County demographics, development, and comprehensive plans (*Section II*);
4. Facility Inventory and Evaluation, including school data and evaluations of school buildings (*Section III*);
5. Enrollment Data, including historical and projected public school enrollment (*Section IV*);
6. Facility Needs Analysis, including recommended facility improvements (*Section V*); and
7. Supporting Documentation (*Section VI*)

The 2024 EFMP is being developed with consideration of three new requirements that have resulted from recent State legislation:

1. **Capacity Study.** The *Built to Learn Act* of 2020 required that each LEA submit a capacity study to the IAC and the General Assembly by December 1, 2022. The study could not be more than three years old at the time of submission and must have identified the current capacity of each school in the school system and the demographics of the students in each school compared to the demographics of the overall student population in the school system.

Status: KCPS submitted the Capacity Study to the General Assembly by the December 1, 2022 deadline.

2. **Expanded Prekindergarten.** The *Blueprint for Maryland's Future Act* (HB 1300) requires that the LEA provide a description of the approach that will be taken to meet the Prekindergarten requirements of the Act. This will indicate how the demand for PreK seats is projected, how school facilities will be used to meet the projected demand, and how private providers will be used.

Status: The utilization figures shown in Table V-1 indicate that there is adequate capacity for an expansion of the Prekindergarten program in most schools. Whether available space can be found in locations within the building appropriate to the needs of small children will require more information about the number of eligible children in the locale who might be attending the expanded programs as well as study of each building's architectural characteristics. If the funding for the modernization of Kent County Middle School as a 5-8 school is approved and the project proceeds, capacity for the prekindergarten programs at the elementary schools will be assured.

3. **Energy Policy.** *Chapter 608 of 2021* (HB 630) required that each LEA provide by July 1, 2022 an approved energy policy that articulates the LEA's guiding principles and strategic vision regarding the use of energy, specifically electricity. A new grant program is available through the Maryland Energy Administration (MEA) to assist LEAs with data collection and other aspects of

the requirements.

Status: KCPS submitted the Energy Policy by the July 1, 2022 deadline. On April 12, 2024, Kent County Public Schools was approved by MEA for a grant of \$63,000 under the Capacity Building Grants for Energy Management and Net Zero Energy Portfolio Planning (AOI 1). Per the application submitted by KCPS, these funds will be used “to engage in building an Energy Star Portfolio Manager for all seven of its locations to compile and analyze energy data with the overall goal of utilizing energy as efficiently as possible moving forward. To achieve this, KCPS will use the grant funds to engage a firm with expertise in energy management to analyze all seven facilities, set up the Portfolio Manager system, and train KCPS staff in using it. The consultant firm will also provide initial monitoring of results to ensure that staff understand the system and enter data correctly so that the program will operate effectively after the period of the grant.”

The State Public School Construction Program

Kent County Public Schools is reliant upon the Kent Board of County Commissioners (BCC) to provide the fiscal resources that are needed to operate and maintain the school system. This includes the funding required to maintain, repair, and make capital improvements to the public school buildings. In some cases, facility needs can be addressed through County funding alone. In other situations the funding provided by the County Commissioners is leveraged to obtain State funding for capital improvements through the programs of the State Public School Construction Program (PSCP), established in 1971.

The PSCP administers four major funding programs: the Capital Improvement Program (CIP), the Built to Learn (BTL) funds, the Healthy School Facility Fund (HSFF), and the Aging Schools Program (ASP), which are described further below. Projects are only eligible for funds at facilities used for educational purposes; central administrative offices are not eligible. The PSCP also administers several smaller funding programs, including the following for which Kent County Public Schools is eligible:

- The *Nonpublic Aging Schools Program* (NASP), which provides funds for "capital improvements to nonpublic school buildings and sites that, when completed, will protect the school building from deterioration, improve the safety of students and staff, and enhance the delivery of educational programs."⁹ To date, no Nonpublic schools in Kent County have received funds through NASP.
- The *Nonpublic School Safety Grants* (NPSI) program provides grants for safety improvements to existing nonpublic school buildings.¹⁰ To date, no Nonpublic schools in Kent County have received funds through NPSI.
- The *School Safety Grant Program* (SSGP) provides grants to address the need for school security improvements.¹¹ Kent County Public Schools was approved for \$27,000 in Round I of the FY 2019 School Safety Grant Program (SSGP). Round I funding was utilized to purchase the Rock Hall Elementary School Security Vestibule as well as the software used in

⁹ IAC, *loc. cit.*, "Procedures for The Senator James E. "Ed" DeGrange Nonpublic Aging Schools Program (Fiscal Year 2021), November 6, 2020, p. 2.

¹⁰ IAC, *loc. cit.*, "Procedures for The Nonpublic School Safety Grants" (Fiscal Year 2021), November 6, 2020.

¹¹ IAC, *loc. cit.*, "School Safety Grant Program Administrative Procedures Guide", approved March 6, 2019.

the security vestibules at all five schools. KCPS was approved for \$200,000 in Round II of the FY 2019 SSGP. Round II funding was utilized to purchase access control software for every KCPS building location. Funding for the FY 2021 SSGP was made available for LEAs with immediate needs. KCPS was able to capitalize on this funding to replace all of the stadium lighting in the Kent County High School Athletic Stadium. This award was in the amount of \$200,000.

Capital Improvement Program (CIP)

Funded annually at over \$340 million in new money statewide since FY 2006, the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) is the largest of the PSCP funding programs. Requests for approval of planning and funding of projects are submitted to the Interagency Commission on School Construction (IAC) in the annual CIP. The IAC grants annual approvals or recommendations for approval in three rounds, by December 31, before March 1, and after May 1. Prior to making its preliminary decisions in December, the IAC is advised by the Governor of the preliminary allocations of new General Obligation Debt and capital operating budget funds that will be proposed for public school construction for the next fiscal year. Subsequent approvals are based on the Governor's submitted capital budget and the final capital budget approved by the legislature and enacted by the Governor. The submission and approval procedures under the Interagency Commission are largely similar to those under the former Interagency Committee on School Construction.¹² The General Assembly has the authority to increase the total capital budget, based on the recommendation of the Capital Debt Affordability Committee (CDAC).

To be eligible for State construction funding, all projects must meet IAC evaluation criteria, must align with the Board of Education EFMP, and must have the support of the local government. Major projects are required to have IAC planning approval, which represents a commitment by the State to fund the project but does not guarantee that State construction funding will be available in any specific fiscal year. State funding for a project that has received planning approval may be deferred due to fiscal limitations or delays in the project itself. However, a county government is not prohibited from “locally funding” or “forward funding” certain types of projects that have been deferred by the State, and then requesting reimbursement after the project is initiated or completed, at the time that State funding becomes available.¹³

Major project types under the CIP include the construction of new schools, renovation of existing schools in use for 15 years or more, and additions for capacity or programmatic purposes. Planning approval is required for these major project types, and site development costs related to construction are eligible for State funding. Requests for planning approval for full renovations and new and replacement projects require calculation of the Total Cost of Ownership (TCO) for a 30-year period. The State also provides capital funding for small renovations such as science classrooms and open-space enclosures, and for systemic renovation projects that improve the learning environment and extend the useful life of school facilities, including such projects as roofs, boilers, chillers, windows and doors, data and security systems, and lighting. These types of projects also require matching

¹² Before FY 2019, the Board of Public Works (BPW) made final decisions on funding and planning approvals, based on recommendations from the then-Interagency Committee on School Construction.

¹³ A “locally funded” project is one that proceeds to construction prior to State planning approval; a “forward funded” project is one that has been approved for planning by the State, but has used local construction funds in lieu of State funds to address expenditures pending the approval and release of State construction funds. When a project has been deferred for State funding, there are time limits within which State tax exempt general obligation bond proceeds can be used for reimbursement of locally funded or forward funded expenses. Reimbursement for local funding now applies to systemic renovation projects that meet certain procedural requirements.

funds from the County, but do not require planning approval.

Full lists of eligible and ineligible project expenses are found at COMAR 14.39.02.10 and .11, respectively. Eligible expenses comprise site development costs related to construction, including off-site work that is required as a condition of permit. The Built to Learn Act of 2020 allows architectural and engineering fees, some planning expenses, and most types of furniture, furnishings and equipment (FF&E) to be an eligible project expense. Ineligible costs for which the local education agency (LEA) is responsible on all CIP projects include site acquisition, design and construction contingency, certain types of movable equipment, change orders, insurance, and repairs and maintenance. For major projects, the LEA is also responsible for square footage that exceeds the State's gross area allowance, which is determined by formula based on student enrollment projections applied against a Gross Area Baseline (GAB) that is specific to each type of school and various enrollment sizes.¹⁴ Exceptions can be granted to the square foot allocations if evidence is presented of unique needs or conditions that require a larger facility. The IAC adjusts the GABs from time to time to reflect current educational mandates and practices, as well as social conditions that may affect the size of educational facilities.

A major project is also eligible for State funding participation in up to 3,000 square feet of community use space, upon presentation of agreement from a local government or nonprofit organization. Typical improvements have included community recreation space, fitness facilities used by local police for training, computer learning centers accessible to the public in non-school hours, and community health facilities. The scope of the Kent County Middle School replacement project will include a small community health facility, following a precedent set at Rock Hall Elementary School.

The Board of Education establishes the project scopes and priorities for its local capital improvement program. The local board request to the IAC must be supported by the County government, which acknowledges and recognizes the County commitment to provide matching funds as well as funds for ineligible costs. Without the support of the County government, the request for State funding will not be considered. Since the annual requests for State funding invariably exceed the available funding, only the highest priority projects that are eligible and have the support of the County government are approved. The IAC may defer approval of a project if it is judged to have a lower priority than other competing requests.

The IAC establishes a maximum State construction allocation for each approved project; a tentative maximum amount is established at approval of planning, and the amount is finalized at approval of funding. The maximum allocation may be modified on presentation of evidence of unusual circumstances, for example unforeseen conditions that exceed the local contingency allocation. For major projects, the allocation is computed using the projected enrollment (seven years from the date of application). This figure is multiplied by the State eligible square footage per full time equivalent student for the specific project type and size (elementary, middle, high, etc.), resulting in a gross area allowance. The gross area allowance is then multiplied by a per square foot construction cost determined annually by the IAC. For new construction, 100 percent of the cost per square foot is used in the calculation of the State allocation. For renovation projects, the cost per square foot increases with the age of the building or portion of the building, per the following sequence:

1. A building area that is less than 16 years old is ineligible for State funding.

¹⁴ See Public School Construction Program *Administrative Procedures Guide*, Appendix 102-B "State- Funded Maximum Gross Area Allowance", and "Instructions for Submission of FY 2021 Capital Improvement Program," July 19, 2019.

2. A building area that is 16-20 years old is eligible for 50 percent of the cost of new construction.
3. A building area that is 21-25 years old is eligible for 65 percent of the cost of new construction.
4. A building area that is 26-30 years old is eligible for 75 percent of the cost of new construction.
5. A building area that is 31-39 years old is eligible for 85 percent of the cost of new construction.
6. A building area that is 40 years or older is eligible for 100 percent of the cost of new construction.¹⁵

Other elements of the calculation of State funding include:¹⁶

- A site redevelopment allowance of 5 percent of the construction cost is allowed for renovation, and 19 percent of the construction cost for new construction or replacement facilities. The allocation for renovation recognizes that older schools will usually have site redevelopment costs that may include bus loading and unloading areas, traffic safety, parking, storm water management, site lighting, utility relocation, etc.
- An allowance of 10 percent of building and site costs is provided for design expenses, and 5 percent of building costs only is allowed for FF&E.
- Additional percentage add-ons are allowed for certain eligible conditions (COMAR 14.39.02.05):
 - 10 percentage points for schools with concentration of poverty greater than 80 percent;
 - 5 percentage points for schools with concentration of poverty less than 80 percent but greater than 55 percent;
 - 5 percentage points for schools that meet certain conditions in the IAC school maintenance effectiveness assessment; and
 - 5 percentage points for a project proposed to be net-zero energy (NZE).
- A State-local cost share percentage is applied to the construction and site development costs. The PSCP State-local cost share percentages are revised every two years based on the factors outlined in COMAR 14.39.02.05, which include several factors related to local wealth, the local percentage of Free and Reduced Price Meal (FARMS) students, and local enrollment growth. Based on these calculations, the PSCP cost-share formula for Kent County has remained unchanged for many years at the lowest eligible percentage, providing for a maximum PSCP funding of 50 percent of eligible project costs.¹⁷
- For major renovations, State funding that was allocated to the building within the previous 15 years is deducted from the total State allocation.¹⁸

Types of projects which may be eligible as systemic renovations include:

- (a) Architectural and structural;

¹⁵ IAC, FY 2022 Instructions, p. 19

¹⁶ As a result of HB 1783 enacted in the 2018 session of the General Assembly, the State no longer includes a contingency amount for change orders in its allocation. Previously, the contingency allowance was calculated as 2.5 percent of the total estimated cost of construction and site work.

¹⁷ In the 2024 session of the General Assembly, the Kent County delegation presented a bill to increase the State funding percentage to around 88% (HB365/SB110). Please refer to the General Assembly website for bill language as well as the fiscal analysis. The bill did not proceed from Committee.

¹⁸ Exceptions to this rule apply to funding for projects that will not be affected by the proposed renovation work, for example a science classroom renovation that will remain intact and will be integrated into the new renovation work elsewhere in the facility.

- (b) Mechanical;
- (c) Plumbing;
- (d) Electrical;
- (e) Fire safety;
- (f) Communications; and
- (g) Vertical conveying systems¹⁹

A systemic renovation project in any of these categories may also “include reasonably related components of other building systems as determined by the IAC or its designee.” In order to encourage a comprehensive approach to inter-related building systems, the IAC has also established two additional categories of systemic renovation:²⁰

- (g) Building Envelope – Any combination of two or more of the following building systems or elements: roofing and flashing, exterior walls, windows and exterior doors;
- (h) Ceiling-and-Above Interior Systems – Any combination of two or more of the following building systems or elements that occupy the space at and above the ceiling plane: electrical, lighting, HVAC, plumbing, fire safety, data systems, structural, ceiling and related finishes

A systemic renovation project must cost at least \$200,000; however, a school district that does not have any requests for systemic projects exceeding \$200,000 may submit a request for a project between \$100,000 and \$200,000 in construction value. Several systemic renovations may be undertaken concurrently within a single school.

A CIP category introduced in 2007 called “Limited Renovation” provides for renovation at less than the scope of a complete renovation and permits additional State-funded projects to be completed at the school within 15 years. Kent County High School was one of the first projects in the state to utilize this new project category under the then-designation of “Hybrid Renovation”, allowing a substantial amount of renovation work to be carried out within a limited budget. To be eligible as a Limited Renovation, the project scope must include a minimum of five major building systems and may include widespread educational and architectural enhancements, and the total cost must be less than the cost of complete renovation of the same building area.

Kent County has also taken advantage of several other special CIP programs and initiatives in the past. These included the Governor's "Technology in Maryland Schools" (TIMS) Initiative, which provided infrastructure improvements to ensure that all Maryland students had access to the internet. Kent County Public Schools was approved for lighting upgrades at all seven of its schools in the FY 2013 CIP Energy Efficiency Initiative (EEI), developed in collaboration with the Maryland Energy Administration (MEA). Energy rebates from participating utility companies helped to support these projects and to reduce the level of local funds required for eligible projects. Two new State initiatives were approved within the FY 2014 CIP, the Security Initiative (SI) and the Air Conditioning Initiative (ACI). Kent County Public Schools did not use SI funds, preferring to improve security through the

¹⁹ COMAR 14.39.02.14.B (former COMAR 23.03.02.15.B)

²⁰ IAC, “Instructions for Submission of FY 2020 Capital Improvement Program,” July 15, 2020, p. 19

Aging Schools Program (ASP) funding described below. The school system had no projects in the ACI.

As an outcome of the Six-Year Strategic Facilities Plan approved in February 2018 by the Board of Education, the annual requests made by Kent County Public Schools have increased significantly in the recent years, and are likely to continue for several years in the future. In the nine fiscal years between FY 2011 to FY 2019, inclusive, the Board requested CIP funds in only three years (FY 2014 – FY 2016). The requests were for a total of 10 projects and for the relatively small amount of \$2,343,000; eight of the projects were approved for a total State allocation of \$1,555,000. These projects were for lighting, HVAC, and roof upgrades or replacements; none were for renovation of instructional spaces.

In the six fiscal years FY 2020 through FY 2025 following the completion of the Six-Year Plan, the level of State funding increased significantly: the Board requested funding for a total of \$9,845,760 for nine projects, and the State approved funding for all nine projects and allocated \$9,738,134, or 98.9% of the amount requested. The CIP projects included security vestibules at four schools, two roof replacements, two targeted renovation projects, and A/E design for the Kent County Middle School Modernization Project (the security vestibule at the fifth school was funded through a separate program, see below). Thus not only has the Plan been effective in increasing the total State (and local) funding for school construction projects, it has also led to renovations that will significantly improve the educational environment for students, in addition to enhancing building performance. As a corollary benefit, this increased capital activity has enhanced the school system's internal capacity to plan, design, and execute complex school facility projects, knowledge that will serve it well as it approaches the vastly more ambitious replacement of Kent County Middle School.

Of particular significance is the enhancement of security arrangements in the schools. In the wake of events in 2012 at Sandy Hook Elementary in Connecticut, in 2018 at Parkland High School in Florida, in 2022 at Robb Elementary School in Texas, and elsewhere, school officials and communities have become increasingly concerned about the security of school buildings. Kent County Public Schools utilized a combination of State Capital Improvement Program (CIP) and Safe Schools Grant Program (SSGP) funds to build security vestibules in all five schools, beginning in May 2019 and completing the work by August 2019. These vestibules create a secure area in which visitors must wait during their identification check. At the same time, an improved electronic visitor identification system was introduced, requiring every visitor to provide positive identification before being admitted to the school. According to school administrators and staff, these enhanced security arrangements have improved their ability to know who is in the building at all times. While no physical barrier can guarantee complete safety, the security vestibule at Kent County High School has already demonstrated its value in halting the entry of an individual who may have had malicious intent.

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, Kent County Public Schools was unable to submit any requests for capital projects in the FY 22 CIP, therefore, projects had to be postponed by a year in order to ensure funding at the local and state level. As a result, Kent County Public Schools requested funding for the Kent County High School Roof Replacement in the FY 23 and FY 24 CIP. This project was a two-year project spanning FY 23 and FY 24 and was completed on time by August 31, 2023.

Built to Learn Act (BTL)

The BTL Act, passed in the 2020 legislative session as HB 1, allows the Maryland Stadium Authority (MSA) to issue revenue bonds to fund school construction projects and provides for management of the projects

by MSA. The Act provides \$207 million over ten fiscal years for 18 smaller school systems in Maryland.²¹ Kent County Public Schools is expected to receive 0.83% of the total, or \$1.72 million.²² Kent County Public Schools was approved in the FY 2025 CIP to use this funding for a portion of the design expenses of the upcoming Kent County Middle School Project. As a condition of receiving BTL funds, the project will be managed by the Maryland Stadium Authority, which will relieve the Board of project management (PM) expenses and may reduce insurance costs. At this writing, the Board is developing a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that will define the relations between the Board, MSA, and the Board of County Commissioners.

The BTL Act also created the Public School Facilities Priority Fund, which will rely on the recommendations of the Assessment and Funding Workgroup to consider how the results of the Statewide Facilities Assessment (required by Education Article §5-310) may be used to prioritize funding to schools with the highest needs. The Act also made design funding eligible for State participation; mandated an increase to the Enrollment Growth and Relocatable Classroom (EGRC) funding beginning in FY 2026; extended the Assessment and Funding Workgroup to December 2021; and extended the Healthy School Facility Fund (see below).

Healthy School Facility Fund (HSFF)

The Healthy School Facility Fund was funded at \$30 million per year in Fiscal Years 2020 through 2022 and for at least \$40 million in Fiscal Years 2023 and 2024. The fund provides grants to improve the health of public school facilities. Funds are granted to projects "that will improve the conditions related to air conditioning, heating, indoor air quality, mold remediation, temperature regulation, plumbing—including the presence of lead in drinking water outlets, roofs, and windows. Grants will be prioritized to projects that correct issues posing an immediate life, safety, or health threat to occupants of a facility."²³ Portions of the funding come from State allocations and portions from federal funds that are approved and distributed by the IAC. KCPS is in the process of identifying a few projects that would potentially qualify for future HSFF funding. These would involve replacement of some HVAC units that are significantly aged in some schools.

Aging School Program (ASP)

The Aging School Program provides funds annually to each county for smaller capital projects in existing schools. The funds are allocated based on a formula that takes account of each school system's proportion of un-renovated pre-1970 square footage. Project costs may be as small as \$10,000, and the State allocation does not require local matching funds. KCPS has used ASP funds for security system upgrades at every school, for a wide range of projects at Garnet Elementary School, and for door, carpet, and other projects throughout the school system. The application process and the eligibility requirements for projects in the ASP are found in the *2021 ASP Administrative Guide* on the PSCP website (<https://iac.mdschoolconstruction.org>).²⁴

For FY 2021, Kent County Public Schools was approved for ASP funds in the amount of \$38,292. Kent County Public Schools decided to carry this figure into FY 22 in order to support a larger project. For

²¹ Chapter 20, Laws of 2020, page 37. The Built to Learn Act was enacted under Article II, Section 17(c) of the Maryland Constitution following the 2021 override of the Governor's 2020 veto of the Blueprint for Maryland Schools education bill.

²² IAC, "Built To Learn Program and Allocations Approved by the Interagency Commission on School Construction," December 1, 2021, found at https://iac.mdschoolconstruction.org/?page_id=3981, P. 6

²³ IAC, "Healthy School Facility Fund Administrative Procedures Guide", approved January 14, 2022, found at <https://iac.mdschoolconstruction.org>, "Programs and Initiatives", p. 2.

^{24, 13} Procedures in the 2017 ASP and QZAB Administrative Guides are unchanged from 2016.

FY 22, Kent County Public Schools was approved for an additional \$38,292, bringing the total available ASP funding for FY 22 to \$78,085 due to there being an additional \$1,501 from prior fiscal years unexpended allocation. For FY 22, Kent County Public Schools was able to utilize this funding to carry out a project at Kent County High School in order to improve drainage around the newly replaced running track. The total cost of this drainage project was \$25,120, leaving a balance of \$52,965 remaining for FY 22. This balance was carried into FY 23 which should bring an additional allocation of \$38,292, giving Kent County Public Schools \$91,257 for FY 23. For FY 23, Kent County Public Schools was able to carry out renovations to the Radio Transmission Housing Building. These included landscaping, painting, lighting, and some HVAC work to the building. In total, the cost was \$12,790.00, making the amount remaining in the ASP \$78,467 for the remainder of FY 23.

For FY 24, Kent County Public Schools will have the \$78,467 remaining from prior years in addition to the annual \$38,292, for a total of \$116,759 in the fund. For FY 25, Kent County Public Schools will have the \$116,759 from prior years in addition to the annual \$38,292, for a total of \$155,051 in the fund. The plan is to utilize this funding to supplement the remainder of our upcoming KCHS tennis court renovation and replacement project (see below).

Other State Capital Funding Programs

Kent County benefited from the FY 2012 Supplemental Appropriation for school construction projects through legislation approved by the Maryland General Assembly during the 2011 session. The State Board of Public Works approved an upgrade of the lighting and sound system at Kent County High School in FY 2013. The Federal School Renovation Program (FSRP), an older funding program no longer in use, provided funds in 2004 to replace windows and exterior doors at Rock Hall Elementary School. KCPS has no State-owned relocatable classrooms, and therefore has not used the PSCP Relocatable Repair Fund. Likewise, the school system has not required funds from the State Emergency Repair Fund, which pays for repair costs resulting from emergency events that are not covered by insurance.

Kent County Public Schools also benefited from a one-time State of Maryland Legislative Bond Initiative.²⁵ The amount of this initiative was \$250,000 and it was utilized to resurface our Kent County High School running track as well as update some of our other track and field areas and equipment. This project was completed in the fall of 2021 and has proved to be a worthy investment to upgrade our facility.

Kent County Public Schools applied for this same Bond Initiative for FY 25. The amount for the application was \$412,500 and KCPS was able to secure a total funding of \$306,000. The plan is to replace the tennis courts at Kent County High School with this funding. Kent County Public Schools will utilize the Aging Schools Program to offset any additional funding over the \$306,000 received. This project was bid in May 2024, with hopes of completion by September 2024 in preparation for the 2025 Spring Tennis season.

²⁵ <https://dgs.maryland.gov/Pages/Grants/index.aspx>

I. GOALS, STANDARDS, POLICIES AND GUIDELINES

General Overview

Composition of the Board of Education

The Kent County Board of Education has five members, each of whom is elected for a four-year term. The Board elects its own officers. There is also a student member of the Board. The Board generally holds one regular meeting on the second Monday of each month, usually at 6:30 p.m.²⁶ Special sessions are held and changes to the above schedule are made as needed.

The chief duties of the Board are to set policies and approve procedures for the efficient and economical administration of the school system, and to approve the annual school budget. Policies adopted by the Board are contained in the *Policies of the Board of Education*, Kent County, Maryland (available on the Kent County Public Schools website). Administration of these policies is the responsibility of the Superintendent of Schools, who serves as the executive officer of the Board, and of the professional staff. All professional staff positions are created only with the approval of the Board.

Authority of the Board of Education

The Authority of the Kent County Board of Education is found in Policy AA, "School District Legal Status": "The Kent County Board of Education is authorized, empowered, directed and required to maintain and promote throughout its political subdivision a reasonably uniform system of public schools. The Board, with the advice of the Superintendent, will determine the educational policies of the school system and will prescribe rules and regulations for the conduct and management of the schools in the system."²⁷

Board of Education: General Mission and Goals

The Board of Education has outlined the following Mission Statement and Core Values:²⁸

Mission:

Anchored in excellence, Kent County Public Schools will provide personal learning experiences within a collaborative community of learners, that inspire our students to reach their highest potential and become engaged global citizens.

Core Values:

These are the principles we believe and drive all of our decisions.

Students First: Developing positive relationships and providing individual learning experiences within a digital environment will meet the diverse needs of our students.

Collaboration: Our success is dependent upon effective teamwork of students, staff, parents, and community members.

Commitment: Promoting a culture of excellence and accountability will demonstrate our commitment to students.

²⁶ Board of Education Policy BEA @ <http://www.boarddocs.com/mabe/kcps/Board.nsf/Public#>

²⁷ "Policies" tab, at <http://www.boarddocs.com/mabe/kcps/Board.nsf/Public#>

²⁸ "Featured" tab, at <http://www.boarddocs.com/mabe/kcps/Board.nsf/Public#>

Community: Uniting our community requires respectful understanding of our diverse heritage and valuing the natural beauty and resources of our environment.

Fiscal Responsibility: Through responsible spending of the funds entrusted to us, the needs of all students will be achieved.

Trust: Trust and confidence will be acquired through integrity, competence, and transparency.

District Priorities

Priority #1- Education Excellence and Equity for Every Student

We are committed to providing equitable access to high quality instruction and culturally responsive educational programs. We will offer tiered supports to ensure all students acquire the foundation to meet or exceed grade level standards on time and ready for postsecondary college and careers.

Priority #2- Highly Effective and Diverse Workforce

We are committed to recruiting and retaining high-quality diverse staff and leaders. In addition, we will fully implement and promote professional learning of all employees to ensure shared accountability for student outcomes at all levels of the organization.

Priority #3- Safe Climate and Student Centered Facilities

We are committed to educating students in a healthy and safe environment to maximize their true learning potential. Optimal facilities should include world-class buildings, equipment, and technology designed to improve and enhance student outcomes.

Priority #4- Student, Family and Community Engagement

We are committed to ensuring family and community partnerships are outcome focused and tied to academic achievement. We will cultivate family and community partnerships, as well as philanthropic partners, as resources to meet student and school needs and to ensure students receive an excellent education.

Establishment of Policies

The Policies of the Board of Education of Kent County were first adopted beginning in 1969 and have been updated and expanded periodically since then. The policies contain specific procedures for adopting new policies or modifying existing policies, and define the process of policy development as follows (Policy BGA):²⁹

- *The Board will develop policies and put them in writing so that they may serve as guidelines and goals for the successful and efficient functioning of the schools.*
- *The Board accepts the definition of policy set forth by the National School Boards Association:*
Policies are principles adopted by the School Board to chart a course of action. They tell what is wanted; they may include why and how much. Policies should be broad

²⁹

Board of Education Policy BGA @ <http://www.boarddocs.com/mabe/kcps/Board.nsf/Public#>

enough to indicate a line of action to be followed by the administration in meeting a number of problems; narrow enough to give clear guidance. Policies are guides for action by the administration, who then sets the rules and regulations to provide specific directions to school district personnel.

- *It is the Board's intention that its policies serve as sources of information and guidance for all people who are interested in, or connected with the district public schools.*
- *Board policies are framed, and are meant to be interpreted, in terms of state laws, State Board of Education rules and regulations, and the requirements of all other regulatory agencies within our local, county, state, and federal levels of government. Wherever inconsistencies of interpretation arise, the law will prevail. Conflict between local policy or regulation must be interpreted in line with the contract for members of the particular bargaining unit. The policies are also framed, and are meant to be interpreted, in terms of those educational objectives, procedures, and practices which are broadly accepted by leaders and authorities in the public education field.*
- *Changes in needs, conditions, purposes, and objectives will require revisions, deletions, and additions to the policies of present and future Boards. The Board will welcome suggestions for policy development.*

School System Capital Budget

The annual schedule for development and approval of the capital budget is as follows:

August:	Board of Education reviews and approves capital improvement plan
October:	CIP is submitted to State for review and approval; LEA staff meets with PSCP staff.
November:	Final date for submission of amendments to CIP, and for statement of support from the County government.
December:	IAC hearing on LEA requests; IAC reviews PSCP staff recommendations and approves preliminary CIP projects.
February:	IAC reviews PSCP staff recommendations and indicates interim CIP recommendations.
May:	IAC submits final CIP approvals; the Board of Public Works (BPW) approves ASP and QZAB allocations. ³⁰
May/June:	County Government approves capital budget.

Projects in the local capital improvement plan may be locally funded, may be funded through a combination of State and local funds (CIP), or may be funded entirely by the State (ASP). For projects eligible for State funding participation, the CIP for the budget year is submitted in October of the preceding year to the Interagency Commission on School Construction (IAC); ASP projects are

³⁰ Until July 2018, the BPW had final approval of projects in the capital programs. In some past fiscal years the General Assembly determined that the IAC rather than the BPW had final approval authority over the annual CIP projects. In the 2018 session, the General Assembly approved legislation that assigned school construction approvals to a newly formed Interagency Commission on School Construction rather than the Board of Public Works. HB 151 (Chapter 22, Laws of 2017).

typically submitted in the spring of the budget year. The CIP request to the State must be supported by the County government.

Projects requested of the State must be in substantial agreement with the Educational Facilities Master Plan. Therefore, this 2024 EFMP will provide support for project requests in the FY 2026 CIP to be submitted in autumn 2024 and for the FY 2025 ASP.

Specific Goals and Policies

Staffing Ratios

The Board of Education does not have a formally adopted policy on staffing ratios/class size. However, a committee of principals and administrators developed informal guidelines for the elementary grades in 2017. This group determined that the following variables and factors should be applied to staffing ratio/class size determinations:

- 1. Permit flexibility for the administration.
- 2. Maintain a reasonable assignment for teachers.
- 3. Recognize the fiscal ramifications.
- 4. Consider the need for a great deal of individualized attention in the early elementary level.
- 5. Consider the limited independence that children at this level can effectively handle.
- 6. Consider the need for grouping which includes enough space in the room for a reading circle as well as gross motor activities essential in a primary classroom.

The Superintendent proposed, and the Board approved, the following staffing-to-student ratio standards:³¹

Pre-Kindergarten:	1:20
Kindergarten through Grade 1:	1:22
Grades 2 & 3:	1:24
Grades 4 & 5:	1:24
Grades 6 through 12:	1:24

Grade Organizational Pattern

For many years the Kent County Public Schools has adopted and utilized the grade organization shown below:

Elementary	Pre-K to 5
Middle	6 to 8
High (w/ Career & Technology)	9 to 12

Since 1983, a number of Advisory Committees, Blue Ribbon Committees, consultants, and most

³¹ These ratios differ somewhat from those used by the IAC to determine State Rated Capacity; see Section III.

recently a Strategic Planning Committee have examined the potential consolidation and/or closing of public schools in Kent County. Many of these studies were prompted by the declining school enrollment and enrollment projections. Table I-1 below shows how the public school enrollment for Kent County Public Schools declined between 2000 and 2010, and was projected at that time to continue to decline through 2025.

Table I-1 – Historic and Projected Enrollment (as of 2010; headcount, pre-k to 12)

Year	Enrollment
2000	2,795
2005	2,434
2010	2,183
2015 (projected in 2010)	2,029
2025 (projected in 2010)	2,000

The decline appears to have accelerated, since the current projected headcount enrollment for 2025 is 1,730 students, almost 13% less than the projection made in 2010. With a declining student enrollment, it was recognized that there was excess capacity in the school system. The excess of capacity represented not only a burden on the operational budget of the system, it also resulted in schools that were too small to effectively deliver the instructional program. This was particularly true at the middle school level.

Until 2010, Kent County Public Schools operated a total of eight (8) schools - four (4) elementary schools, three (3) middle schools, and one (1) high school. On April 15, 2010 the Kent County Board of Education adopted Resolution No. 2010-01, which established a new grade organization pattern and changed the usage and names of several of the existing public schools. Effective for the 2010-2011 school year, there were to be five (5) elementary schools with similar grade configurations, serving students in pre-kindergarten to grade 5; one (1) middle school serving students in grades 6 to 8; and one (1) high school serving students in grades 9 to 12. The changes are shown in Table I-2 below:

Table I-2 – Changes in Grade Organization, April 2010

Former Galena Middle School (grades 5-8)	Became Galena Elementary School (grades pre-K - 5)
Former Rock Hall Middle School (grades 5-8)	Became Rock Hall Elementary School (grades pre-K - 5)
Former Chestertown Middle School (grades 5-8)	Became Kent County Middle School (grades 6-8)
Former Rock Hall Elementary School (grades pre-K - 4)	Became Central Office Administration

In January 2017, the Superintendent recommended the closing of Millington and Worton Elementary Schools, with consolidation of their students into the remaining three elementary schools in the system. These recommendations were presented in order to improve the learning environment and align

operating expenses with the current and anticipated budget of the school system. The full report, *The Superintendent's Final School Closure and Boundary Adjustment Recommended Plan*, is found on the Kent County Public Schools website under "Consolidation".

The Superintendent's January 2017 recommendation for school closing and consolidation was approved by the Board of Education on March 20, 2017. Student assignments were distributed in May 2017 and the revised attendance areas were in effect for the 2017-2018 school year.

In February 2018, following the closures of these two schools, the Board of Education accepted the recommendation of the Strategic Planning Committee and affirmed that the approved grade configuration should continue in the five schools that remain. The former attendance zones of the seven schools and the current attendance zones of the five schools are shown in Maps I-A through I-D that follow.

On April 5, 2023, the Board approved the educational specification for the Kent County Middle School as a grade 5-8 instructional facility. When the replacement project is completed, the school system will consist of three elementary schools with grades PK to 4, a single middle school with grades 5 to 8, and a single high school with grades 9 to 12.

The Covid-19 Pandemic: KCPS Recovery Plan and Re-opening of Schools

Kent County Public Schools, much like the rest of the country, was greatly affected by the pandemic. As of March 2020, Kent County Public Schools transitioned to 100% remote learning for the remainder of the 2019-2020 school year. Beginning at the start of the 2020-2021 school year in September 2020, schools were still 100% remote. Towards the end of September 2020 and into early October 2020, Kent County Public Schools began bringing back groups of students to the elementary schools. The initial group of students that returned were special education students as well as our highest need children at the elementary school level. By November, the elementary schools and middle school were operating on a 4-day schedule for in-person learning. Students were grouped into A and B day groups so the majority of students that returned had 2 days of in-person learning. At Kent County High School, the only students in-person were special education and CTE program students.

In-person learning followed all guidelines and protocols surrounding COVID-19. All classrooms were sanitized throughout each day and given a thorough cleaning each evening by the custodial staff. In December 2020, KCPS had to go back to 100% remote learning due to the nationwide spike in COVID-19 cases. In January 2021, KCPS returned to the same in-person learning structure from November, while beginning to bring in high school students for in-person learning. By March 2021, KCPS had increased the number of students allowed to return to in-person learning at each school. Finally, in April 2021, KCPS allowed all students that wanted to return to in-person learning 4 days per week to do so. Fridays were 100% remote learning days. This schedule was used for the remainder of the school year.

For the 2021-2022 School Year, Kent County Public Schools was able to operate on a normal school schedule, while still adhering to all masking and social distancing requirements. On February 28, 2022, as a result of the decision by the Maryland State Board of Education, it was announced that masking was now optional for all students and staff of Kent County Public Schools. Social distancing mandates were still followed when possible. At this writing, neither masking nor social distancing protocols are in effect, and based on past experience, the school administration is reasonably confident that any future recurrence of pandemic conditions can be accommodated within the existing facilities.

Districting and Redistricting Policies (Policy FL)

The Board of Education uses the following policy factors when making decisions on school attendance districts and redistricting:

1. The responsibility conferred on the Board by Article 77, Section 42, Annotated Code of Maryland, regarding the determination of the geographical attendance areas for all public schools in the County.
2. The trust held to provide, direct, and maintain throughout the County a reasonably uniform system of public schools designed to provide quality education and equal educational opportunity for all youth.
3. The need as a tax-supported institution to see that policies enacted and decisions made reflect a careful balance between educational considerations and cost effectiveness.
4. The need to provide opportunities for citizen input on important issues facing the Board.

The policy cited above was followed by the Board of Education during the school closing, consolidation, and redistricting process that culminated with the passage of Resolution No. 2010-10 in April 2010. This policy was also followed regarding the closing of two elementary schools for the 2017-2018 school year. The policy will be followed for the opening of the future Kent County Middle School as a grade 5 to 8 facility.

School Attendance Areas

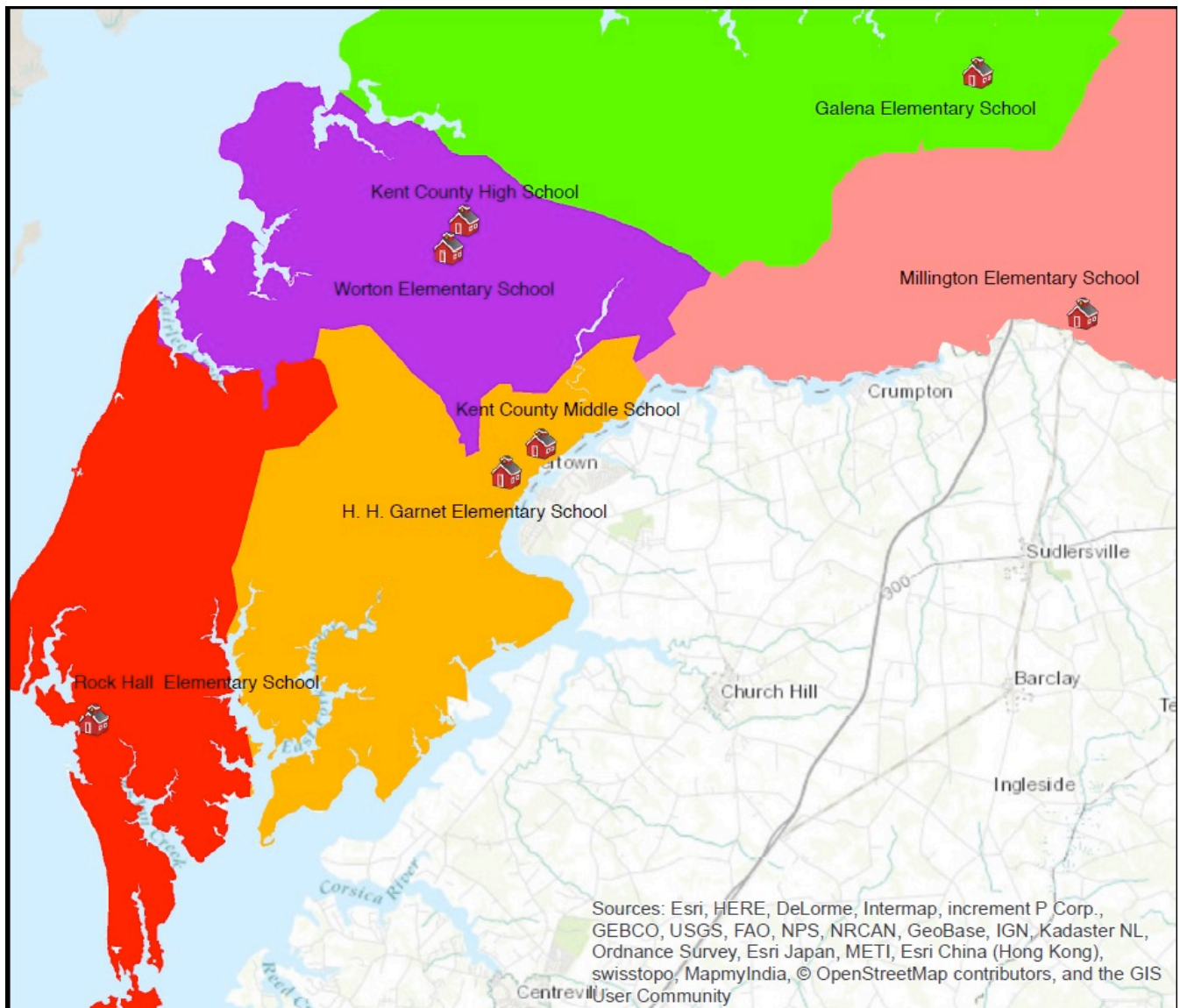
The locations of the five school facilities and their current attendance areas are shown on the following maps. The maps show that some parts of Kent County have geographical limitations which restrict the flexibility of the Board to adjust school district boundaries. The southern area of the County is shaped by several peninsulas that have restricted access to the main part of the County. Large distances between population centers in combination with a rural road pattern result in long transportation times, a factor that must be accounted for in any effort to consolidate schools and redistrict their attendance areas.

Map I-A: Public School Locations

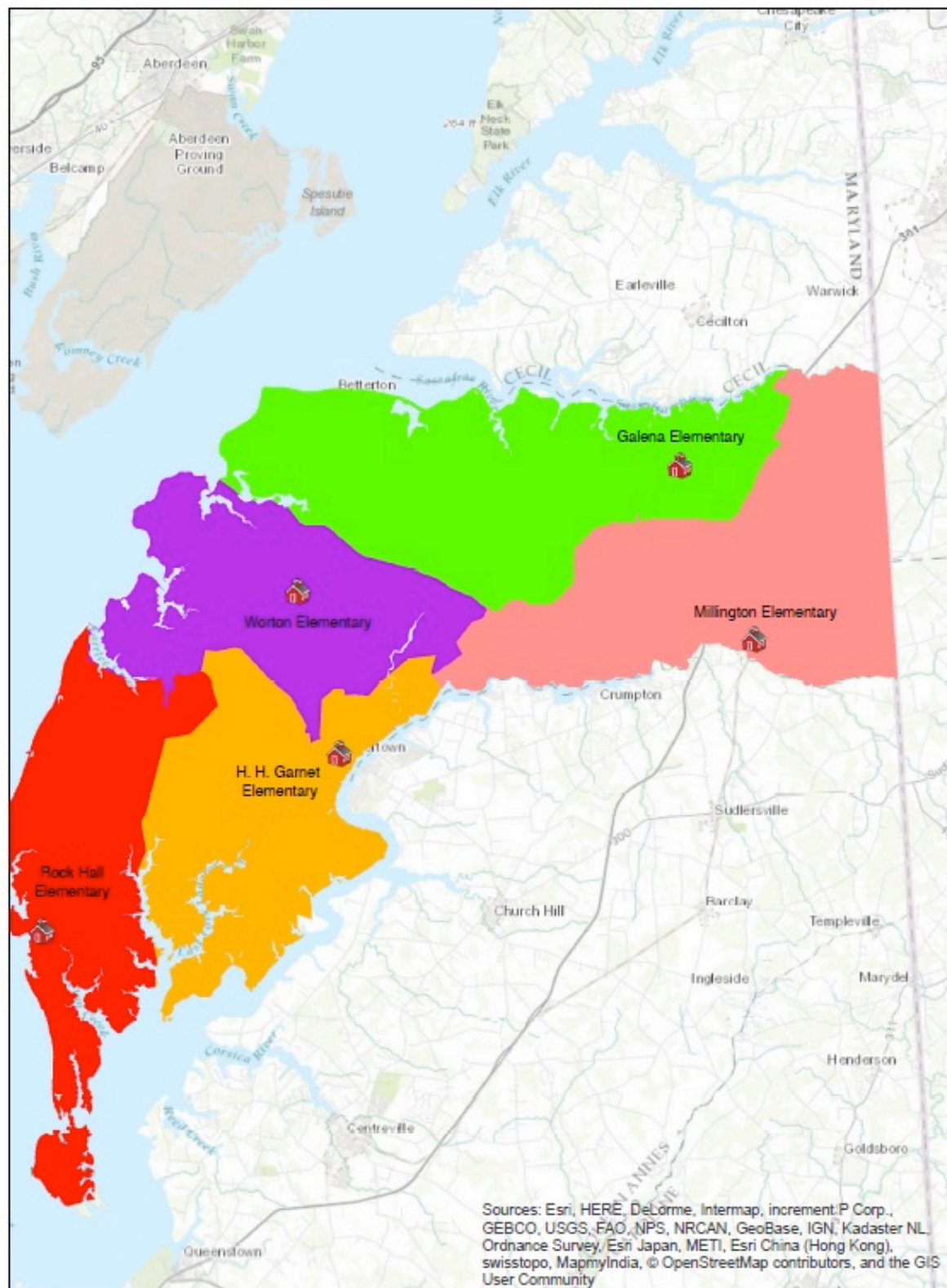
Map I-B: Current Elementary School Attendance Areas

Map I-C: 2017-2018 School Year Elementary School Attendance Areas

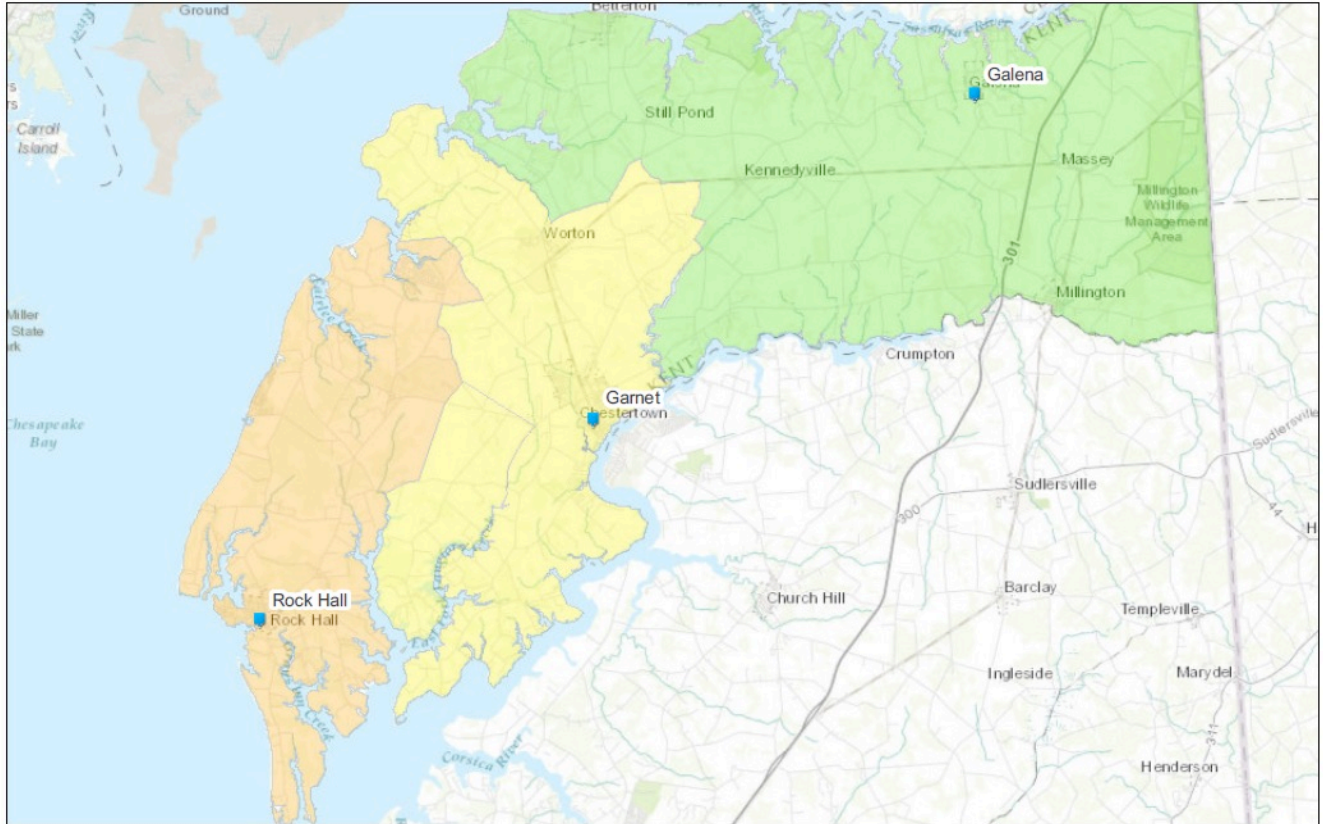
Map I-D: Middle and High School Attendance Area (entire County)



**Map I-A: Former Public School Locations and Attendance Areas
NOT TO SCALE**



**Map I-B: Former Elementary School Attendance Areas
NOT TO SCALE**



Map I-C: Current Elementary School Attendance Areas
(2017-2018 and subsequent school years)
NOT TO SCALE



Map I-D: Middle and High School Attendance Area (entire county)
 (Note: Former Elementary School attendance area boundaries are shown)
NOT TO SCALE

Procedures for Out-of-Attendance Zone Placement (Policy JFBA, Procedure 600-42)

Parents and/or guardians can request approval of Out-of-Zone Placements. A total of 61 applications were submitted for the 2023-2024 school year. A total of 61 were approved for elementary school students (pre-k to 5). Out-of-Zone requests and approvals dropped significantly from 2010-2020 then have seen a slight increase since the 2019-2020 school year, but still not to the level of 2010-2011. The approved requests were 103 for 2010-2011, 33 for 2014-2015, 31 for 2016-2017, 35 for 2017-2018, 42 for 2018-2019, 37 for 2019-2020, 45 for 2020-2021, 53 for 2021-2022, 54 for 2022-2023.

I. Purpose and Scope

The purpose of these procedures is to set forth specific requirements regarding approval of requests for out-of-zone placements.

II. Requirements

The attendance area for each school located in the county will be designated by the Board of Education. The Supervisor of Student Services or a Pupil Services Worker will investigate all requests for exceptions to this policy.

Out-of-Zone placement decisions require balancing countywide considerations with those of the student and family. Building utilization, enrollment levels and the educational program needs of the individual student are considered in weighing the impact of a request to transfer a student from the home school to some other school of choice. Applications for an Out-of-Zone placement will be processed on a first come-first served basis.

Once approved, Out-of-Zone placements are in effect until such time as the student completes elementary school (5th grade), or a different request is made by the parent and approved by the Supervisor of Student Services.

The Pupil Services Worker and Supervisor of Student Services are sensitive to requests which may reflect a desire to avoid schools which may have a different social composition, or to situations where a change is requested simply because of the parent's perceptions that one school is better than another. School preference is not a qualifying reason for an Out-of-Zone placement.

Students who reside in Kent County but who reside outside the service area of the school in which they wish to enroll will not be admitted until the Pupil Services Worker and Supervisor of Student Services reviews the placement request. The Supervisor of Student Services must give final approval before the student may be enrolled at the requested school.

III. Criteria for Approval

An Out-of-Zone placement may be requested for one of the following reasons:

1. Childcare

These requests are made when the primary issue is the child's safety and welfare. A childcare provider is that person, nursery school, daycare center, or other facility, which directly provides childcare for the referred child.

2. Curriculum

These requests involve the pursuit of a program of instruction unavailable in the student's

home school. A program is defined as a sequence of courses leading to a specific academic or vocational preparation or to the development of a specific interest or need.

Consideration will not be given to a request based on a single course, athletic activities, or extracurricular activities, as these do not constitute a program of instruction. Curriculum requests are granted only for the duration of the curricular program.

3. Hardship

These requests pertain to personal and family circumstances of an unusual and adverse nature, which precludes the student's enrollment in his/her home school.

4. Other Conditions

Other conditions, to be determined by the Superintendent, may be justification for waiving the attendance zone procedures if they are in the best interest of the student and/or school system.

IV. Limitations

The Office of Student Services will review the reasons for the request and determine whether any limitations apply such as: school enrollment, grade level class size, program eligibility and capacity, and impact on building utilization and support services. If the request meets the guidelines and no limitations apply, the Out-of-Zone placement is generally approved. Factors that limit an Out-of-Zone placement in a requested school:

- School is at or over 95 percent of State Rated Capacity based on adjusted enrollment
- Over-enrollment of a particular grade level. Out-of-Zone placements will be viewed as adversely affecting class size if the average class size at any grade level meets or exceeds the following:

Pre-kindergarten	20
Kindergarten through Grade 1	20
Grades 2 & 3	22
Grades 4 & 5	24
Grades 6 through 12	26

V. Conditional Attendance

If a family is planning to move into a different attendance zone in Kent County, documentation of construction completion, settlement date, or rental agreement is required from contractor, lawyer, realtor or landlord.

If a family moves from one school attendance area to another in the county after February 1 of the school year, the children may continue in the school in which they are already enrolled for the remainder of the school year. This is not obligatory, but may be done at the option of the parents. Parents would assume responsibility for transportation once the family moves.

VI. Transportation

Transportation for students given Out-of-Zone placement shall be the responsibility of the parents/guardians.

VII. Required Application

Requests for placement outside of a student's attendance zone must be made in writing to the Supervisor of Student Services on a request form available from the student's school. These forms must be submitted to the student's school by June 1st for the following school year. The principal will forward the completed forms to the Supervisor of Student Services as they are received. Application for Out-of-Zone placement must be submitted every year. There is not guarantee of approval for continued placement from year to year.

VIII. Notification of Approval/Denial

Notification of approval or denial will be provided to the parent/guardian by August 25th.

IX. Transfers During the School Year

Requests for a change of school placement during the school year will be acted upon, and notification will be provided within ten (10) working days of the receipt of the request. Since school changes during the school year impact severely upon both the student and the school, such requests will be carefully scrutinized as to need. The sending school will be required to document efforts to resolve the problem if the request is based upon behavior of the student, personal differences between the school and the home, student attendance, or student academic progress.

X. Returning to Attendance Zone School

Families receiving approval for Out-of-Zone placement who wish to return to their former school may do so upon written request to the Supervisor of Student Services.

XI. Termination

Upon the written recommendation of the receiving school principal or a Pupil Services Worker, an Out-of-Zone placement may be revoked by the Supervisor of Student Services under any of the following conditions:

1. The stated reason for the Out-of-Zone placement is no longer valid.
2. False information was given at the time of the Out-of-Zone placement request.
3. There are more than three (3) unexcused absences or tardies in any marking period
4. The parent/guardian picks up the child early from school more than five (5) times in any marking period.

The parent will be notified in writing of the decision of the Supervisor of Student Services.

XII. Appeal Process

Appeals should be addressed in writing to the Superintendent of Schools within 15 days following notification of denial or termination of an Out-of-Zone placement.

School Closing Procedures (Policy FL)

Policy FL addresses the closing or consolidation of schools.³² In accordance with the Maryland Annotated Code, Education Article § 4-120 and COMAR 13A.02.09.01, the following factors are to be reviewed in any such considerations:³³

1. Student enrollment trends;
2. Age or condition of school buildings;
3. Transportation;
4. Educational programs;
5. Racial composition of student body;
6. Financial considerations;
7. Student relocation;
8. Impact on community in geographic attendance area for school proposed to be closed and school, or schools, to which students will be relocating.

Policy FL also describes the opportunity for citizens, taxpayers, parents, educators and students to express opinions on any proposed closing or consolidation; scheduling of recommendations; and appeals to the State Board of Education. Significant and flexible dates and activities from the procedure include:

June-Sept.	Administration gathers and analyzes data. Board decision to charge Superintendent to proceed.
October-December	Superintendent presents proposed plan and recommendation to Board. Board provides written notice to public and plans for a public hearing.
November-February	Board reviews and considers all testimony and data. Superintendent presents to the Board the final school.
April	Final decision of Board is announced by April 30 th .
Aug. – Sept.	Schools open under new plan.

The closure of Millington Elementary and Worton Elementary in the 2017-2018 school year followed these procedures and the calendar outlined above.

Site Selection and Disposal Procedures

School properties, a principal concern of this Educational Facilities Master Plan, are the responsibility of the Board. The Board is the trustee for all public school buildings and lands. Acquisition of new properties by the Board of Education must be approved by the IAC, and disposal of properties must be approved by the Board of Public Works on the recommendation of the IAC.

The Kent County Board of Education has not selected a site for a new school in over thirty years. The

³² <http://www.boarddocs.com/mabe/kcps/Board.nsf/Public>

³³ <http://www.dsd.state.md.us/comar/comarhtml/13a/13a.02.09.01.htm>

Board is committed to following the site selection procedures that are specified in COMAR 14.39.02.12 (former COMAR 23.03.02.13) "Site Selection" and the State of Maryland Public School Construction *Administrative Procedures Guide* Section 104.³⁴ The Board and the administrative staff recognize the importance of maintaining communities and neighborhoods. The staff works closely with the Kent County Department of Planning, Housing, and Zoning to monitor residential development and changes in residential patterns to keep abreast of any potential impact they may have on public school enrollments.

Because of Kent County's overall current population and population projections; the types of typical residential units being built; the general occupancies of these units; and the number of residential units that have been approved each year, there does not appear to be a need for a new school in the foreseeable future. Seating capacity is currently available in each of the five (5) Kent County public schools and is projected to remain available at least through 2029. The consolidation of student bodies approved by the Board of Education in March 2017 was accommodated within the receiving schools without renovations. However, the increase of student enrollment in the elementary schools has impacted both the circulation and the room assignments in these facilities, prompting the targeted renovation under construction for Rock Hall Elementary School and the expansion and renovation project that is currently under construction for Galena Elementary School.

Should the need arise in the future for further consolidation of two or more schools, consideration would be given to a) expansion and renovation of existing schools, or b) new construction on sites currently owned by the Board of Education. There should therefore be no need to acquire a new site. The continuing ownership of the former Worton Elementary School building provides potential space for special programs, for example an expansion of the early childhood program.

Each of the five public school buildings is located in a Priority Funding Area (PFA). If an additional school site is required in the future, the Kent County Board of Education is committed to selecting a site within a PFA, in accordance with COMAR 14.39.02, regulations .12 and .29 (former COMAR 23.03.02, regulations .13 and .28).

Special Education (Policies BEEB and IHBA)

The Kent County Board of Education supports a policy of full inclusion for special education students. Consequently, all special education students are accommodated within the five schools, and there are no separate special education centers in Kent County. The following summarizes the policies regarding special education students.

I. Policies

Special Education is addressed through two Policies: Special Education Hearings (Policy BEEB) and Special Education Policies and Goals (Policy IHBA). In addition, the Special Education Handbook, which is provided to all teachers and principals, describes the philosophy and the objectives of the Board of Education with regards to special education:

Philosophy and Goals: The Kent County Board of Education provides full educational opportunity for all students. Special Education programs and services are in place to provide individually designed

³⁴ Available at www.pscp.state.md.us.

instruction for students who are identified under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and COMAR 13A.05.01.3B as having academic, physical, intellectual, and/or social-emotional needs that impact their ability to make progress in the general education curriculum without support and services. To ensure this commitment, the Kent County Board of Education has approved the following policies:

1. All children and youth with disabilities shall be provided a free and appropriate educational program (FAPE) in compliance with federal and State regulations. All children and youth with disabilities will be provided appropriate, sequential educational programming designed to ensure some progress in the educational program. Students with disabilities shall be identified as early as possible to ensure the right of these children and youth to receive the full range of educational services in the least restrictive setting (LRE).
2. Kent County Public Schools shall provide "child find" procedures, which are in compliance with federal and State regulations and designed to identify students from birth through age twenty-one who have a disability under IDEA and are in need of special education and related services.
3. Kent County Public Schools shall ensure that the development and implementation of Individual Education Programs (IEPs), which are based upon the assessed needs of students who are identified as having disabilities under IDEA and who are in need of special education and related services, are in compliance with federal and State regulations.
4. Kent County Public Schools shall provide special education and related services for students in the least restrictive environment (LRE), in compliance with federal and State regulations.
5. Kent County Public Schools shall ensure that the confidentiality of information and all due process protections are in compliance with federal and State regulations.
6. Kent County Public Schools shall ensure that procedures related to private and religious schools, as well as interagency agreements, are in compliance with federal and State regulations.
7. Kent County Public Schools will provide ongoing staff development to enhance the instructional skills of special and general educators, in compliance with federal and State regulations.
8. Kent County Public Schools will ensure that procedures dealing with accountability and evaluation related to students with IEPs are in compliance with federal and State regulations.

The Public Agency Standards Submission (PASS) document and the Special Education Handbook outline the following:³⁵ policies and procedures for programs and services; determination of eligibility for services; evaluation/re-evaluation procedures; roles and responsibilities of IEP team members; extended school year procedures (ESY); components required in the development of the student's IEP; disciplinary procedures related to students with IEPs; parental involvement and rights; confidentiality of records; home and hospital teaching; as well as, policies and procedures regarding special education due process hearings.

³⁵ A copy of these documents is available in every school and can be found on the KCPS website.

II. Continuum of Special Education Services within the County

A full continuum of special education services is available for students with IEPs, ages birth through twenty-one. These services are provided in accordance with the IEP of a student in the least restrictive environment (LRE), as appropriate. Implementation of the IEP is with age appropriate peers in the home school of the student, or the school nearest to the home, unless the IEP cannot be implemented there, even with the support of supplementary aids and services. If the IEP team determines that the student's IEP cannot be implemented in the home school, even with the support of aids and services, a central office IEP team is convened to review the IEP and determine the least restrictive environment for implementation of services.

Children ages birth to three, who have been identified through Early Identification as needing special education and/or related services, receive the services outlined in their Intensive Family Services Plan (IFSP) in natural environments such as the home, individual day care or other day care settings.

The service coordinator will schedule a transition planning meeting at the child's home school during the six-month window between the child's age of 27 months and 33 months to discuss transitioning to an IEP or an extended IFSP if the child qualifies. Three-year olds may receive their IEP services in natural settings, such as day care, or Head Start Programs, or in the elementary school where the student will attend pre-kindergarten or kindergarten. Pre-school special education services are available for children ages four and five in their base school, as well as at the Judy Center, which is located at Henry Highland Garnet Elementary School.

Special education services are available in all elementary, middle and high schools. In order to provide a full range of services, there are countywide special education classes at Henry Highland Garnet Elementary School and Galena Elementary School. Transportation is provided to these sites when it has been determined that the site is the least restrictive environment for implementation of the IEP.

Kent County Middle and Kent County High School provide a continuum of services for all students with IEPs. Additionally, transition services are also provided at the high school for all students with IEPs to assist them in moving from high school to the adult world. At age 14, which is the age mandated by the State of Maryland, the IEP Team develops a set of coordinated activities to address the student's course of study while in school, as well as related service needs and community activities to prepare the student for adult life. The IEP Team also works closely with adult service agencies to develop linkages for students when they are ready to move to post-secondary educational activities, employment or independent living opportunities in the community.

Related services, including speech and language therapy, occupational therapy, physical therapy, vision supports, hearing services, interpreter services, counseling, transportation, and other services that may be needed to ensure that the student progresses in the educational setting are provided in accordance with the student's IEP. For many years the staff of the Kent County Public Schools and staff from the Mid-Shore Special Education Consortium (MSSEC) have provided some of these related services. Effective for the 2014-2015 school year the staff of the Kent County Public Schools and/or outside service providers have provided the related services.

Another service that is provided for students is home and hospital teaching, which is short-term instruction for students with temporary conditions, including medical conditions, temporary emotional

conditions that do not require special education but do require mental health treatment, and pregnancy. In addition, services are provided for students enrolled in private and religious schools, on a limited basis, based on the proportionate share of federal funds that are available. Finally, the Parent Center, located at Kent County Middle School, provides information, resources and training to assist families in supporting the educational needs of their children.

As of October 2022, the Kent County Public Schools had identified and were providing services to 248 students with disabilities. This number is 14.16 percent of the total student population of 1,751 (Pre-K - 12). The disability categories with the largest number of students include: specific learning disabilities (99), other health impairments (44), speech or language impairments (34), Autism (27), Developmental Delay (15), intellectual disabilities (12), emotional disabilities (9), multiple disabilities (5), traumatic brain injury (2), and hearing impairment (1).

Career and Technology Education

Career and Technology Education is designed to offer students the opportunity to pursue a sequential technical and academic program of study leading to advancement in a career field. These programs help to ensure the transition into post-secondary education and/or to earn industry credentials in a career field.

In the early 2000s, MSDE along with Career Technology Supervisors and statewide industry advisory groups identified ten (10) career clusters. These partners further defined career pathways/programs for schools to adopt. These programs of study are adopted by local systems and are comparable state-wide in terms of curriculum, training, and equipment.

In 2001-02, Kent County High School aligned with the State initiative to adopt five (5) career clusters and eight (8) programs/pathways. Over the years, our local advisory committee along with the program advisory committees have met regularly to recommend the new adoption, continuation, or deletion of career technology programs of study for Kent County High School. While there has been some variation over the years, there are currently nine (9) pathways/programs for the 2019-2020 school year. They are as follows: Agricultural Science, Academy of Health Professions, Automotive Technician, Construction Trades, Food and Beverage Management, FM Broadcasting, Project Lead The Way Pre-Engineering, Teacher Academy of Maryland, and Maryland Institute of Fire and Rescue. New adoptions since the 1997 report are: Teacher Academy and Fire and Rescue; the following programs have been deleted: Computer Technology, Academy of Finance, Graphic Design/Printmaking, and Career Development and Research.

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Table I-3: CTE Programs

Program	Year Added/ Revised	Industry Certification	Tran- scripted Credit	Articulation Agreement
Agri-science, CASE	2010		Yes	Yes
Automotive Technology, NATEF/ASE	2004	Yes	Yes	Yes
Broadcast Communications Technology	1998			Yes
Culinary Arts, Pro Start	2010	Yes	Yes	Yes
Construction Technology, NCCER	2010	Yes		
Engineering Technology Project Lead the Way	2004		Yes	Yes
Health Professions Technology, CNA, GNA, Pharmacy Tech.	2012	Yes		
Maryland Institute of Fire and Rescue	2008	Yes		Yes
Teacher Academy of Maryland:	2014	Yes		Yes

Kent Alternative Program³⁶

This program provides an alternative educational setting for students assigned to an alternative school program classroom as part of a disciplinary referral. The referral form and guidelines for the Alternative School are part of the procedure manual, Procedure Number 600-82.³⁷

An Alternative School Program was approved by the Board of Education for the 2008-09 school year to serve middle and high school students. This program was initially housed in Rock Hall Middle School. Students were transported there for the full day program. Beginning with the 2010-2011 school-year the program was relocated to a relocatable classroom building on the Kent County High School site. The setting provides four (4) classrooms, a computer room, administrative space, and lavatories.

Beginning with the 2013-2014 school year, the program became known as the Kent Alternative Program (KAP) and the services are provided under contract with Transforming Lives, Inc. This is an Interim Alternative Education Placement (IAEP), and teachers and related service providers in this program mirror a student's home school by administering the same educational and social-emotional

³⁶ <https://www.catapultlearning.com/schools/kent-alternative-program-worton-md/>

³⁷ The procedure manual is currently available in paper format, and was placed online in the Fall of 2017 (see <https://sis.schools.com/locations/maryland/kent-alternative-program> and <https://catapultlearning.com/category/kent-alternative-program/>)

interventions, but they do so in a more therapeutic and highly structured environment.

At KAP, the behavioral/counseling component is the primary focus and is based on an individual and schoolwide behavior management system with built-in incentives and rewards for positive behavior. In accordance with this, students have access to individual counseling outside of their regularly scheduled services when needed. By offering a small classroom environment with a high teacher-to-student ratio and one-to-one counseling services, this program allows students the ability to quickly transition back to their home school. Future progress and success are ensured through a transitional track once the students return to the regular public school setting.

During the 2019-2020 school year, an average of 15 students participated in the KAP program. There is ample capacity in the two relocatable classrooms for anticipated student participation in this program. During the 2020-2021 school year, there were no students in the KAP program due to the COVID-19 pandemic. During the 2021-2022 school year, there was an average of 13 students in the KAP program. For school year 2022-2023 there was an average of 12 students in the KAP program at any given time. For school year 2023-2024 there was an average of 7-10 students in the KAP program at any given time.

Community Use of School Facilities (Policy KG)

The Board of Education has recognized that unused space may be available in some schools. The Board makes space available to community groups and other governmental entities in accordance with Policy KG. Facilities and grounds “shall be available in accordance with the following order of priority.

1. *Any curricular or extra curricular program of the educational system.*
2. *Any program which is directly affiliated with the educational program such as the Parent-Teacher Association, Alumni Association, etc.*
3. *Any public recreation and parks program sponsored by the Kent County Department of Parks and Recreation.*
4. *All other uses, such as volunteer agencies, improvement associations and the like, on a first come first served basis. None of these that have been approved will be canceled except for postponement of activities covered in 1 and 2 above.³⁸*

In accordance with this policy, the Board of Education has entered into an Agreement with the Kent County Board of Parks and Recreation. The purpose of this Agreement is to obtain an optimum use of public-owned recreational facilities so that the taxpayer will receive the greatest return on investment, and so that maximum use can be made of these facilities in publicly-owned buildings and on playground areas. The Agreement includes policies for prioritization, maintenance and construction, property damage, fund raising, use of equipment, use of supplies, and supervision.

It is the policy of the Board to expand its efforts to lease available space when appropriate so that this space will remain available for anticipated future growth in enrollment. The Board has established the following priorities for the lease of such space during regular school hours:

1. Kent County school-based programs, such as special education classes, enrichment classes, senior centers, etc. will have first priority.

³⁸ <http://www.boarddocs.com/mabe/kcps/Board.nsf/Public#>

2. Community programs (public-supported or private non-profit) which provide learning experiences for children or needed community services (e.g., senior centers, counseling centers, nutrition centers) will have the next priority.
3. Non-public schools and/or nurseries that will not attract additional students from the regular school programs will then be considered.
4. Private enterprise businesses or private offices will not be considered for rental.

The Policy Manual contains detailed policies to implement this program, including lease agreement provisions and operation of programs. The Policy Manual also provides for the afterhours use of school buildings. Areas covered include reservations by the Board, approval procedures, custodial services, security, insurance requirements, utilities costs, exclusions of standard charges for certain organizations, general regulations, fees, and applications. There are currently no lease agreements in place in Kent County Public Schools.

The educational specification for the replacement Kent County Middle School calls for a 750 square foot community health center, to be located with a separate entrance so that adults may come and go during the day without interacting with students.

Maintenance of School Facilities

The *Comprehensive Maintenance Plan for Kent County Public Schools* establishes maintenance policies and procedures. The overall purpose of the plan is to “develop, maintain, and/or improve the maintenance program of the public school system to support the delivery of educational programs and services in safe and healthy environments as effectively and efficiently as possible.”³⁹

This plan is updated annually and submitted to the Public School Construction Program, as required by the Interagency Commission on School Construction. The specific objectives of maintenance are as follows:

1. *Maintain a positive learning environment;*
2. *Maintain the asset value of the property;*
3. *Eliminate or reduce the number and scope of fires, accidents, and other safety hazards on the property;*
4. *Provide buildings that function at top efficiency;*
5. *Provide continuous use of facilities without disruptions to the educational program.*
6. *Conserve energy.*

Through a contract with the Aramark Corporation, Kent County Public Schools developed and maintained a *Five-Year Deferred Maintenance Plan*. The objective of the Plan was to assist the Kent County Public Schools in addressing matters of major concern related to physical plant equipment, facility integrity, and the health, safety, and welfare of students, staff, and visitors. This plan provided valuable information to identify potential projects, prioritize needs, prepare cost estimates, and identify appropriate funding programs and/or resources. These projects can usually be accomplished through the capital improvement program, systemic renovation projects (State/County funds), Aging School

³⁹ *Comprehensive Maintenance Plan, Fiscal Year 2016*, Prepared by Wayne J. Bedwell, September 7, 2016, page 1.

Program projects (State funds), and/or other projects with County funding.⁴⁰ Unfortunately, capital and maintenance needs exceed the annual available State and/or County funding, and therefore many projects must be deferred.

In October 2012 Aramark initiated a process to prepare a Facility Condition Assessment Report of the Kent County Public Schools.⁴¹ The final report was received in June 2013. It was presented to the Kent County Board of Education in July 2013 and was subsequently presented and discussed with the Kent County Commissioners.

The report identified building systems and/or components that would require the expenditure of funds to make the necessary improvements over the next ten years. This report examined the following categories of building systems, components, and/or areas: heating, controls, cooling, electrical, exterior shell, finishes, fire safety systems, foundations, grounds, interior shell, plumbing, and ventilation. Based upon the then-current cost figures for these improvements, as presented in the report, the total to make improvements in all seven public schools operative at the time, as well as the Board's administrative office building, was approximately \$21.354 million. 42 projects were identified as stand-alone projects, each with a construction value in excess of \$100,000.

The individual project figures and the total estimated cost figure were given in then-current dollars, based upon Aramark utilizing R.S. Means 2012 with an adjustment for a regional cost factor. Each project was assessed for its impact on institutional missions, including accessibility, academic program, asset preservation, cost containment, public interface, safety/security/regulatory, student life, and sustainability. This facility condition assessment (FCA) did not include an educational adequacy assessment component. For each proposed project in the ten-year period covered, the report provided a cost estimate escalated to the anticipated date of contracting. Since the report was published, two elementary schools were closed at the end of the 2016-2017 school year, the roof and HVAC system at H. H. Garnet Elementary School were replaced, the roof at Rock Hall Elementary School was replaced, the roof at Galena Elementary School was replaced and the mechanical system substantially upgraded, and the roof at Kent County High School was replaced. Consequently, the total backlog of needed improvements has been and will continue to be reduced, while at the same time the facilities have aged and the cost of construction has increased. The Strategic Planning report published in January 2018 indicated that a new and more complete facility condition assessment should be undertaken to account for the current condition of the school buildings. The new near-term projects called for in the Strategic Plan, all of which have been completed at this writing, would be incorporated into a new facility condition assessment. The replacement of Kent County Middle School with a new, state-of-the-art facility, representing 18% of the total facility plant, will have a substantial impact on eliminating a large number of backlog items and reducing the overall maintenance burden.

As a specific project is identified to be undertaken and/or a request is developed for State and/or County funding in a specific year, it is imperative that an architect, engineer, and/or other design consultant be hired to determine the exact scope of work required and to develop a cost estimate based upon the anticipated bid date. The estimates in the 2012 Aramark report provide a starting point, but should not be relied upon to prepare actual cost estimates for funding. Accurate cost estimates can only be developed based upon a detailed examination of the proposed project; the existing conditions of the

⁴⁰ Formerly, the Qualified Zone Academy Bond (QZAB) program was included in this list.

⁴¹ A copy of the report is available in the Superintendent's office.

building component(s) at the time of review; a specified detailed scope of work; a realistic anticipated bid date; the availability of supplies, equipment, and contractors; and market conditions within Kent County.⁴² The exact timing of individual projects will depend on the urgency of the problem to be corrected and the availability of County and State funding.

Transportation Policies (Policy EEA)

Policies of the Kent County Board of Education on busing and transportation of students are found in the Policy Manual. Procedures to implement this Policy are included in the Administrative Procedures Manual 900-1 and include: general policy, emergency vehicles, school bus drills, transportation for after school activities, school bus routing, school bus safety program, and school bus driver trainer. The Procedure also addresses eligibility for school bus transportation, eligibility conditions, authorized passengers, school attendance areas, suspension of bus riding privileges, bus route extensions and stops, standees on a bus, responsibilities of the pupil and parent, and delayed opening of schools due to fog, ice or snow.

In addition, the Procedure Manual authorizes the adoption of separate "Kent County Public Schools, Rules and Regulations Concerning Pupil Transportation".⁴³ These rules and regulations provide detailed policy implementation in the following subject areas: eligibility, non-transported areas, exceptions, handicapped pupils, non-approved riders, funding, operations, school bus contracts, routing and scheduling, pupil transportation reporting, minimum conditions for use of school buses over 10 years of service, snow tire requirement, and exceptions.

Kent County is a rural county where the vast majority of the students live in areas that require bus transportation to and from school. There are very few students who walk or bike to school. The figures below include students who do not take bus transportation to or from school even though they would be eligible for this service, since their parent or guardian has made a decision to not utilize this service.

Table I-4: Walkers, by School

School Name	9/30/2023 K-12 Enrollment	No. of Walkers	% Walkers
Galena Elem.	245	10	4.08%
Garnett Elem.	296	29	9.80%
Rock Hall Elem.	176	3	1.70%
Kent County Middle	382	37	9.69%
Kent County High	522	9	1.72%
Total (K to 12)	1,621	88	5.43%

⁴² The Interagency Commission on School Construction indicates that statewide school construction costs have escalated approximately 43% in the ten years between July 2016 and July 2025 (Interagency Commission on School Construction, Fiscal Year 2022 Public School Construction Allocations, approved December 31, 2020, Section VIII; subsequent fiscal year instruction manuals). This construction cost escalation figure must be adjusted for market conditions unique to each locality.

⁴³ Copies of the Administrative Procedures Manual and "Rules and Regulations Concerning Pupil Transportation" are available in the Superintendent's office.

II. COMMUNITY ANALYSIS

County Demographic Data

Population Changes, Distribution, and Projections

Kent County has the smallest population of Maryland's 24 political subdivisions. For most of its recent history the population of Kent County has been relatively stable with a slight upward growth trend. Kent County's population increased in each decade between 1940 and 2010, with the greatest average annual growth rate of 1.3 percent occurring between 1950 and 1960. In the 1980s the average annual growth rate was 0.7 percent and in the 1990s it was 0.8 percent, but in the decade between 2000 and 2010 it slowed to 0.5 percent.

This pattern of slow growth has changed between 2010 and 2020. The data from the 2020 census released in September 2021 indicates that in that decade the total population of Kent County decreased from 20,197 persons to 19,198, a loss of 999 persons (4.9%). The population aged 18 and older decreased by a slightly lower figure of 2.9%, suggesting that the school-age population is decreasing faster than that of older people. This corresponds to anecdotal evidence that Kent County is a desirable place to live for more mature individuals, for example retirees and householders who are able to telework from home. The US Census American Community Survey estimated modest growth in the population for the past two years; this growth was generated through the in-migration of older people rather than by an increase in the number of births. The US Census estimates the county population in 2023 was 19,303.

The Maryland Department of Planning has not yet released population projections based on the 2020 census. The former projection of December 2020, which was based on the 2010 census, projected an overall population increase for Kent County between 2010 and 2045 of 2,053, an increase of 10.1 percent in the thirty-five year period (Table II-4).

Tables II-1 and II-2 show that the most significant past population trend in Kent County was the disparate growth rates among election districts. The majority of the districts grew between 1940 and 2010, with only Edesville having a lower population in 2010 (2,618) than in 1940 (2,738). From 2000 to 2010 three of the seven districts (Kennedyville, Edesville, and Pomona) lost population (110 to 126 each, for a total of 346 persons). Two districts had small increases (Fairlee at 40 persons and Worton at 79 persons), and Massey and Chestertown had decadal increases above 10 percent. Massey increased by 669 persons (21.1%) and Chestertown increased by 558 persons (10.7%). These two districts combined, with 9,617 people, accounted for 47.6 percent of the entire population of Kent County in 2010. The total gain for the county in the 2000 to 2010 period was 1,346, resulting in a net gain of 1,000.

By contrast, the period between 2010 and 2020 saw a decrease in every election district in the county except Chestertown. Chestertown grew by 3.6%, or 208 persons. Meanwhile, the decreases in population among the other election districts ranged from 6.5% in Kennedyville to 12.4% in Fairlee. These changes are represented graphically by Figure II-1. The increase in an urbanized area and declines in surrounding rural areas is similar to the trend seen in a neighboring Maryland jurisdiction, Talbot County, over the same period.

The Chestertown District had the largest population in 2020, with 5,983 residents or 31.2 percent of the population of Kent County's population (up from 28.6 percent in 2010). The Pomona District had the smallest population, with 1,124 residents, or 5.9 percent. Because of the small size of Kent County, a single large development in any one year can cause a significant temporary alteration in

the growth rates when comparing the districts.

Table II-1: Historical Population, 1940 – 2020 by Election District⁴⁴

Election District	1940	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	2020
1. Massey	2,295	2,242	2,576	2,707	2,889	3,033	3,173	3,842	3,553
2. Kennedyville	1,854	1,645	1,797	1,840	1,796	2,069	2,063	1,953	1,826
3. Worton	1,671	1,685	1,919	1,956	2,258	2,342	2,808	2,887	2,656
4. Chestertown	2,920	3,395	3,964	4,209	3,949	4,261	5,217	5,775	5,983
5. Edesville	2,738	2,732	2,929	2,889	2,861	2,770	2,728	2,618	2,391
6. Fairlee	1,067	1,102	1,320	1,352	1,422	1,987	1,860	1,900	1,665
7. Pomona	920	876	976	1,193	1,520	1,380	1,348	1,222	1,124
Kent County	13,465	13,677	15,481	16,146	16,695	17,842	19,197	20,197	19,198

Table II-2: Annual Rate (Percent) of Population Change, 1940 – 2020 by Election District⁴⁵

Election District	1940 - 1950	1950 - 1960	1960 - 1970	1970 - 1980	1980 - 1990	1990 - 2000	2000- 2010	2010- 2020
1. Massey	-2.3%	14.9%	5.1%	6.7%	5.0%	4.6%	21.1%	-7.5%
2. Kennedyville	-11.3%	9.2%	2.4%	-2.4%	15.2%	-0.3%	-5.3%	-6.5%
3. Worton	0.8%	13.9%	1.9%	15.4%	3.7%	19.9%	2.8%	-8.0%
4. Chestertown	16.3%	16.8%	6.2%	-6.2%	7.9%	22.4%	10.7%	3.6%
5. Edesville	-0.2%	7.2%	-1.4%	-1.0%	-3.2%	-1.5%	-4.0%	-8.7%
6. Fairlee	3.3%	19.8%	2.4%	5.2%	39.7%	-6.4%	2.2%	-12.4%
7. Pomona	-4.8%	11.4%	22.2%	27.4%	-9.2%	-2.3%	-9.3%	-8.0%
Kent County	1.6%	13.2%	4.3%	3.4%	6.9%	7.6%	5.2%	-4.9%

The map in Figure II-1 indicates that the Chestertown district grew modestly between 2010 and 2020, while population decreases were seen in the remainder of the county.

⁴⁴ Source: U. S. Census Bureau Data and Census 2010 Redistricting Data Summary File Maryland Department of Planning, March 2012.

⁴⁵ Source: U. S. Census Bureau Data and Census 2010 Redistricting Data Summary File Maryland Department of Planning, March 2012.

Fig. II-1: Kent County, Maryland, Total Population Change, 2010 to 2020⁴⁶

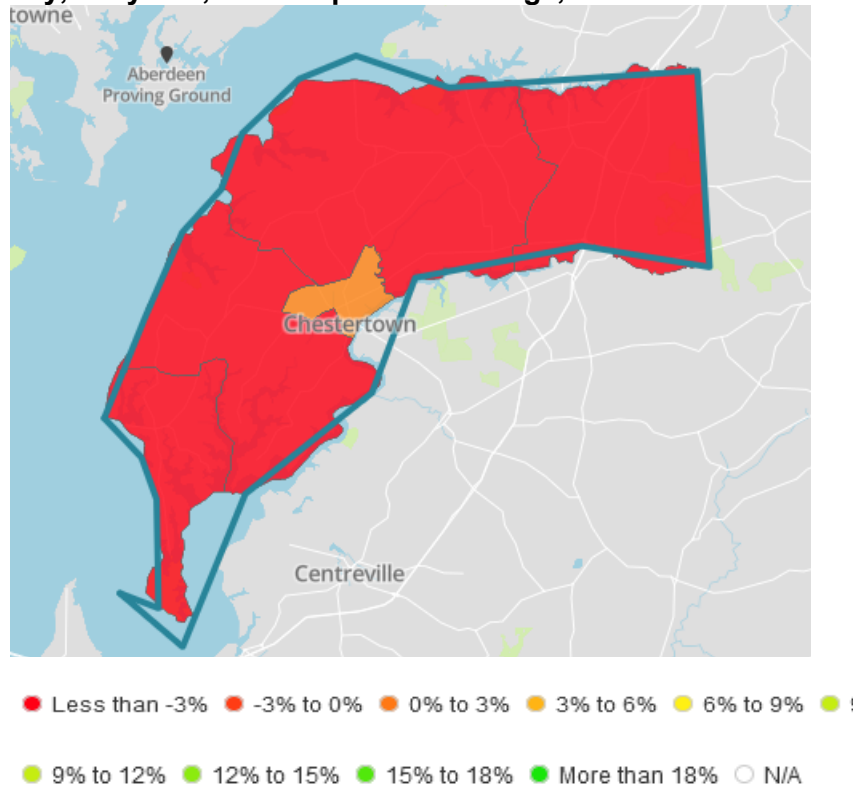


Table II-3 shows that the overall proportion of the white and black populations declined by 9.9% and 8.1% respectively between 2010 and 2020, corresponding to decreases of 1,595 in the white population and 248 persons in the black population. The Hispanic population increased by 154 persons, or 17%. These changes in the overall composition of the population are somewhat reflected in the composition of the school-age population.

Table II-3: Kent County, Maryland, 2020 Census Information: Race and Ethnicity⁴⁷

		2010		2020		Change
		#	%	#	%	
Total		20,197		19,198		-4.90%
Race	White	16,169	80.10%	14,574	75.90%	-9.90%
	Black	3,056	15.10%	2,808	14.60%	-8.10%
	American Indian	42	0.20%	41	0.20%	-2.40%
	Asian	165	0.80%	251	1.30%	52.10%
	Pacific Islander	6	0.00%	0	0.00%	-100.00%
	Other	393	1.90%	441	2.30%	12.20%
	Two or More	366	1.80%	1,083	5.60%	195.90%
Ethnicity	Hispanic or Latino	907	4.50%	1,061	5.50%	17.00%

⁴⁶ Source: Ibid

⁴⁷ Source: <https://data.sj-r.com/census/total-population/total-population-change/kent-county-maryland/050-24041/>. As reported in *USA Today*.

Table II-4: Population Projections, Kent County⁴⁸

Year	Population Projection
<i>2010 Actual</i>	<i>20,197</i>
2015	19,600
2020	19,700
2025	20,400
2030	20,900
2035	21,350
2040	21,800
2045	22,250

A separate 2015 MDP analysis that was based on the 2010 census indicated that the increase in population will likely be among persons 45 years and older, while the age groups that contribute to the school population – children 4 and under, young people between the ages of 5 and 19, and people in the child-raising ages between 20 and 44 – are projected to decline by a total of approximately 8.7%. While the data that this projection was built on has been superseded by the 2020 census, pending a new analysis from MDP, the general outlook appears to align with observations and the change for 2010 to 2020 noted above. These demographic projections support the view that barring changes in housing patterns or the creation of new employment opportunities, the public school enrollment will remain level or will decline over the 23-year period between 2022 and 2045.

The MDP population projections for Kent County largely reflect an expectation of increased in-migration of individuals and/or families without school aged children (Table II-5). These could be individuals or couples buying second homes on the Eastern shore and/or retirement homes.

- The trend toward in-migration of older, childless people is aligned with a projected reduction in residents in the 20 to 44 age group, the child-raising years. In the 2015 analysis, this younger age group was projected to increase modestly from 5,300 in 2015 to 5,400 in 2030, and then to decrease to 5,160 in 2040.
- Concurrently, the school-age population (5-19) was projected to decline gradually from 3,380 in 2015 to 3,100 in 2040, and the pre-school cohort (0-4) will also decline, from 870 in 2015 to 810 in 2040.
- The 45-64 age group will also decrease, from 5,970 in 2015 to 5,610 in 2040.
- By contrast, the 65 and older age group will increase by 73.6%, from 5,080 in 2015 to 8,820 in 2040.
- In combination, the 45 and older age group will increase by 3,380 persons, from 11,050 in 2015 to 14,430 in 2040, or 30.6%.

Thus the overall picture is of a population in which the oldest cohort of residents will increase

⁴⁸ Source: Maryland Department of Planning, “Historical and Projected Total Population for Maryland’s Jurisdictions (Revised December 2020)”

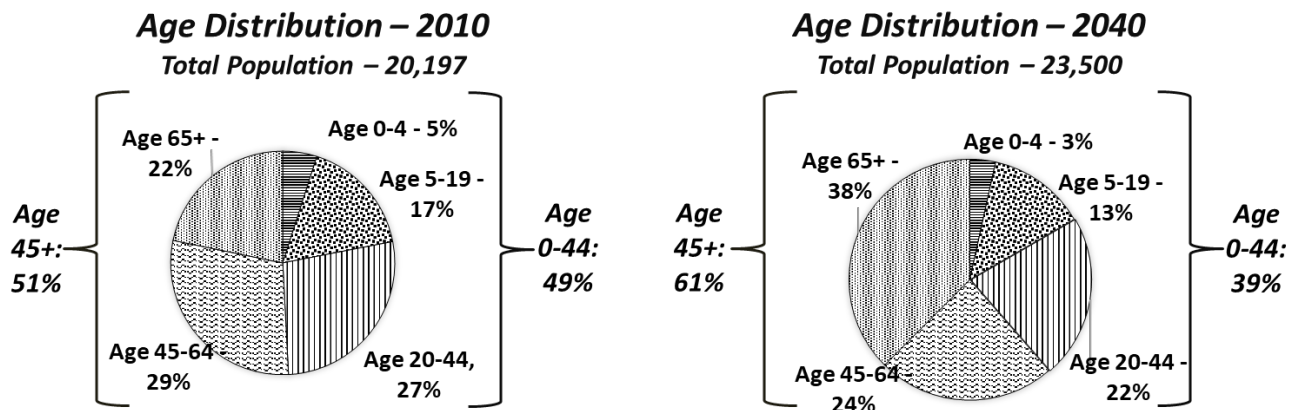
significantly due to in-migration, while the child-bearing cohort and the cohort of school-age residents will decline modestly but steadily. Over recent years there have been more deaths than births in Kent County, supporting the view that positive net in-migration has been the sole cause of population growth in Kent County. Causes for this pattern likely include the attractiveness of the county's waterfront communities to retirees, in combination with the absence of major employment centers providing jobs for younger people and the relative remoteness of the employment centers that do exist in Maryland and Delaware. The recent enlargement of the plant of one of the county's major employers, Dixon Valve, has not to date led to increases in the overall population or the student enrollment. Given the goal of the County to retain its rural, agricultural quality, and of the major town, Chestertown, to retain its small-town historical quality, the pattern of population change outlined here is likely to continue.

In the past, the County population increased by 1,000 (from 19,197 in 2000 to 20,197 in 2010) while the public school enrollment (K-12) decreased by 638 students during the same period (from 2,673 to 2,035). Between 2010 and 2020 the total population decreased by 4.9% while the K-12 student enrollment decreased by 8.5%, from 2,035 to 1,733. The pattern of projected population growth, and the student enrollment projections described in Section IV, indicate that these diverging trends will continue for at least the next decade. Factors that may alter this pattern include increases in the construction of housing in the lower and middle ranges of the market, changes in household composition, increases in employment opportunities through private-sector investment, and transportation improvements that will make the county more viable as a home to commuters who are employed in Delaware or elsewhere in Maryland.

The uncertainty of this demographic situation calls for a school facility strategy that responds to the projected decline in the near term, but retains flexibility and resiliency to accommodate a potential increase of the student population at a more remote future time.

Table II-5: Summary of Projected Population Changes, Kent County⁴⁹

Age Cohort	2010			2015	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040			% Change, 2010 - 2040		
0-4	995	4.9%		870	860	810	800	810	810	3.4%		-19%		
5-19	3,436	17.0%	49%	3,380	3,400	3,320	3,140	3,110	3,100	13.2%	39%	-10%	-864	-8.7%
20-44	5,503	27.2%		5,300	5,300	5,360	5,400	5,190	5,160	22.0%		-6%		
45-64	5,866	29.0%		5,970	5,950	5,630	5,220	5,330	5,610	23.9%		-4%		
65+	4,397	21.8%	51%	5,080	5,880	6,980	8,040	8,610	8,820	37.5%	61%	101%	4,167	40.6%
Total	20,197								23,500					



⁴⁹ From "Six-Year Strategic Plan: Recommendations of The Strategic Planning Committee," February 10, 2018.

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Table II-6: Demographic and Socio-Economic Outlook, Kent County and Maryland⁵⁰

Note: The projection information has not been updated per the 2020 census; however, the historic information prior to 2015 remains useful.

Kent County:

	Historical					Projected				
	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010 *	2015	2020	2025	2030	2040
Population Characteristics:										
Total Population	16,146	16,695	17,842	19,197	20,197	20,600	21,400	22,100	22,600	23,490
Male	7,858	8,026	8,615	9,192	9,640	9,850	10,250	10,600	10,860	11,370
Female	8,288	8,669	9,227	10,005	10,557	10,750	11,150	11,510	11,750	12,130
Non-Hispanic White **	N/A	12,820	13,776	15,070	15,783	16,200	16,800	17,390	17,810	18,550
All Other **	N/A	3,875	4,066	4,127	4,414	4,400	4,600	4,720	4,800	4,950
Selected Age Groups:										
0-4	1,169	948	1,140	888	995	870	860	810	800	810
5-19	4,751	3,890	3,429	3,809	3,436	3,380	3,400	3,320	3,140	3,100
20-44	4,762	5,626	6,354	5,937	5,503	5,300	5,300	5,360	5,400	5,160
45-64	3,347	3,704	3,927	4,855	5,866	5,970	5,950	5,630	5,220	5,610
65+	2,117	2,527	2,992	3,708	4,397	5,080	5,880	6,980	8,040	8,820
Total	16,146	16,695	17,842	19,197	20,197	20,600	21,400	22,100	22,600	23,490
Total Household Population	15,440	16,060	16,714	17,849	18,671	19,080	19,890	20,610	21,081	21,759
Total Households	5,109	6,133	6,702	7,666	8,175	8,500	9,050	9,625	10,075	10,675
Average Household Size	3.02	2.62	2.49	2.33	2.29	2.24	2.20	2.14	2.09	2.04

Maryland:

	Historical					Projected				
	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010 *	2015	2020	2025	2030	2040
Population Characteristics:										
Total Population	3,922,399	4,216,975	4,780,753	5,296,486	5,773,552	6,010,140	6,224,510	6,429,750	6,612,190	6,889,690
Male	1,916,030	2,042,810	2,318,291	2,557,794	2,791,762	2,911,650	3,019,580	3,121,870	3,212,790	3,355,290
Female	2,006,369	2,174,165	2,462,462	2,738,692	2,981,790	3,098,490	3,204,940	3,307,880	3,399,410	3,534,400
Non-Hispanic White **	N/A	3,116,160	3,328,086	3,300,566	3,157,958	3,152,330	3,121,750	3,098,200	3,071,920	3,015,520
All Other **	N/A	1,100,815	1,452,667	1,995,920	2,615,594	2,857,810	3,102,770	3,331,550	3,540,280	3,874,170
Selected Age Groups:										
0-4	344,573	272,274	364,988	353,393	364,488	355,880	379,920	396,210	402,110	398,060
5-19	1,170,508	1,054,505	940,288	1,139,572	1,152,138	1,146,120	1,136,350	1,145,970	1,166,360	1,221,790
20-44	1,321,781	1,645,037	2,046,144	1,978,806	1,951,312	2,013,810	2,093,280	2,172,310	2,217,020	2,226,310
45-64	785,840	849,550	914,989	1,225,408	1,597,972	1,655,350	1,630,620	1,565,280	1,526,680	1,636,880
65+	299,697	395,609	514,344	599,307	707,642	838,970	984,340	1,149,970	1,300,010	1,406,660
Total	3,922,399	4,216,975	4,780,753	5,296,486	5,773,552	6,010,140	6,224,510	6,429,750	6,612,190	6,889,690
Total Household Population	3,817,618	4,122,547	4,666,897	5,162,430	5,635,177	5,864,129	6,071,714	6,269,826	6,444,321	6,700,425
Total Households	1,174,933	1,460,865	1,748,991	1,980,859	2,156,425	2,247,775	2,360,125	2,470,025	2,567,275	2,698,850
Average Household Size	3.25	2.82	2.67	2.61	2.61	2.61	2.57	2.54	2.51	2.48

⁵⁰ Source: Maryland Department of Planning, <http://planning.maryland.gov/MSDC/County/kent.pdf>, July 2014. Population and household data are from 1970 through 2010 U. S. Census Bureau. Projections are rounded, therefore numbers may not add to totals.

Table II-6 shows Kent County's population in the 0-19 age group for 1970-2010. This population group decreased steadily from 1970 to 1990, increased slightly in 2000, but dropped below the 1990 figure in 2010. The only increase between 2000 and 2010 was in Massey, while Chestertown remained essentially flat in this age group even as the total population increased by 558 persons. All of the other districts showed decreases in the 0-19 age group during this decade.

The overall decline in this age group mirrors the decline in public school enrollment during the same period. The 2010 Census shows that the overall County population (all ages) increased from 19,197 in 2000 to 20,197 in 2010, an increase of exactly 1,000 persons. During this period, the population in the category 18 years and older increased by 1,437 (from 15,212 in 2000 to 16,649 in 2010). During this same ten-year period the population aged 17 years old and under decreased by 397 (from 3,945 in 2000 to 3,548 in 2010).

Kent County has five (5) incorporated towns. Table II-7 compares the population in the incorporated towns and the unincorporated areas. The table shows that between 1980 and 2010 Kent County's overall population grew by 3,502, or 21.0 percent. The total growth rate in the incorporated towns was 2-1/2 times that of the unincorporated areas (34.2% vs. 13.5%). Galena and Chestertown saw substantial rates of growth, while Millington saw more modest growth, and Betterton and Rock Hall experienced declining populations. Based upon the 2010 census data, the five incorporated towns had 40.2 percent of the entire county population, with 59.8 percent residing in the unincorporated areas (compared to 63.7 percent in 1980). This data indicates a gradual shifting of the overall population away from the unincorporated county and toward the towns.

The data from the 2020 census confirms that even though the growth of the incorporated towns stabilized, the declining population in the unincorporated areas meant that the proportions shifted noticeably: 42.2% of the county population now lives in towns, while 57.8% lives in unincorporated areas. This suggests that while Kent County remains a rural county, there is a gradual shift in the population toward town life.

Table II-7: Population by Incorporated Towns and Unincorporated Areas, 1980 – 2020⁵¹

Town or Area	1980	1990	2000	2010	2020	2010 Percent of Population	Rate of Change, 1980 - 2020	2020 Percent of Population	Rate of Change, 2010 - 2020
Betterton	356	360	376	345	286	1.9%	-3.1%	1.5%	-17.1%
Galena	374	324	428	612	539	2.1%	63.6%	2.8%	-11.9%
Chestertown	3,300	4,005	4,796	5,252	5,532	23.7%	59.2%	28.8%	5.3%
Millington	512	409	416	605	549	2.1%	18.2%	2.9%	-9.3%
Rock Hall	1,511	1,584	1,396	1,310	1,198	6.9%	-13.3%	6.2%	-8.5%
Subtotal, Incorporated Areas	6,053	6,682	7,412	8,124	8,104	40.2%	34.2%	42.2%	-0.2%
	36.3%	37.5%	38.6%	40.2%	42.2%				
Unincorporated Areas	10,642	11,160	11,785	12,073	11,094	59.8%	13.4%	57.8%	-8.1%
	63.7%	62.5%	61.4%	59.8%	57.8%				

Total	16,695	17,842	19,197	20,197	19,198
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Table II-8 shows that the population growth rate in Kent County from 2000-2010 (5.2%) lagged behind the growth rate for the State of Maryland as a whole (9.00%). Kent County also had slower growth rates during this period than the eight other Eastern Shore Counties. In the decade between 2010 and 2020, the population of Kent County declined by 4.9%, a factor that was exceeded on the Eastern Shore only by Somerset County. Neighboring Cecil County to the north and Queen Anne's County to the south both experienced population growth (2.6% and 4.3% respectively).

It appears that many of the factors that have produced significant population growth in the other Eastern Shore Counties have so far had limited impact in Kent County. These include the improved access from the Western Shore following construction of the two Bay Bridges and improvements to beach route highways, the growth of industrial and commercial employment, and the development of significant residential communities for commuting to jobs outside the county. Both Cecil and Queen Anne's Counties have population centers located on major highways, whereas Kent's population center at Chestertown lies remote from the Route 301 corridor that connects the Bay Bridge to Delaware and points north. This pattern, however, aligns with the goal of the County, which as stated in the *Comprehensive Plan* is "to preserve its historic and cultural traditions, along with its high quality of life, while embracing sufficient economic opportunities to provide for the economic well-being of our citizens."⁵²

There is a recognition that there are limited job opportunities in Kent County, particularly at the higher income levels. However, while between 1985 and 2006 the greatest job growth occurred in services and the retail trade, the 2018 *County Comprehensive Plan* states that "recent trends have delivered jobs in the top growth

⁵¹ U. S. Census Bureau Data and Census 2020.

⁵² *Comprehensive Plan*, April 2018, p. 1.

categories of education services, construction, and professional/technical services with a more favorable wage structure. The economy has transitioned from one based on manufacturing and the natural resource-based industries to one emphasizing health care and service providing industries.”⁵³ “Dixon Valve, a major employer, has relocated to a new plant in Chestertown, but without expansion of capacity; consequently it is not anticipated that this move will have impacts on employment or on student enrollments.”

Table II-8: Comparative Population Growth, Kent County, State of Maryland, and Other Maryland Eastern Shore Counties⁵⁴

	1990 Popu- lation	2000 Popu- lation	% Change 1990 - 2000	2010 Popu- lation	% Change 2000 - 2010	2020 Popu- lation	% Change 2010 - 2020
State of MD	4,781,468	5,296,486	10.8%	5,773,552	9.0%	6,177,224	7.0%
Caroline Co	27,035	29,772	10.1%	33,066	11.1%	33,293	0.7%
Cecil Co	71,347	85,951	20.5%	101,108	17.6%	103,725	2.6%
Dorchester Co	30,236	30,674	1.4%	32,618	6.3%	32,531	-0.3%
Kent Co	17,842	19,197	7.6%	20,197	5.2%	19,198	-4.9%
Queen Anne's	33,953	40,563	19.5%	47,798	17.8%	49,874	4.3%
Somerset Co	23,440	24,747	5.6%	26,470	7.0%	24,620	-7.0%
Talbot Co	30,549	33,812	10.7%	37,782	11.7%	37,526	-0.7%
Wicomico Co	74,339	84,644	13.9%	98,733	16.6%	103,588	4.9%
Worcester Co	33,028	46,543	40.9%	51,454	10.6%	52,460	2.0%

Residential Growth

In the past few years, new residential development has moved from high value waterfront property to development in or near the County's historic towns and villages. These developments are being built for and marketed to all household types. However, at this time no large developments are anticipated in the near future outside of Chestertown. The future impact of these changes on the public school enrollment is still unknown. In its 2008 *Annual Report*, the Kent County Planning Commission noted a steady increase in the number of new lots created in recent years, after a low period of development activity in the late 1990s. However, Table II-9 below, showing approved subdivision lots for the unincorporated areas of Kent County for 2000 – 2021 indicates a significant drop in new lots between 2009 and 2012, reflecting the national and regional economic impact of the economic recession on residential development. Only 39 lots were approved in this four year period (an average of 9.8/year), compared to 378 lots approved in the eight-year period between 2001 and 2008 (an average of 47.25/year). Although in 2013 the number increased significantly to 56, very few subdivision lots were approved in the period 2015 to 2021.

⁵³ Ibid, p. 5.

⁵⁴ Source: U. S. Census Data (2010) by the Maryland Department of Planning, March 2012

Table II-9: Subdivision Lots, Unincorporated County, 2000 - 2023⁵⁵

Year	Total Lots
2000	7
2001	19
2002	62
2003	35
2004	79
2005	74
2006	13
2007	36
2008	60
2009	6
2010	23
2011	5
2012	5
2013	56
2014	1
2015	3
2016	1
2017	2
2018	2
2019	2
2020	27
2021	3
2022	1 ⁵⁶
2023	0

The slow pace of lot development is mirrored by the noticeable decline in the number of new housing units within the county. Table II-10 shows that the growth in the total number of housing units slowed markedly in

⁵⁵ Source: Kent County Department of Planning, Housing, and Zoning

⁵⁶ Per email from Mr. William Mackey, Director, Kent County Department of Planning, Housing and Zoning, April 18, 2023. Mr. Mackey noted that seven lots were extinguished, resulting in a net reduction in the number of lots.

the 2010-2019 decade as compared to the previous two decades.

Table II-10: Residential Housing Units, 1990 – 2020⁵⁷

YEAR	HOUSING UNIT	VARIANCE
1990-2000	8,181 to 9,410	+15.0%
2000-2010	9,410 to 10,886	+13.0%
2010-2019	10,886 to 10,999	+ 1.1%

YEAR	HOUSEHOLDS	VARIANCE
1990-2000	6,792 to 7,666	+11.0%
2000-2010	7,666 to 8,508	+10.0%
2010-2019	8,508 to 8,294	-2.0%

Table II-11 shows that this trend has continued. Each incorporated town has the authority to issue building permits. The table below provides some historical data on this subject. Total permitting declined from over 100 per year prior to 2010 to 46 in 2010 itself, and then continued to decline steadily to a low of 24 in 2015. This reflects the unique conditions that in Kent County inhibit the type of residential growth that has been seen in nearby Queen Anne's County. In most years, the proportion of permits issued in the unincorporated county is noticeably higher than in the five towns. However, there has been a noticeable increase in total housing permits in 2021 and 2022, and in 2022 the largest percentage of new permits was in the towns, particularly Chestertown and Millington. It is not known what factors may be causing these changes in the long-term trend, but they will bear monitoring, as they could have future implications for the number of students who will be enrolled in the school system.

Table II-11: Building Permits Issued for New Residential Development, 2005-2023⁵⁸

Year	Kent County Unincorporated	Betterton	Chestertown	Galena	Millington	Rock Hall	Total	% Town	% County
2005	117	3	40	14	0	22	196	40.3%	59.7%
2006	86	2	55	1	5	24	173	50.3%	49.7%
2007	90	0	57	4	26	4	181	50.3%	49.7%
2008	55	1	27	5	8	9	105	47.6%	52.4%
2009	33	0	68	1	12	7	121	72.7%	27.3%
2010	21	1	18	1	0	5	46	54.3%	45.7%

⁵⁷ Source: Kent County Government, reported in *The Superintendent's Final School Closure and Boundary Adjustment Recommended Plan*, January 2017, p. 8

⁵⁸ Source: Information from each Town and the County Planning Office (by Dr. Yale Stenzler - April 2016, updated by consultant). 2014 and 2015 Unincorporated County figures from Kent County Department of Planning, Housing, and Zoning Annual Report 2015 (June 2016), p. 16. 2016 through 2022 Information from each Town; Unincorporated County figures from Kent County Department of Planning, Housing, and Zoning.

2011	31	0	0	0	0	4	35	11.4%	88.6%
2012	20	0	4	1	0	8	33	39.4%	60.6%
2013	33	2	2	1	0	4	42	21.4%	78.6%
2014	50	0	3	0	0	2	55	9.1%	90.9%
2015	13	0	10	0	0	1	24	45.8%	54.2%
2016	22	1	4	0	0	3	30	37.1%	62.9%
2017	23	0	2	0	0	5	30	23.3%	76.7%
2018	21	0	13	1	0	1	36	41.7%	58.3%
2019	19	0	9	0	0	0	28	32.1%	67.8%
2020	34	1	13	0	0	NI	NI	=/-	=/-
2021	37	0	10	0	0	NI	47	21.3%	78.7%
2022	18 ⁵⁹	1	36	0	15	3	73	75.3%	24.7%
2023	28	0	31	0	13	2	74	62.1%	37.8%

Note: NI stands for “No Information Received”

While the pace of residential permitting has picked up slightly, the majority of permits in the periods 2004 to 2009 and 2010 to 2014 were issued in the unincorporated county rather than in the incorporated towns, as shown in Table II-12. The information in Table II-11 indicates that this trend continued in 2016 through 2021, but was noticeably different in 2022.

Table II-12: Building Permits Issued, 2004 – 2009 and 2010 - 2014⁶⁰

YEAR	PERMITS ISSUED- INCORPORATED TOWNS	PERMITS ISSUED- UNINCORPORATED TOWNS
2004-2009	474	515
2010-2014	56	154
VARIANCE	88% DECREASE	70% DECREASE

Table II-13 indicates that the proportional decrease in housing permits in the incorporated towns was accompanied by a decrease in the number of multi-family homes that were permitted: from a total of 38 in the period 2000 to 2004, to 11 between 2005 and 2009, and only 2 between 2010 and 2014. All of the permitted multi-family housing was located in the incorporated towns. Although this information has not been updated, it is likely that this trend toward building multi-family housing in the towns has continued.

⁵⁹ Per email from Mr. William Mackey, Director, Kent County Department of Planning, Housing and Zoning, April 21, 2023. Mr. Mackey noted that an additional six occupancy permits were issued in 2022 for replacement units.

⁶⁰ Source: Kent County Government, reported in *The Superintendent's Final School Closure and Boundary Adjustment Recommended Plan*, January 2017, p. 9

Table II-13: Maryland Jurisdictions and Permit Issuing Places New Housing Units Authorized for Construction by Building Permits: 2000 - 2014⁶¹

Area	2014 - 2010					2009 - 2005					2004 - 2000				
	Total	Single Family	Multi Family	Avg Tot /year	% Town vs. County	Total	Single Family	Multi Family	Avg Tot /year	% Town vs. County	Total	Single Family	Multi Family	Avg Tot /year	% Town vs. County
MARYLAND	74,878	47,291	27,587			96,165	71,059	25,106			146,006	117,795	28,211		
KENT	237	235	2	47.4		855	844	11	171.0		1,725	1,687	38	345.0	
Betterton	3	3	-	0.6		4	4	-	0.8		7	5	2	1.4	
Chestertown	29	27	2	5.8		234	223	11	46.8		133	97	36	26.6	
Galena	5	5	-	1.0	32.5%	13	13	-	2.6	42.1%	53	53	-	10.6	62.9%
Millington	-	-	-	-		52	52	-	-		3	3	-	-	
Rock Hall	40	40	-	8.0		109	109	-	21.8		892	892	-	178.4	
Kent County Unincorporated Area	160	160	-	32.0	67.5%	443	443	-	88.6	51.8%	637	637	-	127.4	36.9%

Information in the Kent County *Comprehensive Plan* (April 2018) discusses housing in Kent County. Single family homes constitute the vast majority of housing preferences in Kent County. In 2017 the County had 10,424 housing units, of which 8,228 (78.9 percent) were single family homes.⁶² This, however, may vary with the characteristics of the population, for example senior citizens may prefer smaller homes in community settings that can provide them with additional services. Several development projects were put on hold during the economic recession that began in 2008. At this time there are many unknowns about these development proposals and how they may or may not impact public school enrollment. It is not known how speculative or realistic some of these projects may be, or when build-out may occur.

Although Kent County has not seen proposals for and/or approvals for any age-restricted developments, the County continues to be highly attractive to retirees. However, there does appear to be a shift in new housing trends toward a broader household mix. It remains to be seen whether changes in development trends will provide more housing that is attractive to families with children. An 88-unit development of multiple housing units has been approved for the Dixon Valve company in the northern part of Chestertown, but there has been no building activity to date. When this project is completed, it could have an impact on enrollments for schools in the Chestertown area.

In planning for school facilities in Kent County, a critical question is whether there will be any changes in the housing types and occupancy by owners and/or renters who have school age children attending public school. The historical data and projections of overall population and school age population do not reflect any changes. However, due to the small size of the total Kent County population and the relative small public school enrollment, even a small change in trends can have a large proportionate impact on the public school population.

⁶¹ Source: U. S. Bureau of the Census. Manufacturing and Construction Statistics Division. Residential Construction Branch. Prepared by Maryland Department of Planning. Planning Services Division. 2015.

⁶² Amy Moredock, *Director, Kent County Department of Planning, Housing, and Zoning*, email communication 4-26-17.

Table II-14: Historical and Projected Total Population for Maryland Jurisdictions (Revised Dec. 2020)

	Census 1970	Census 1980	Census 1990	Census 2000	Census 2010	2015	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040	2045
MARYLAND	3,923,897	4,216,933	4,780,753	5,296,486	5,773,552	5,982,810	6,074,750	6,244,980	6,413,690	6,588,760	6,739,410	6,873,330
BALTIMORE REGION	2,071,016	2,173,989	2,348,219	2,512,431	2,662,691	2,737,380	2,762,890	2,814,290	2,864,350	2,914,680	2,964,210	3,001,930
Anne Arundel County	298,042	370,775	427,239	489,656	537,656	562,870	582,880	595,010	608,990	620,350	632,200	645,190
Baltimore County	620,409	655,615	692,134	754,292	805,029	827,770	830,310	838,560	846,590	858,920	873,130	883,980
Carroll County	69,006	96,356	123,372	150,897	167,134	167,550	169,000	171,700	174,150	177,490	180,800	184,150
Harford County	115,378	145,930	182,132	218,590	244,826	250,030	257,680	264,870	271,860	280,560	289,220	294,250
Howard County	62,394	118,572	187,328	247,842	287,085	313,350	327,990	344,150	356,860	364,640	368,830	369,220
Baltimore City	905,787	786,741	736,014	651,154	620,961	615,810	595,030	600,000	605,900	612,720	620,030	625,140
WASHINGTON SUBURBAN REGION	1,269,455	1,358,916	1,635,788	1,870,133	2,068,582	2,183,270	2,227,910	2,299,000	2,366,330	2,439,900	2,497,070	2,548,340
Frederick County	84,927	114,792	150,208	195,277	233,385	245,000	264,780	285,690	300,580	316,360	329,150	341,130
Montgomery County	522,809	579,053	757,027	873,341	971,777	1,032,270	1,051,990	1,087,290	1,124,790	1,167,700	1,197,150	1,223,340
Prince George's County	661,719	665,071	728,553	801,515	863,420	906,000	911,140	926,020	940,960	955,840	970,770	983,870
SOUTHERN MARYLAND REGION	115,748	167,284	228,500	281,320	340,439	357,630	373,000	393,970	413,630	432,740	450,800	469,430
Calvert County	20,682	34,638	51,372	74,563	88,737	90,650	93,310	96,050	97,900	98,740	99,160	99,550
Charles County	47,678	72,751	101,154	120,546	146,551	155,790	164,540	174,220	184,470	194,850	205,290	215,980
St. Mary's County	47,388	59,895	75,974	86,211	105,151	111,200	115,150	123,700	131,260	139,150	146,350	153,900
WESTERN MARYLAND REGION	209,349	220,124	224,477	236,699	252,614	252,250	251,560	258,540	267,300	276,010	283,770	291,750
Allegany County	84,044	80,548	74,946	74,930	75,087	72,650	70,660	71,400	72,150	72,900	73,560	74,200
Garrett County	21,476	26,490	28,138	29,846	30,097	29,600	29,100	29,700	30,250	30,510	30,760	31,000
Washington County	103,829	113,086	121,393	131,923	147,430	150,000	151,800	157,440	164,900	172,600	179,450	186,550
UPPER EASTERN SHORE REGION	131,322	151,380	180,726	209,295	239,951	240,980	244,820	254,230	266,620	280,630	292,490	304,390
Caroline County	19,781	23,143	27,035	29,772	33,066	32,890	33,660	35,550	37,700	40,000	42,200	44,500
Cecil County	53,291	60,430	71,347	85,951	101,108	102,400	103,100	106,100	112,050	119,200	125,450	131,550
Kent County	16,146	16,695	17,842	19,197	20,197	19,600	19,700	20,400	20,900	21,350	21,800	22,250
Queen Anne's County	18,422	25,508	33,953	40,563	47,798	48,480	50,810	53,430	56,320	59,530	62,040	64,650
Talbot County	23,682	25,604	30,549	33,812	37,782	37,600	37,550	38,750	39,650	40,550	41,000	41,440
LOWER EASTERN SHORE REGION	127,007	145,240	163,043	186,608	209,275	211,300	214,570	224,950	235,460	244,800	251,070	257,490
Dorchester County	29,405	30,623	30,236	30,674	32,618	32,250	32,110	33,850	35,160	36,400	37,300	38,240
Somerset County	18,924	19,188	23,440	24,747	26,470	25,710	25,760	26,750	27,450	28,100	28,310	28,500
Wicomico County	54,236	64,540	74,339	84,644	98,733	101,950	104,200	109,400	115,700	120,650	124,650	128,800
Worcester County	24,442	30,889	35,028	46,543	51,454	51,400	52,500	54,950	57,150	59,650	60,810	61,950

Table II-15: Historical and Projected Total Population for Maryland's Jurisdictions, Annualized Growth Rates (Revised December 2020)

	1970- 1980	1980- 1990	1990- 2000	2000- 2010	2010- 2015	2015- 2020	2020- 2025	2025- 2030	2030- 2035	2035- 2040	2040- 2045
MARYLAND	0.72%	1.26%	1.03%	0.87%	0.71%	0.31%	0.55%	0.53%	0.54%	0.45%	0.39%
BALTIMORE REGION	0.49%	0.77%	0.68%	0.58%	0.55%	0.19%	0.37%	0.35%	0.35%	0.34%	0.25%
Anne Arundel County	2.21%	1.43%	1.37%	0.94%	0.92%	0.70%	0.41%	0.47%	0.37%	0.38%	0.41%
Baltimore County	0.55%	0.54%	0.86%	0.65%	0.56%	0.06%	0.20%	0.19%	0.29%	0.33%	0.25%
Carroll County	3.39%	2.50%	2.03%	1.03%	0.05%	0.17%	0.32%	0.28%	0.38%	0.37%	0.37%
Harford County	2.38%	2.24%	1.84%	1.14%	0.42%	0.60%	0.55%	0.52%	0.63%	0.61%	0.35%
Howard County	6.63%	4.68%	2.84%	1.48%	1.77%	0.92%	0.97%	0.73%	0.43%	0.23%	0.02%
Baltimore City	-1.40%	-0.66%	-1.22%	-0.47%	-0.17%	-0.68%	0.17%	0.20%	0.22%	0.24%	0.16%
WASHINGTON SUBURBAN REGION	0.68%	1.87%	1.35%	1.01%	1.09%	0.41%	0.63%	0.58%	0.61%	0.46%	0.41%
Frederick County	3.06%	2.73%	2.66%	1.80%	0.98%	1.56%	1.53%	1.02%	1.03%	0.80%	0.72%
Montgomery County	1.03%	2.72%	1.44%	1.07%	1.22%	0.38%	0.66%	0.68%	0.75%	0.50%	0.43%
Prince George's County	0.05%	0.92%	0.96%	0.75%	0.97%	0.11%	0.32%	0.32%	0.31%	0.31%	0.27%
SOUTHERN MARYLAND REGION	3.75%	3.17%	2.10%	1.93%	0.99%	0.85%	1.10%	0.98%	0.91%	0.82%	0.81%
Calvert County	5.29%	4.02%	3.80%	1.76%	0.43%	0.58%	0.58%	0.38%	0.17%	0.08%	0.08%
Charles County	4.32%	3.35%	1.77%	1.97%	1.23%	1.10%	1.15%	1.15%	1.10%	1.05%	1.02%
St. Mary's County	2.37%	2.41%	1.27%	2.01%	1.12%	0.70%	1.44%	1.19%	1.17%	1.01%	1.01%
WESTERN MARYLAND REGION	0.50%	0.20%	0.53%	0.65%	-0.03%	-0.05%	0.55%	0.67%	0.64%	0.56%	0.56%
Allegany County	-0.42%	-0.72%	0.00%	0.02%	-0.66%	-0.55%	0.21%	0.21%	0.21%	0.18%	0.17%
Garrett County	2.12%	0.61%	0.59%	0.08%	-0.33%	-0.34%	0.41%	0.37%	0.17%	0.16%	0.16%
Washington County	0.86%	0.71%	0.84%	1.12%	0.35%	0.24%	0.73%	0.93%	0.92%	0.78%	0.78%
UPPER EASTERN SHORE REGION	1.43%	1.79%	1.48%	1.38%	0.09%	0.32%	0.76%	0.96%	1.03%	0.83%	0.80%
Caroline County	1.58%	1.57%	0.97%	1.05%	-0.11%	0.46%	1.10%	1.18%	1.19%	1.08%	1.07%
Cecil County	1.27%	1.67%	1.88%	1.64%	0.25%	0.14%	0.58%	1.10%	1.24%	1.03%	0.95%
Kent County	0.33%	0.67%	0.73%	0.51%	-0.60%	0.10%	0.70%	0.49%	0.43%	0.42%	0.41%
Queen Anne's County	3.31%	2.90%	1.79%	1.65%	0.28%	0.94%	1.01%	1.06%	1.11%	0.83%	0.83%
Talbot County	0.78%	1.78%	1.02%	1.12%	-0.10%	-0.03%	0.63%	0.46%	0.45%	0.22%	0.21%
LOWER EASTERN SHORE REGION	1.35%	1.16%	1.36%	1.15%	0.19%	0.31%	0.95%	0.92%	0.78%	0.51%	0.51%
Dorchester County	0.41%	-0.13%	0.14%	0.62%	-0.23%	-0.09%	1.06%	0.76%	0.70%	0.49%	0.50%
Somerset County	0.14%	2.02%	0.54%	0.68%	-0.58%	0.04%	0.76%	0.52%	0.47%	0.15%	0.13%
Wicomico County	1.75%	1.42%	1.31%	1.55%	0.64%	0.44%	0.98%	1.13%	0.84%	0.65%	0.66%
Worcester County	2.37%	1.27%	2.88%	1.01%	-0.02%	0.42%	0.92%	0.79%	0.86%	0.39%	0.37%

Consistency with Community Plans

Community development plans serve as guides to both public and private development activities, and therefore influence the location of new population and the provision of necessary public facilities. In this way, they also have a potential effect on the location, size and growth or decline of student enrollments, and they therefore influence the development and utilization of educational facilities.

This EFMP update was submitted to the County Planning Department for a determination of consistency with local growth or land use plans. A copy of the Director's letter of consistency is included in Section VI Supplemental Information.

Kent County Comprehensive Plan

The *Kent County Comprehensive Plan* is the most significant community plan affecting population distribution and community growth. The original *Comprehensive Plan* was adopted in 1968. The most recent *Plan* was adopted in April 2018. The substance of the Plan has not changed, but additional principles have been added over time.

Under Maryland's planning and zoning enabling laws (§3-101, Land Use Article, Annotated Code of Maryland), the Comprehensive Plan does not itself have the effect of law or ordinance. However, it is the legal basis for zoning and can be given greater effect by provisions in the local Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations which require that development must be consistent with the Plan.

The Comprehensive Plan contains the following principles, which includes a specific mention of the quality of schools (emphasis added).⁶³

1. *Foster a diverse, stable economy that provides economic opportunities for all our citizens, which is essential for a healthy and balanced community.*
2. *Stewardship of our lands and waters is a universal ethic.*
3. *Continue and reaffirm our commitment to supporting agriculture and promoting working landscapes.*
4. *Preserve our cultural, historic, and archeological resources as they are essential to maintain our sense of place.*
5. *Preserve the County's unique quality of life; growth is planned to occur slowly and deliberately at a manageable rate which would not exceed the County's historic growth rate.*
6. *Ensure growth occurs in limited and specific locations in a way that complements and enhances each designated growth area's character. These locations will be a result of mutually agreed upon boundaries established by working with existing communities.*
7. *Provide the elements necessary to enrich the lives of our citizens and sustain a healthy community by including:*
 - a. ***a high-quality system of public and private schools,***

⁶³ *Comprehensive Plan, Kent County, Maryland, April 2018, Page 1.*
(<http://www.kentcounty.com/images/pdf/planning/cp/CompPlan.pdf>)

- b. a quality set of recreation and cultural activities,*
- c. an effective transportation system,*
- d. a variety of housing types, and*
- e. a safe and healthy environment.*

In October 2012, the Land Use Ordinance was amended to require an impact analysis of the cost of providing local government services to proposed subdivisions. As a result of this change, applicants must now submit subdivision information to County agencies, including Kent County Public Schools, which must review the application materials and then provide comments to the Planning Department. The Department obtains information from these agencies indicating the adequacy or inadequacy of existing services, which is then considered prior to the approval of the proposed subdivision.

The Education Section of Part G. “Community Facilities and Public Services” of the 2018 Comprehensive Plan outlines two goals related to education.⁶⁴ These goals and the related strategies are compatible not only with the goals of the Kent County Board of Education, but also with the objectives of the State of Maryland Public School Construction Program.

Goal: Maintain existing and promote new educational services and programs within the county

Strategy: Maintain and upgrade existing educational facilities and programs

Many of the County schools are aging. The last new facility was built in the 1970s. The County and the Board of Education will cooperate in aggressively pursuing funding from the State for major renovations, modernization, and necessary maintenance of the existing educational facilities within the public-school system.

Strategy: Promote the use of schools as community centers

Existing public school facilities will continue to be available for community activities, such as evening or weekend meetings and workshops. Further use of school facilities for cultural, recreational, athletic, and civic activities will be encouraged.

Strategy: Support vocational and technical training

The County will coordinate with the Board of Education to promote the development of vocational/technical training and apprenticeships in conjunction with local businesses. This is especially important as such jobs generally remain on-shore and the need for technical and skilled crafts remains strong in Kent County.

Strategy: Revitalize the adult education program

The average age of Kent County residents has and is projected to increase over time. This reinforces the need for adult continuing education programs and provides an opportunity to garner support for school programs. Retraining is a growing need as shifts in the economy continue creating new employment opportunities while displacing jobs that become obsolete.

Strategy: Involve county citizens in planning for facilities and programs

The Board of Education should identify ways to engage County citizens in developing and updating educational services and facilities. This could include an annual open meeting to

⁶⁴ Comprehensive Plan, Kent County, Maryland, April 2018, Page 105 and 106.

review program progress and hear public comments.

Goal: *Develop an educated work force with the skills and training required to meet current and future Kent County employment needs*

Strategy: *Develop secondary and post-secondary school training and apprenticeship programs to train residents and to provide skilled workers*

The presence of a skilled labor force is a critical ingredient in attracting new employers as well as satisfying the growth demands of existing businesses. Training and apprenticeship programs should be developed in cooperation with local business including resource-based business. This will help meet their needs while also providing opportunities for Kent County workers to advance and obtain better paying jobs.

The Economic Development Advisory Board will foster a cooperative relationship among the Board of Education, the Upper Shore Regional Council, private employers, community colleges, and training facilities to establish and/or nurture vocational training programs. This effort will be designed to satisfy the training needs of local businesses while developing skills in younger workers and re-training existing workers. These programs will emphasize skills that will be needed in the future and training that enables workers to learn and adapt to an ever-changing employment environment.

The Six-Year Facilities Strategic Plan and its resulting planning instruments, the subsequent Educational Facilities Master Plans and Capital Improvement Programs, support the principles and goals of the Comprehensive Plan by catalyzing visible improvements to the quality of the public school facilities in Kent County, assisting the achievement of related goals on the quality of education.

Chesapeake Bay Critical Area

A considerable land area in Kent County is located within the Chesapeake Bay Critical Area. In most locations, this area is defined as land within 1,000 feet of the tidal wetland line. Under State mandated requirements, Kent County has prepared development controls for the Critical Area.

In general, the density and other controls required by the Chesapeake Bay Critical Area Commission will significantly reduce the density of future development for most waterfront property. In Kent County it is believed that these restrictions will have little effect on current development trends.

Kent County Comprehensive Water and Sewer Plan

The Kent County Comprehensive Water and Sewer Plan is an inventory of all public and private water supply and sewage disposal facilities in Kent County. In addition, it is a policy document that identifies facility problems, priorities and proposed projects. No project which requires a water supply or sewage facility construction permit from the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) may be constructed unless it is consistent with the Water and Sewerage Plan. The County Director of the Water and Wastewater Department makes such determinations. The County of Kent website states "The Plan must be reviewed triennially and is prepared with the cooperation and support of the Department of Water and Wastewater Services, Department of Public Works, Department of Planning, Housing and Zoning, and Health Department."⁶⁵ The County Commissioners adopted an

⁶⁵ <https://www.kentcounty.com/water/comprehensive-plan>

update to the Plan in June 2019; the updated plan was approved by MDE with certain modifications in November 2019.

The Comprehensive Water and Sewer Plan assigns categories to all land in Kent County as to the priority and planned phasing of public water and sewerage service. Therefore, it may have a significant effect on the pattern of development. However, it is not anticipated that the current Comprehensive Water and Sewer Plan will have an effect on the public school enrollment projections or assignments within the time frame of this Master Plan.

At present all school facilities and their methods of water supply and sewage disposal are consistent with the Comprehensive Water and Sewer Plan. Any alteration to these water supply and sewage disposal facilities, such as the extension of new lines, installation of new water wells, or expansion of package treatment plants will require amendments to the Plan. Because no new facilities are envisioned within the current EFMP, no amendments to the Plan will be required. The expansion and renovation of Galena Elementary School will not increase the water consumption of the school and is therefore in compliance with the Water and Sewer Plan. If, however, the long-term strategic plan described in Section V is implemented, it may lead to expansion or replacement of existing facilities, with possible implications for the Plan.

Town of Chestertown

Chestertown, the largest town in Kent County and the center of its cultural and economic life, appears to place a high value on integrating the two public schools within the municipal boundary, Kent County Middle School and H. H. Garnet Elementary School, with the long-term goals of the town. The 2015 *Town of Chestertown Comprehensive Plan* states as an overarching goal:

*It is the intent of the Planning Commission that growth will consist of infill residential construction, and annexation if the proposed annexation meets the high standards set forth in the Comprehensive Plan. The Town is committed to preserving its agricultural and open-space buffer areas adjacent to the Town's boundaries, and extending those buffer areas to form wildlife corridors and greenways wherever practicable. Similarly, the Town is committed to preserving its historic character, maintaining its diversity of neighborhoods and setting high design standards for residential, commercial, and all other types of construction.*⁶⁶

The Plan anticipates a population increase from 4,899 (based on the Maryland Department of Planning estimate of July 2007) to between 6,400 and 7,600 residents by 2030. Since the growth in population could lead to as many as 990 new residential units and as many as 472 new students, the Plan recognizes that the increase may have an impact on the public schools.⁶⁷ However, the rate of growth will depend on annexation of adjacent areas, and the Plan does not foresee the annexation of more than one or two areas within the next 20 years.⁶⁸ To mitigate impacts, the Plan requires under "General Educational Facilities Goals" that the town "[coordinate with the Kent County Board of Education so school district impacts from new development can be integrated with Educational Facilities Master Planning]."⁶⁹

⁶⁶ *Town of Chestertown Comprehensive Plan*, April 6, 2015, pp. 7 and 16

⁶⁷ *Ibid*, p. 79 and p. 84, Table 4: "Potential Impacts of "In-Town" Residential Growth on Public Facilities & Services"

⁶⁸ *Ibid*, p. 87

⁶⁹ *Ibid*, p. 23

The Plan recognizes the role that school facilities play in the quality of life in Chestertown. Under the “Recreation” section, the Plan outlines a goal of increasing the number of playgrounds at schools and parks, and states that the “Town will work with the Board of Education to better use playgrounds, to improve landscaping to meet current standards, and to improve links with the community.” The Plan mentions the playground and walking trail behind Garnet Elementary School and the walking trail behind Kent County Middle School, both accessible to the public. It also mentions that the tennis courts and outdoor basketball court at Kent County Middle School are run down and in need of repair.⁷⁰ Integration of the school facilities with the fabric of the town is emphasized in the “Community Character” section: “Connectivity is essential to ensuring that no part of the municipality is isolated from any other part of Town, so that children will have safe routes to schools and playgrounds....”⁷¹

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⁷⁰ Ibid, p. 12 and 13; see also p. 63

⁷¹ Ibid, p. 34; see also p. 63

III. INVENTORY AND EVALUATION OF BUILDING AND FACILITIES

System-Wide Facility Data

Following the closure of two elementary schools in the 2017-2018 school year, the Kent County Public School System operated a total of five (5) public school buildings in the 2023-2024 school year. There were three (3) elementary schools, one (1) middle school and one (1) high school. All of the schools are located in Priority Funding Areas (PFAs).

- *Elementary Schools.* The elementary schools are located so as to serve the County's population centers. Elementary schools in 2023-2024 were located in Chestertown, Galena, and Rock Hall. Each elementary school serves students from pre-kindergarten through grade 5. See the elementary school attendance area maps in Section I for the locations and attendance areas of the elementary schools.
- *Middle School.* One (1) middle school serves all of the students in Kent County in grades 6-8. Prior to 2010, middle school students attended three middle schools located in Galena, Rock Hall, and Chestertown. Since 2010, these students have attended school in the Kent County Middle School, formerly called Chestertown Middle School. See the middle school map in Section I for the location of the middle school.
- *High School.* A single high school, Kent County High School, serves all of Kent County. It is located in Worton, near the geographic center of the County. See the high school map in Section I for the location of the high school.

A major building program in the 1960s and 1970s resulted in the construction of four new schools: Millington, former Rock Hall (now Board of Education offices), and Worton Elementary Schools, and Kent County High School. During that period major additions and renovation projects were also completed at the other four schools: Garnet Elementary; Chestertown Middle (now Kent County Middle); Galena Middle (now Galena Elementary); and Rock Hall Middle (now Rock Hall Elementary).

The Worton Campus

In February 2018 the Strategic Planning Committee recommended, and the Board of Education approved, that the school system should retain ownership of all educational facilities on the Worton campus. Retaining ownership of all the educational facilities on this campus will provide the school system with physical resources to adjust to either a declining or increased student population. In addition, due to its central geographic location in the county, the campus includes or is near the Kent County Community Center and Worton Park. Both of these County facilities offer recreational, physical education, and after-school opportunities for public school students.

For these reasons, the Committee recommended re-purposing the former Worton Elementary School as the site for Board of Education functions rather than surplus it to the County Government. The report argued that a central location for the Board of Education would enhance operational efficiency, particularly for transportation functions, as well as improve engagement between the Board and the community. The closure of the current Board offices in Rock Hall was estimated to result in an operational savings of at least \$45,000 / year in utility costs alone.

Retention of the former Worton Elementary facility would also assist the Board in meeting future enrollment increases, should they occur. Should enrollments continue to decline, the educational facilities on this campus will allow the school system to consider multiple grade level configurations,

including consolidation of additional grade levels, relocation of the middle school, or a single-campus arrangement with all elementary, middle, and high school students co-located on one campus. Facility options and future grade configurations to adjust to student enrollment changes are possible only if the school system retains ownership of the former Worton Elementary. As noted, the facility is now being used as the Kent County Public Schools bus depot and the location for the Blended Learning Academy. With the exception of an improved bus parking area, no actions have been taken to adapt the building to future Board of Education functions.

Age of Facilities

A key factor in evaluating the facilities of the Kent County Public Schools is the age of the school buildings or building sections. The age is determined by either the year of original occupancy or the year of a State or locally funded general renovation, whichever event is most recent. A general renovation project “resets the clock” for the renovated building area, which is then considered “new” as of the date of completion of the renovation for purposes of future State funding. However, the portion of a school that is renovated under a Limited Renovation (LR) project is given an age that is reflective of one-half the interval between the original construction or the previous full renovation, and the date of completion of the limited renovation.

Kent County High School was the last new school built in Kent County (1971). Since then, there has been only one building-wide modernization/renovation project, of Kent County Middle School in 1976. There have, however, been numerous State-funded projects that have improved or modernized building systems and/or components in the schools. These include CIP systemic renovations, Aging Schools Program (ASP), Technology in Maryland Schools (TIMS), Qualified Zone Academy Bond (QZAB) program projects, a Supplemental Appropriation project, and a number of projects funded through smaller programs. These projects have addressed many specific building needs in order to improve the learning environment and extend the useful life of the buildings, such as roofs, HVAC systems, fuel storage tanks, windows, doors, and technology wiring. This tradition has continued with the completion of nine near-term projects in the Six-Year Facilities Strategic Plan, comprising security vestibules in all five schools, the replacement of the roofs at Rock Hall Elementary and Kent County High School, the targeted renovations at Rock Hall Elementary, and the renovation and addition at Galena Elementary School. All of these projects were approved by the County Government and the Interagency Commission on School Construction.

As noted in the Introduction, for renovation projects, the highest level of funding is 100 percent of the cost of new construction for buildings that have been completed and utilized for 40 years or more. In Kent County Middle School, the entire area of the school is more than 40 years old and is therefore eligible for 100% of the State cost; however, a feasibility study conducted in 2023 determined that renovation would be neither cost effective nor result in an educationally suitable facility. More than 70% of the area of Garnet Elementary School is also in this older category, with the balance between 15 and 34 years old. Kent County High School has undergone a number of partial renovations of science classrooms and the Technology Education laboratory between 1994 and 2000, as well as a “Hybrid” renovation completed in 2006 which combined system upgrades with partial renovations;⁷² proposals for future renovation work at this school will need to account for the multiple ages of the various parts of the facility. In addition, with the targeted renovation projects completed, the age of

⁷² This project served as the precedent for the new IAC category of Limited Renovation, which was implemented in procedure and regulation in 2008.

Rock Hall Elementary and Galena Elementary are currently under review for recalculation.

Kent County Middle School

Kent County Public Schools faces the urgent task of modernizing the Kent County Middle School facility. Given the large cost of this undertaking, and the fact that it is the sole middle school in the county, the Superintendent and Board of Education initiated a thorough process of planning, with ample input from educators, stakeholders, and the community at large.

The Six-Year Facilities Strategic Plan and the assessment conducted as part of the 2023 Feasibility Study by an architectural/engineering team recognized that Kent County Middle School contains numerous deficiencies, summarized below and shown in Figure III-1:

General building deficiencies:

- Interior instructional spaces without daylight
- Large number of spaces that are either too small or too large, compared to educational specification requirements
- Absence of small instructional spaces
- Absence of teacher planning areas
- Absence of acoustical separation for a large number of classrooms
- Circulation:
 - Difficult to achieve grade/age separation
 - Passes through Library/Media Center
 - Two dead-end hallways
 - Access to Music through Gym
 - No ADA access to 2nd floor
- No ADA accessible toilet
- Code violations

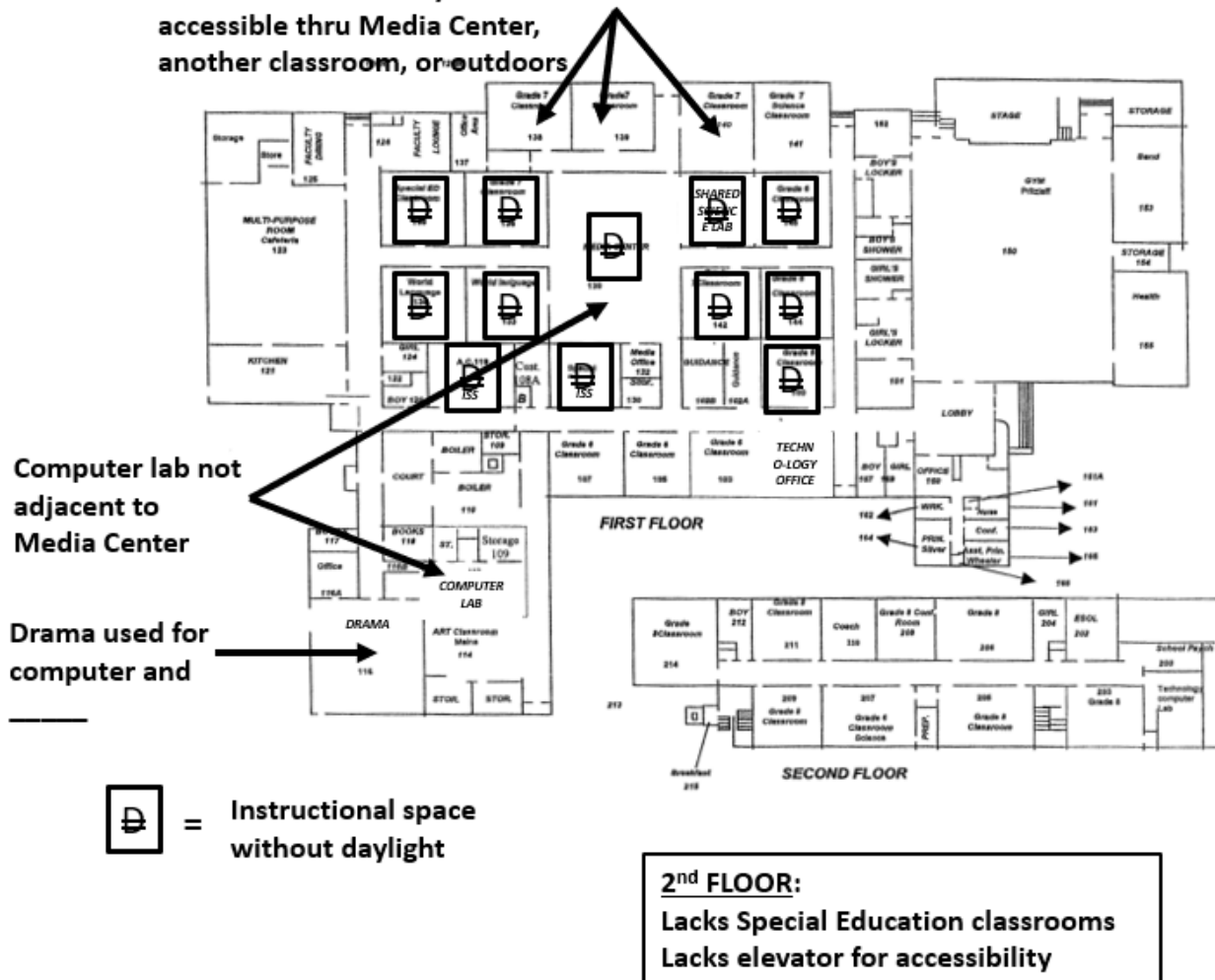
Specific instructional spaces *not* present:

- Collaborative learning spaces (3)
- Special Education
- Science:
 - General Science (1)
 - Storage/Prep
 - Chemical Storage
- Music:
 - General Music/Choral Classroom (however, staffing currently does not support this program in the middle school)
 - Instrumental Storage/Library
 - General Storage/Library
 - Practice Rooms (2)
- Technology Education

Deficient building systems:

- Roof
- Structural deficiencies at exterior window lintels
- HVAC
- Plumbing
- Interior lighting
- Temperature controls
- Electrical service and distribution

Figure III-1: Kent County Middle School
Three classrooms only
accessible thru Media Center,
another classroom, or outdoors



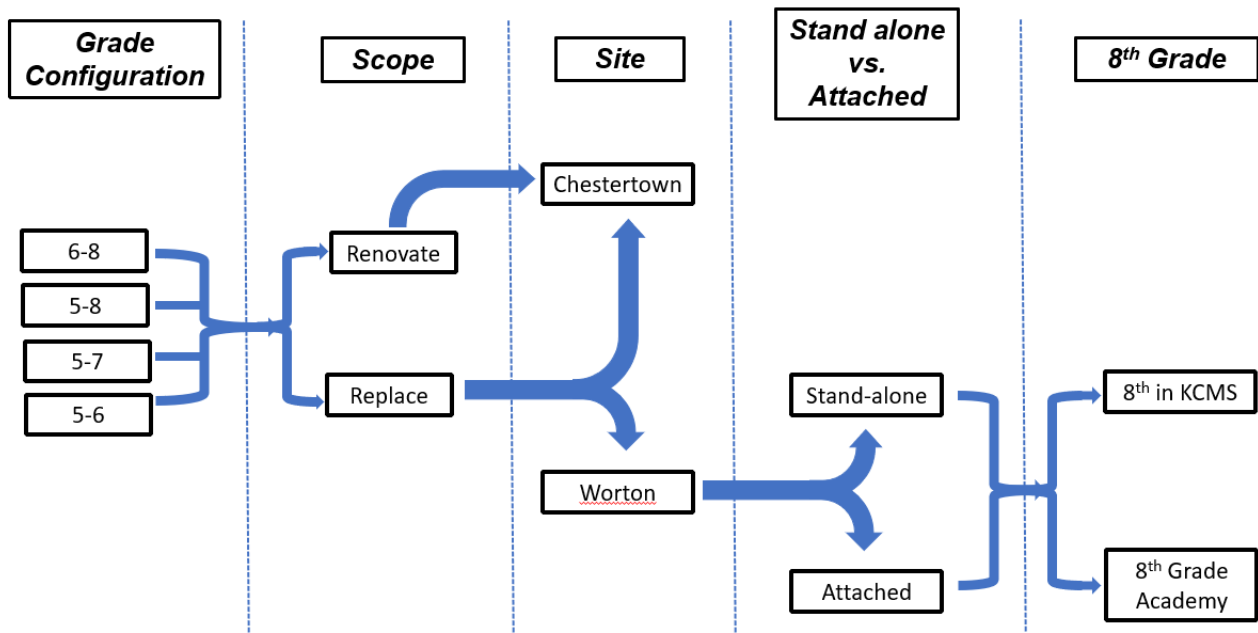
To address this situation, the Superintendent established an Educational Specification Committee in the summer of 2021 and engaged EFP to lead the educational specification process. The Committee met eleven times between September 2021 and March 2023 to discuss educational matters, to explore educational and planning options, and to approve the Educational Specification. The committee visited three middle schools on the Eastern Shore to understand the range of what is possible in recent architectural design: Sudlersville and Stevensville Middle Schools in Queen Anne's County (replacement and renovation/addition, respectively), and North Dorchester Middle School in Dorchester County (replacement).

Concurrently, it was recognized that at 52.1%, the utilization of Kent County High School at that time was far below its State Rated Capacity of 1,070 (the utilization has since fallen to 48.8% for the 2023-2024 school year). In early 2022, EFP conducted an analysis of the potential to house an 8th grade academy at Kent County High School. The study found that while an 8th grade academy could be housed on the 2nd floor of the high school, a certain amount of renovation would be required on the 1st floor to receive the high school programs that would be displaced from the 2nd floor. This offered the opportunity to also correct several of the educational deficiencies of the high school, in particular the

fragmentation of departments like Foreign Languages and Social Studies and the dissociation of the Weight Room from the other Physical Education facilities.

In June 2022 the Committee was asked to consider the benefits and detriments of 12 planning options. Factors considered included the grade bands for the middle school, the scope (renovation vs. replacement), and the location (Chestertown vs. Worton). If the school were located at the Worton site, the Committee was asked to consider whether it should be a stand-alone facility detached from the high school, or should be treated as an addition to the high school, with middle school students sharing the use of the cafeteria, gymnasium, and a number of other spaces on a different schedule from the high school students. The Committee also considered whether the 8th grade should be located in the middle school or in a separate academy. These multiple choices are represented in Fig. III-2:

Fig. III-2: Kent County Middle School Planning Options



Concurrently, EFP developed cost models in collaboration with staff members of the Interagency Commission on School Construction (IAC), who visited both the high school and the middle school on May 6, 2022. In August 2022 the Educational Specifications Committee used a scoring methodology to evaluate and rank the 12 planning options, then narrowed the range of options to three:

- Replacement as a 5-8 middle school at the current site in Chestertown;
- Replacement as a stand-alone 5-8 middle school at the Worton site; and
- Replacement as a 5-8 separate middle school attachment to Kent County High School at the Worton site (with joint use of some facilities).

Through this process, the Committee also clarified certain conclusions:

- The 8th grade academy concept was viewed unfavorably because of the way it would isolate 8th grade students from both middle school and high school activities.
- Grade configurations that ended with 7th grade were viewed unfavorably, since the Committee felt that 7th grade was not a good age level to end middle school and prepare for the transition

to high school.

- Renovation of the KCMS building was viewed unfavorably compared to replacement at either the Chesterstown or Worton sites, with the Worton site viewed slightly more favorably.
- Replacement at the Worton site with a stand-alone 5-8 or 6-8 middle school, and with 8th grade integral to the school, was viewed very favorably.

On September 12, 2022 the Board of Education considered the three options brought forward by the Committee and gave approval for them to be presented to the community for feedback. Four community meetings were held in October 2022, and as a result of comments and discussion at these meetings, the Superintendent determined to undertake a Feasibility Study to examine the three options listed above, as well as two additional options suggested by the community:

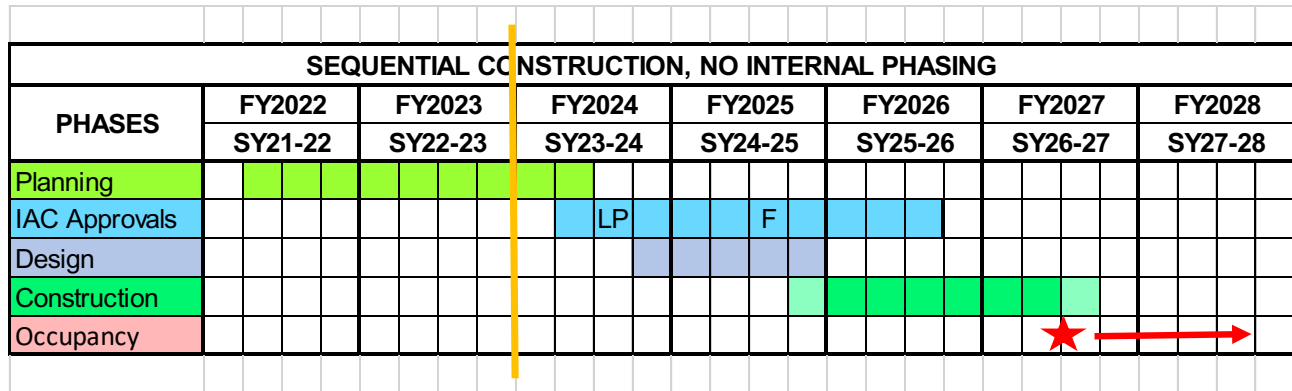
- Renovation of the existing Kent County Middle School facility for grades 5-8; and
- Replacement at a new, undetermined site in Chestertown

The Feasibility Study was initiated in February 2022. Funds to support this effort were approved by the IAC under the Built to Learn Act as part of a larger allocation for FY 2025, which also included funds for the design effort. The results were presented to the Board of Education in August 2023 and the replacement option was approved by the Board of Education on October 9, 2023. While the Feasibility Study was in progress, the Board had approved the Educational Specifications for the project on April 5, 2023. Both the Educational Specification and the Feasibility Study have been approved by the IAC.

Based on the Board approval of the scope of the project and conditional support by the Board of County Commissioners, the project was submitted as a request for Planning Approval in the FY 2025 Capital Improvement Program in October 2023, with a concurrent request for design funds under the Built to Learn Act. The design funds were approved on November 9, 2023, and Planning Approval was approved on May 9, 2024. As a result of an analysis of classroom usage presented by KCPS staff and the consultant, the IAC increased the square footage per student by 8% to determine the allocation for the middle school project. The evidence presented by KCPS establishes a statewide precedent for State funding for small middle schools.

If approved by the IAC, architectural/engineering design will begin in the summer of 2024, with an anticipated start of construction in the summer or fall of 2025 and occupancy in January or August 2027. A tentative schedule for completion of the project is shown in Figure III-3. The schedule will be dependent on the decision-making process, on the availability of funding, and on the approvals that are required from governing bodies.

Fig. III-3: Tentative Schedule, Kent County Middle School Replacement



Individual School Facility Database

Individual school facility data base information is presented for each school on IAC/PSCP Form 101.1 located at the end of this section. This form provides a summary of the school facility information as required in the EFMP, including the grades housed in the school, the State Rated Capacity (SRC), the fall 2021 enrollment, the utilization presented as a percentage figure, the acreage of the site, building data (year of construction and additions with associated square footage), the PSCP physical condition (maintenance) assessment, and capital improvements that have been completed (under a “Comments” column).

Because of the uncertain impact of the covid-19 situation on school enrollments, the decision was made for the 2021 EFMP to show both the fall 2019 and the fall 2020 enrollment numbers and the corresponding percentages of utilization. This decision was related to the methodology that was used to project enrollments forward under the very unusual circumstances of the 2020-2021 school year, with the projections based on the last year of enrollments pre-covid-19. Since then, enrollments have stabilized and the forms reflect the former practice of showing only the enrollments from the previous September 30 (that is, September 30, 2023 for the 2024 EFMP).

State Rated Capacity

State Rated Capacity (SRC) is a numerical calculation that reflects how the spaces within a school facility are actually used at the time that the enrollments are counted. SRC is defined by the Interagency Commission on School Construction (IAC) and is calculated based on the number of teaching stations (classrooms) in the school and how they are used.⁷³ The SRC for all schools is approved by the Maryland Department of Planning following the State Public School Construction guidelines and procedures. SRC applies only to the permanent building and does not include relocatable classroom units.

- Elementary School SRC is calculated as the sum of the capacity in:

Prekindergarten classrooms:	20
Kindergarten classrooms:	22
Regular classrooms (Grades 1-5):	23
Grade 6:	25

⁷³ Public School Construction Program, *Administrative Procedures Guide* Appendix 102-A.
Part III – Inventory and Evaluation of Building and Facilities

Self-contained special education classrooms: 10

Core and specialized spaces where instruction may take place are not included in the elementary school SRC. These include: cafeteria, gymnasium and multi-purpose rooms, computer lab, art, vocal music, instrumental music, and reading resource, science storage, and science preparation rooms.

- Secondary School SRC is calculated as the sum of the capacity in:

Regular classroom/computer classrooms (Grades 6-12): 25 x 85% utilization

Career and technology education classrooms: 20 x 85% utilization

Self-contained special education classrooms: 10 x 100% utilization

Gymnasium (2 classrooms): 50 x 85% utilization

Alternative Programs: 15 X 85% utilization

Science laboratories, career technology education (CTE) rooms, classrooms for English for speakers of other languages, distance learning rooms, business education rooms, computer laboratories, band and chorus rooms, art rooms, family and consumer sciences rooms, weight rooms, and wrestling rooms all count as teaching stations: 25 seats x 85% utilization.

Teaching stations that can be separated by moveable walls or partitions (such as those in some auditoriums) also contribute to capacity: 25 seats x 85% utilization.

- For further information, see the IAC Administrative Procedures Guide (APG), Appendix 102 A – State Rated Capacity, at www.pscp.state.md.us.

The SRC calculated for an individual school may change after a renovation, a change in school program offerings, or a change in the function of a space (for example, an elementary school art room that is converted into a regular classroom, or vice versa). When an event such as this happens, the SRC is recalculated and submitted for approval to the Maryland Department of Planning (MDP). The revised SRC will be entered into the PSCP Facility Inventory database by the IAC. The most recent review and update of the SRC of Kent County schools was approved by the Maryland Department of Planning in April 2019. The MDP approved revised SRCs for the three (3) elementary schools that were operational at that time - Galena Elementary School, Garnet Elementary School, and Rock Hall Elementary School. Changes in the State's capacity formula over the years have also resulted in an overall reduction in the SRC of the Kent County Public Schools. Following completion of the renovations of Rock Hall Elementary School in 2020 and Galena Elementary School in 2021, the SRC of these facilities is currently under review. The SRC for the replacement facility for Kent County Middle School will be calculated after it is occupied in 2027.

Physical Condition Assessment

In August 2020 the IAC staff presented to the Commission a new maintenance evaluation process, the Maintenance Effectiveness Assessment (MEA). The intent of the MEA is to allow the ratings to reflect how maintenance impacts the longevity of a building. The new process continues the five previous maintenance categories, with these definitions:

Good and Superior	Maintenance is likely to extend the life of systems within the facility beyond expected.
-------------------	--

Adequate	Maintenance is sufficient to achieve the life of each system within the facility and, with appropriate capital spending and renewal, the total expected facility lifespan.
Not Adequate and Poor	Maintenance is insufficient to achieve the expected life cycle of systems within the facility. ⁷⁴

The IAC website notes that "As a result of this change, results in FY 2021 and forward will not be comparable to results in FY 2020 or previous years....In the new MEA, an assessment score of "adequate" (70% to 79%) indicates that the facility is being sufficiently maintained so that it will achieve its expected life span. Many facilities that received "good" ratings under the previous assessment will receive "adequate" ratings under the new MEA. This should not be interpreted as a decline in maintenance performance." The new process also includes weighting categories of minor and major deficiencies, and outlines a process by which the LEA can correct the deficiencies.

The most recent rating is considered to still be valid for each building. Since the overall inspection rating is the result of a composite score, any single school building may have areas or systems for which the maintenance is in significantly better or worse condition than the overall building rating would indicate.

The IAC has inspected and rated one or two Kent County school buildings each year since 2010. Kent County Public Schools has a mixed record: of 16 schools inspected between FY 2010 and FY 2024, one received a Superior rating, two were rated Good, eight were rated as Adequate, and three were rated as Not Adequate. It is of some significance that the Adequate and Not Adequate scores occurred in the latter part of this eight-year period, suggesting that maintenance is becoming more of a challenge for the staff of the school system. The IAC FY 2019 report on H. H. Garnet and Rock Hall Elementary Schools notes that "For years, Kent County's public school building inventory was found to be the second oldest in the State, trailing Baltimore City by a small margin. This year, both Kent County and Baltimore City Schools have the same average adjusted age for all their schools."⁷⁵ This suggests that interaction between maintenance and building age: even with diligent and skilled attention, an older facility becomes increasingly difficult and more costly to maintain over time, leading to the conclusion that only substantial investment in building upgrades, renovation, or replacement can significantly alter a trajectory of gradual deterioration. Alternatively, increasing resources must be applied to maintenance to ensure the standard of building performance. The list of deficiencies noted above for the Kent County Middle School facility, which last received a major renovation in 1976, suggests how difficult this task can be.

The main areas of concern for the most recent inspection of three schools in FY 2024 (Kent County High School, Kent County Middle, and Henry Highland Garnet Elementary) included the absence of documentation on playground and bleachers, the absence of preventative maintenance (PM) schedules for a number of assets (electrical equipment, roofs, fire and safety systems, and backflow preventers), the failure to track pest management PM activities. A number of deficiencies were observed in these categories. All of the deficiencies were deemed to be minor.

⁷⁴ Interagency Commission on School Construction, at <https://iac.mdschoolconstruction.org>

⁷⁵ Interagency Commission on School Construction, "Maintenance of Maryland's Public School Buildings, Annual Report," October 1, 2019, page 39

Table III-1: PSCP Inspection Results, FY 2010 – FY 2024

School	Fiscal Year Inspected	PSCP Overall Rating
Galena Elementary	2023	Adequate
Garnet Elementary	2024	Adequate
Millington Elementary	2015	Good
Rock Hall Elementary	2023	Adequate
Worton Elementary	2013	Good
Kent County Middle	2024	Adequate
Kent County High	2024	Adequate

Relocatable Classrooms

Kent County Public Schools has one (1) portable classroom building installed on the Kent County High School site. This building serves students in the Kent Alternative Program. This building provides four (4) classrooms, a computer room, administrative space, and lavatories. All relocatable classrooms in Kent County are owned or leased by the Board of Education; none are owned by the State of Maryland.

Former Public School Buildings

On April 15, 2010, the Board of Education approved Resolution No. 2010-01 concerning the consolidation and redistricting of public schools in Kent County. As a component of this action, students were transferred, with some redistricting, from Rock Hall Elementary School to the former Rock Hall Middle School building, which was re-designated as Rock Hall Elementary School. On that same date the Board approved a motion to transfer all of the Central Office staff from the Administration Building in Chestertown to the former Rock Hall Elementary School building. This former elementary school, located at 5608 Boundary Avenue, Rock Hall, MD 21661, now serves as the Administrative Office Building for Kent County Public Schools and the Board of Education.

The Administration Building at 215 Washington Avenue in Chestertown, originally built as a high school and used for educational purposes until the late 1960s, served as the central office for the staff of the Kent County Public Schools and the Board of Education. In 2010 the Board declared the building surplus and subsequently received State approval to transfer the building and the site to the Kent County Commissioners. The property was transferred on March 16, 2010.

Millington and Worton Elementary Schools were approved for closing in the 2017-2018 school year and approved for surplus by the Board of Education in February 2018. The Board of County Commissioners agreed to take ownership of the former Millington Elementary facility and site in May 2019. At this writing, the former Worton Elementary School remains in school board ownership and is being used as a bus depot and to house the Blended Learning Academy.

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Facilities Inventory

IAC/PSCP FORM 101

LEA:		Kent County Public Schools					DATE:		July 1, 2024							
SCHOOL NAME & ADDRESS		GRADES	SRC	PRIOR FALL ENRLMT		% UTIL	ACREAGE	BUILDING DATA			PHYSICAL COND	COMMENTS				
				9/30/2023				DATE	SQ. FT.							
Galena Elementary School 114 South Main Street, Galena 21635 PSC 14.002 School No. 14.0106 Tax Assessment ID: 15-01-010794 Located in a PFA Note: Formerly Galena Middle School. Started PK-5 August 2010.		PK-5	438	291		66.4%	8.35	1951 1957 1962 1974 2021 Total	13,408 15,372 7,586 21,331 1,183 58,880	Not Adequate IAC/PSCP 2022	Additions & Renovations: 1957, 1962, and 1974 2019 Installed security vestibule 2021 Partial renovation and addition Systemic Renovations: 1993 Replaced 53,679 sf of roof 1999 Replaced HVAC system 1999 TIMS wiring 2005 Replaced windows & doors Aging Schools Program: 2003 Replaced underground storage tank 2007 Replace metal ceiling tiles 2013 Security system QZAB Program: 2012 IT Project 2017 Parking lot repavement EEL Program: 2013 - Lighting					

LEA:	Kent County Public Schools					DATE:		July 1, 2024					
SCHOOL NAME & ADDRESS		GRADES	SRC	PRIOR FALL ENRLMT 9/30/2023	% UTIL	ACREAGE	BUILDING DATA		PHYSICAL COND	COMMENTS			
							DATE	SQ. FT.					
Garnet Elementary School 320 Calvert St., Chestertown 21620 PSC 14.006 School No. 14.0403 Tax Assessment ID: 15-04-018494 Located in a PFA Note: PK-5 started August 2010.		PK-5	426	329	77.2%	6.0	1950 1953 1956 1958 1962 1975 Total	19,156 13,830 6,898 10,943 7,117 <u>1,065</u> 59,009	Not Adequate IAC/PSCP 2022	Additions & Renovations: 1975 Renovated 41,452 SF (all of the 1950, 1953, and 1956 sections and 1,568 SF of the 1958 section) 1983 Renovated 4,120 SF of the 1958 section for special education 2002 Judy Hoyer Center, renovated 3,000 SF in the 1950 section 2019 Installed security vestibule Systemic Renovations: 1995 Replaced entire roof, p/o HVAC 1997 TMS wiring 2003 Heating system renovation 2015 Roof and HVAC replacement Aging Schools Program: 1999 Ph. 1 window replacement 2000 Ph. 2 window replacement 2003 Replaced fuel oil storage tank 2004 Replaced gym windows 2006 Re-tiled 4 classroom floors 2007 Replace in-wall cafeteria tables 2008 Restroom renovations 2010 Replace playground equipment 2013 Security System 2015 Grease traps QZAB Program: 2002 Replaced exterior doors 2008 Motorized blinds in gymnasium 2012 IT Project 2013 Generator 2014 Network upgrade 2017 Parking lot repavement			

LEA:	Kent County Public Schools	DATE:		July 1, 2024															
SCHOOL NAME & ADDRESS	GRADES	SRC	PRIOR FALL ENRLMT 9/30/21	% UTIL	ACREAGE	BUILDING DATA		PHYSICAL COND	COMMENTS										
						DATE	SQ. FT.												
									2003 Replaced fuel oil storage tank 2004 Replaced gym windows 2006 Re-tiled 4 classroom floors 2007 Replace in-wall cafeteria tables 2008 Restroom renovations 2010 Replace playground equipment 2013 Security System 2015 Grease traps QZAB Program: 2002 Replaced exterior doors 2008 Motorized blinds in gymnasium 2012 IT Project 2013 Generator 2014 Network upgrade 2017 Parking lot repavement EEL Program: 2013 Lighting										

LEA:	Kent County Public Schools										DATE:		July 1, 2024							
SCHOOL NAME & ADDRESS		GRADES	SRC	PRIOR FALL ENRLMT	% UTIL	ACREAGE	BUILDING DATA		PHYSICAL COND	COMMENTS										
				9/30/2023			DATE	SQ. FT.												
Kent County Middle School 400 Campus Ave., Chestertown 21620 PSC 14.003 School No. 14.0402 Tax Assessment ID: 15-04-018508 Located in a PFA Note: Formerly Chestertown Middle Grades 5-8 Started as grade 6-8 August 2010		6-- 8	645	382	59.2%	15	1950 1952 1957 1960 1976 Total	18,029 17,066 4,460 12,544 <u>26,686</u> 78,785	Adequate IAC/PSCP 2021	Additions & Renovations: 1976 Renovated 52,099 SF (all of the 1950, 1952, 1957 & 1960 parts) Demolished 3,225 SF of the original 1950 building and added 26,686 SF. 2019 Installed security vestibule Systemic Renovations: 1994 Replaced 63,286 sf of roof. 1997 7 new rooftop HVAC units 1999 TMS wiring 2003 Window replacement 2004 Replaced boiler and underground storage tank Aging Schools Program: 2007 Replace in-wall cafeteria tables 2013 Security system 2015 Grease traps 2019 Parking Lot Paving QZAB program: 2002 Replaced exterior doors 2012 IT Project EEL Program: 2013 Lighting										

LEA:	Kent County Public Schools										DATE:		July 1, 2024																						
<table><tr><th rowspan="2">SCHOOL NAME & ADDRESS</th><th rowspan="2">GRADES</th><th rowspan="2">SRC</th><th rowspan="2">PRIOR FALL ENRLMT 9/30/2023</th><th rowspan="2">% UTIL</th><th rowspan="2">ACREAGE</th><th colspan="2">BUILDING DATA</th><th rowspan="2">PHYSICAL COND</th><th rowspan="2">COMMENTS</th></tr><tr><th>DATE</th><th>SQ. FT.</th></tr><tr><td>Kent County High School 25301 Lambs Meadow Road Worton, Maryland 21678 PSC 14.007 School No. 14.0301 Tax Assessment ID: 15-03-020851 Located in a PFA</td><td>9-12</td><td>1,070</td><td>522</td><td>48.8%</td><td>73.02</td><td>1971</td><td>189,626</td><td>Adequate IAC/PSCP 2022</td><td>Additions & Renovations: 1994 Ren. 8,159 SF in 5 science labs. 1995 Ren. 5,265 SF in Tech Ed lab area. 2000 Ren. 1,280 SF science lab 2005 Hybrid Project, Phase 1: HVAC work, replace boilers, underground storage tank, domestic hot water, and 5 air handlers 2006 Hybrid Project, Phase 2 & Phase 3: multiple systemics & limited area renovations 2019 Installed security vestibule Systemic Renovations: 1992 Replaced half of the original roof. 1998 TMS wiring 1999 Replaced remaining roof 2023. Replaced entire roof Aging Schools Program: 1998 Emergency repairs part of roof 2001 Ph. 1 replaced exterior doors 2002 Ph. 2 replaced exterior doors 2003 Replaced carpet in career center & athletic director offices 2013 Security System QZAB Program: 2012 IT Project 2013 Generator Supplemental Appropriation Program: 2013 Lighting and Sound System</td></tr></table>														SCHOOL NAME & ADDRESS	GRADES	SRC	PRIOR FALL ENRLMT 9/30/2023	% UTIL	ACREAGE	BUILDING DATA		PHYSICAL COND	COMMENTS	DATE	SQ. FT.	Kent County High School 25301 Lambs Meadow Road Worton, Maryland 21678 PSC 14.007 School No. 14.0301 Tax Assessment ID: 15-03-020851 Located in a PFA	9-12	1,070	522	48.8%	73.02	1971	189,626	Adequate IAC/PSCP 2022	Additions & Renovations: 1994 Ren. 8,159 SF in 5 science labs. 1995 Ren. 5,265 SF in Tech Ed lab area. 2000 Ren. 1,280 SF science lab 2005 Hybrid Project, Phase 1: HVAC work, replace boilers, underground storage tank, domestic hot water, and 5 air handlers 2006 Hybrid Project, Phase 2 & Phase 3: multiple systemics & limited area renovations 2019 Installed security vestibule Systemic Renovations: 1992 Replaced half of the original roof. 1998 TMS wiring 1999 Replaced remaining roof 2023. Replaced entire roof Aging Schools Program: 1998 Emergency repairs part of roof 2001 Ph. 1 replaced exterior doors 2002 Ph. 2 replaced exterior doors 2003 Replaced carpet in career center & athletic director offices 2013 Security System QZAB Program: 2012 IT Project 2013 Generator Supplemental Appropriation Program: 2013 Lighting and Sound System
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IV. SCHOOL ENROLLMENT DATA

Historic Enrollment Data

Current and Historical Public School Enrollment

In the ten years between 2012 and 2022, Kent County Public Schools experienced a net loss of 361 K-12 students, or 17.9% of the 2012 enrollment. A large portion of this decline is attributable to long-term demographic cycles that continued into the recent decade, exasperated by the impact of the pandemic in 2020 and 2021. Following the high birth rates of the post-war "baby boom" of the 1950s and early 1960s, the "baby bust" of the late 1960s and 1970s produced lower birth rates across the nation. In Kent County, this contributed to a prolonged decline in enrollment that began in the early 1970s and ended in 1987. That decline was followed by a "mini baby boom" or "boomlet" as the children of the baby boomers were born and entered public schools. This caused another period of enrollment growth that ended in 1997.

Total enrollment has trended lower each year since the 1997 peak, a pattern that was accelerated in Kent County, other school systems in Maryland, and throughout the nation by the Covid-19 pandemic. For School Year 2020-2021, there was a net decrease of 91 students from the 2019-2020 school year, including 29 elementary school students, 41 middle school students, and 21 high school students. Subsequently the enrollments appeared to stabilize, with a decrease of only 26 students between September 30, 2020 and September 30, 2021, or -1.5% of the student body; this consisted of a decrease of 16 elementary students, an increase of 12 middle school students, and a decrease of 22 high school students.

In Kent County, the covid-induced changes in enrollment were accommodated within the existing schools. Although the decreases registered in the first two school years of the pandemic were significant, it was not known at that time whether the decreases reflected a long-term trend, or if they would be mitigated or even reversed once the pandemic abated. Consequently, the consideration of overall building capacity, which is reflected in the Kent County Middle School educational specification, was driven as much by the long view of declining enrollments as by the potentially short-term effects of the pandemic.

Historic K-12 enrollments by grade for the current year and the previous 10 years are shown on Table IV-1, prepared by the Maryland Department of Planning (March 2024). The descriptions below are based on the MDP information as of spring 2024.

- *Elementary School Enrollment (K-5).* Total elementary school enrollment in grades K through 5 reached a low point in 1983 and then increased to a cyclical peak in 1996. From 2007 to 2014 the elementary school enrollment stayed fairly stable within the range of 927 (2008) and 947 (2011), but showed a marked decline in 2015 followed by eight years of losses. In the ten years between 2013 and 2023 the elementary school enrollment decreased by 229 students (-24.2%), ending the decade in 2023 at 717 students.
- *Middle School Enrollment.* Middle school enrollment (grades 6-8) also hit a low point of 418 in 1987 and then rose to a peak of 706 in 1996. For the past ten years the middle school enrollment has been gradually declining, from 446 in 2013 to 382 in 2023, a decrease of 64

students (-14.3%).

- *High School Enrollment.* High school enrollment (grades 9-12) peaked at 1,170 in 1975 and then declined to a low point of 642 students in 1990. High school enrollments then entered into a period of growth that ended with 841 students in 2004. High school enrollments dropped below 700 in 2008 (685) and have been decreasing steadily since, dipping below 600 in 2013 (at 599). The high school enrollment reached a low of 563 in 2018, increased to 580 in 2020, decreased to 558 in 2021, decreased to 531 in 2022 and ended the decade in 2023 at 522. Between 2013 and 2023 the high school enrollment decreased by 77 students (-12.9%).

Table IV-1 – Kent County Total Public School Historical Enrollments 2013 – 2023⁷⁶

Kent County		Public School Historical Enrollments 2013 - 2023										
Grades		<u>2013</u>	<u>2014</u>	<u>2015</u>	<u>2016</u>	<u>2017</u>	<u>2018</u>	<u>2019</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>2021</u>	<u>2022</u>	<u>2023</u>
Kindergarten		161	147	159	138	122	136	135	121	125	111	119
1		141	161	144	160	135	123	134	131	124	122	113
2		177	146	155	141	151	135	122	133	127	121	124
3		151	180	137	152	146	151	135	115	129	121	119
4		160	146	166	126	149	131	147	130	117	128	112
5		156	154	135	163	130	145	139	143	135	117	130
6		149	146	150	137	161	122	140	121	143	132	122
7		138	146	150	151	140	162	121	135	121	145	124
8		159	147	147	150	147	132	160	124	128	122	136
9		154	154	152	139	164	152	164	158	143	128	132
10		146	139	154	154	134	155	135	150	152	123	122
11		164	149	131	147	132	131	148	136	142	150	130
12		135	152	129	133	154	125	121	136	121	130	138
Elementary School (K-5)		946	934	896	880	833	821	812	773	757	720	717
Middle School (6-8)		446	439	447	438	448	416	421	380	392	399	382
High School (9-12)		599	594	566	573	584	563	568	580	558	531	522
Total School Enrollment		1,991	1,967	1,909	1,891	1,865	1,800	1,801	1,733	1,707	1,650	1,621

Data prepared by Maryland Department of Planning

⁷⁶ Maryland Department of Planning, March 2024

Demographics of Student Population

Another factor to consider is the demographic profile of the Kent County Public Schools student body. Historically, Kent County Public Schools has not seen growth in the population of students whose first language is not English, as have other school systems on the Eastern Shore of Maryland. In some other jurisdictions, it appears that the growth in the English Language Learner (ELL) student enrollment, particularly among Hispanic students, has been driven by agricultural and construction employment. Since the growth of the ELL population has a significant impact on how schools are utilized, particularly with respect to the adequacy of resource rooms, Kent County Public Schools will need to monitor the situation over a number of years and take growth in the ELL population into account in determining both the capacity and the design of future facilities. Tables IV-2 and IV-3 show the demographic profile of students prior to the closure of Millington Elementary School and Worton Elementary School, and the demographic profile in the 2022-2023 school year, after closure of the schools.

Table IV-2 - Demographic Composition of Kent County Public Schools Elementary Population, 2016-2017⁷⁷

School	Hispanic %	Indian/ Alaskan %	Asian %	Black %	Pacific Islander %	White %	Two or More Races %	LEP %	FARMS %	IEP %	504 %
Galena ES	5.8%	0.0%	0.6%	11.0%	0.0%	86.7%	1.7%	4.0%	46.2%	10.4%	3.5%
Garnet ES	11.5%	0.9%	1.8%	39.0%	0.0%	48.6%	9.6%	4.6%	71.1%	8.7%	5.0%
Millington ES	21.0%	0.0%	1.2%	17.3%	0.0%	74.7%	6.8%	9.9%	62.3%	13.6%	1.2%
Rock Hall ES	2.3%	0.6%	0.0%	18.1%	0.0%	74.0%	7.3%	0.0%	62.1%	11.9%	1.7%
Worton ES	3.8%	0.8%	1.5%	36.8%	0.0%	54.9%	6.0%	0.8%	57.9%	14.3%	0.8%

Table IV-3 - Demographic Composition of Kent County Public Schools Elementary and Secondary Population, 2023-2024⁷⁸

School	Hispanic %	Indian/ Alaskan %	Asian %	Black %	Pacific Islander %	White %	Two or More Races %	FARMS %
Galena ES	21.3%	0%	0%	7.9%	0%	64.3%	6.5%	61.2%
Garnet ES	14.0%	0%	2.7%	34.3%	0%	38.3%	10.6%	75.4%
Rock Hall ES	4.3%	1.0%	0%	23.1%	0%	59.6%	12.0%	76.4%
KC Middle	11.8%	0.3%	0.8%	25.1%	0%	51.0%	11.0%	73.3%
KC High	11.9%	0.4%	0.8%	23.8%	0%	55.7%	7.5%	58.8%

⁷⁷ The Superintendent's Final School Closure and Boundary Adjustment Recommended Plan, January 2017, Appendix E.

⁷⁸ Information provided by Kent County Public Schools, April 2024

Non-Public School Enrollment

In 2022, there were 455 students in non-public schools (nursery through 12) in Kent County, as reported to the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE); this figure includes nursery school and home-schooled non-public students. The number of students and other information obtained from the MSDE reports pertaining to students enrolled in non-public schools (private schools, church exempt schools and nursery schools) may vary from actual practice, since the report relies upon voluntarily self-reported data from these schools. The self-reporting procedure began in 2009. The year-to-year data can vary depending on whether the non-public school submits a report. The total non-public school enrollment, including any nursery school aged children, is shown Table IV-4 below for the past ten years.

Table IV-4 - Non-Public School Enrollment (including nursery school)⁷⁹

2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
256	349	258	255	272	304	407	414	381	354	430	455	448

The non-public school enrollment was about the same from 1985 through 1997, in the range of 240 to 280 per year. It then increased steadily to the 460-470 range between 2003 and 2006. A dramatic drop in 2008, followed by more than doubling in 2009, is attributable to a change in the reporting requirements of MSDE. The reported drop in private school enrollment in 2008 was not accompanied by a commensurate increase in public school enrollment for Kent County. This same anomaly occurred in every school system in Maryland, to varying degrees, as a result of the new reporting requirements.

Comparing the non-public school K-12 enrollment data (i.e., without nursery school) from MSDE for the past five years to the Kent County Public School K-12 enrollment for the same period shows that the non-public school enrollment represented between 11.5 and 27.6 percent of the total student population. The total non-public K-12 school enrollment (not including nursery school), which had been almost 300 in 2012, dropped to just below 200 in less than a five-year period but then showed an increase in the following years. From a low of 182 students in 2014, the nonpublic K-12 enrollment trended upward in 2015 through 2018, with modest decreases in 2019 and 2020, and a significant increase to almost 400 in 2021 and 2022. This upward trend may be partly explained through the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic. Table IV-5 below presents the data.

Table IV-5 - Non-Public K-12 School Enrollment Compared to Total K-12 Enrollment, 2014 – 2023 (not including nursery school)⁸⁰

Year	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
KCPS K-12 Enrollment	1,967	1,909	1,891	1,865	1,800	1,801	1,733	1,707	1,650	1,621
Non-Public K-12 Enrollment	182	190	218	215	333	298	295	399	398	448
Percentage in Non-Public	9.3%	10.0 %	11.5 %	11.5 %	18.5 %	16.6 %	17.0 %	23.4 %	24.1 %	27.6 %

⁷⁹ *Nonpublic School Enrollment*, State of Maryland, September 30, 2022, “Nonpublic School Enrollment and Graduates Summary”, Table 1.

⁸⁰ *Ibid*, “Nonpublic Schools Enrollment by Local Education Agency and Grade”, page 2

There is no data available on the county of residence for non-public school students. Students attend the following private schools: Chestertown Christian Academy, Friendship Montessori, Kent School, Inc., and Radcliffe Creek. Both the Chestertown Christian Academy and Kent School, Inc. provide bus transportation for their students who reside in surrounding counties. Also, it is known that a number of Kent County students attend non-public schools in neighboring jurisdictions.

Home Instruction

The number of Kent County students taught through home instruction increased from 31 students in 1991 to a peak of 106 in 2001. Following a decline in home instruction enrollment after 2001, enrollments have trended upward since 2013, with between approximately 62 and 159 students enrolled per year for the past twelve (12) years. At its current level (for 2023) home instruction is 8.7 percent of total K-12 public school enrollment, below the former high of 8.8 percent in 2020. This decrease can be directly attributed to the COVID-19 pandemic, since once schools reopened to normal the percent of home school enrollment has returned to its mean prior to 2018. Home instruction students have been fairly evenly distributed among grades K-12. Table IV-6 below shows the home instruction data.

Table IV-6 - Home School Enrollment as Percentage of Public School Enrollment, 2011 - 2023

Year	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Home School	65	63	62	63	67	75	88	103	117	159	69	111	141
Per-cent	3.2	2.96	3.11	3.20	3.5	3.9	4.7	5.4	6.1	8.8	3.6	6.7	8.7

Projected Enrollment Data

Enrollment Projections

The annual projections of the Maryland Department of Planning (MDP) are a primary source of public school enrollment data. The most recent of these projections are for the 2024 - 2033 time period. Historic enrollment by grades for the current school year and the next 10 years can be found in Table IV-7. The State enrollment projections do not include pre-kindergarten students. All enrollment figures are for September 30 of the indicated year.

The student population is projected to decrease from the current 1,621 to 1,540 in 2027 and then gradually increase again to 1,610 by 2033. These enrollment projections are consistent with the projected slow growth in the 0 to 17 age population in Kent County, as published by MDP and recognized by the Kent County Department of Planning, Housing, and Zoning. In the 10 year period from 2023 to 2033, the net decrease in the K-12 enrollment will be 11 students, or less than 1% of the student body; in effect, the school system will achieve relative long-term stability. These projections are consistent with the projections developed independently by EFP for Kent County Public Schools, which are within 5% of the MDP projections in every year.

Enrollment Methodology

Maryland Department of Planning Methodology

In developing its public school enrollment projections, the Maryland Department of Planning (MDP) employs a methodology that uses historical data to relate the number of births in a given year to subsequent kindergarten enrollment five years later. These ratios reflect both the number of births and the net in-migration and emigration of children of pre-school age.

A variety of historical grade succession ratios (GSR; also called cohort survival ratios, CSR) are developed to show the relationship between one year's enrollment in a particular grade and the previous year's enrollment in the preceding grade. These grade succession ratios cover different periods of time and methods, such as the most recent year ratio and the average of the last 3, 5 or 10-year ratios.

The MDP grade succession ratios reflect the effects of five factors that determine the number of students in the subsequent grades: child mortality, net in-migration and emigration of school age children for the county as a whole, transfer of children between public and private schools, non-promotion of children to the next grade level, and dropouts in the later years of secondary school. Barring unusual circumstances that may cause rapid increase or decrease in enrollments, the GSRs reflect the cumulative effect of these factors. If any of the factors have changed in recent years, this will affect the historic grade succession ratio. Generally, changes in the factors listed are gradual and incremental; however, the covid-19 situation has introduced the kind of unusual circumstance that makes projecting the future enrollments based on past experience very difficult.

The selection of which average grade succession ratio to use has a significant effect on the projection of future enrollment. MDP makes its selection of the appropriate GSRs based on past history and on anticipated trends in school age population, live birth projections, and both public and non-public school enrollment. Transfer of students among schools within a school system may also be a factor, although this does not appear to have a significant impact in Kent County.

In recent years MDP has included within its projections a factor to account for legislation passed by the Maryland General Assembly, which was signed into law as Chapter 494 of the Act of 2012. This law increases the age for compulsory school attendance to 17 in school year 2015-2016 and then to 18 in school year 2017-2018. By affecting the number of students who are anticipated to remain in high school, these changes increased MDP's projected ten year enrollments for grades 9-12.

The enrollment projections for school years 2022 through 2031 developed by MDP are for the entire County School system on a grade-by-grade basis, rather than an individual school basis. MDP's projections for Kent County are shown in Table IV-7. The MDP projections are for full time equivalent (FTE) enrollments and do not include pre-kindergarten students. The MDP projections are based on the September 30, 2021 enrollments, and accordingly reflect the continuing impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on school enrollments.

Local Enrollment Projection Methodology

Educational Facilities Planning LLC has developed systemwide and individual school grade enrollment forecasts for all KCPS schools, based on the historical enrollment data for all grades. Because of the uncertainty of the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on future enrollments, projections for the 2021 EFMP were based on the pre-Covid September 30, 2019 enrollments rather than those from September 30, 2020. However, with the stabilization of enrollments, the future projections in the

2022 and 2023 EFMPs have been based on the prior year enrollments, specifically September 30, 2023 for the 2024 EFMP.

1. Using birth data reported by the Maryland Department of Health Vital Statistics Administration and historical enrollment reported by Maryland State Department of Education historical grade succession ratios calculated are then used to project the enrollment of each grade level in each school. Projections are also modified to account for any anticipated residential growth. Enrollment projections become progressively less reliable for every future year out. This happens not only because there is uncertainty about the future events that may affect the enrollments (such as the initiation of a long-delayed housing project), but also because of the cumulative effect of the method: even a small difference in the calculated GSR can progressively lead to substantial differences in the out-year enrollment numbers.

Special Considerations: Pre-K, Out-of-Zone Students, Speakers of Foreign Languages, KAP Students, Attendance Area Changes

- *2024-2025 Enrollments:* Projections for 2024-2025 are based on data developed independently by KCPS.
- *Pre-kindergarten:* PreK enrollments for 2024 through 2028 and 2033 are based on the proportion of PreK 2023 enrollments for each school.
- *Kindergarten:* The total kindergarten enrollment for 2024 to 2028 and 2033 is based on the birth-to-K (BTK) ratios. As noted, the total is distributed among the schools based on each school's 2023 share of the K population.
- *Out-of-Zone Students:* Transfer requests that are approved each year also impact the projected enrollments at individual schools. These were described in Part I - Goals, Standards, Policies and Guidelines. The enrollment projections prepared and presented by MDP are based upon the actual number of students in the school system, which includes the approved transfers. The trends associated with the transfer students cannot be isolated in preparing the enrollment projections. The methodology for calculating the enrollment in each grade assumes that the number of transfer students at each school will remain reasonably constant from year to year.
- *Alternative education* students who attend the KAP for a portion of the school year are counted in the enrollment of their home school.
- *Speakers of Foreign Languages.* Although not a large factor at this time, there has been a noticeable increase in the proportion of students of Hispanic origin in some schools, particularly Galena Elementary, Kent County Middle School, and Kent County High School. Since the likelihood is very high that English is not spoken in the home environment among this student group, the school system must accommodate the special needs of the children to ensure that they receive an education that is equitable with that of their English-speaking peers. This educational objective typically requires that instruction be provided in smaller learning groups, very often in schools that were not originally designed with adequate resource rooms or other small pull-out spaces. This factor is of great importance not only in determining the future capacity of school facilities, but will also be important in the detailed design of the instructional spaces at the Kent County Middle School replacement facility.

Future Enrollment Projections

The FTE and head count local enrollment projections are required to be shown on IAC/PSCP Form 101.2 for the entire county and then for each school. The information on each form includes actual current school enrollment data as of September 30, 2023. For prekindergarten, the number can fluctuate from year to year, so the best recent data was used.⁸¹

Since kindergarten is a full-day program at all Maryland elementary schools, the kindergarten head count is equal to the FTE. Pre-kindergarten is a full day universal program in Kent County, so the PK head count is also equal to the FTE.

Future Enrollment Projections for Individual Schools

The MDP enrollment projections are for system-wide enrollments only, excluding pre-kindergarten students. The enrollment projections from MDP and the historical grade-by-grade enrollment data for each school were utilized to develop the projections for each of the five (5) individual schools.

MDP Countywide Projections

Overall, Table IV-7 shows that the K to 12 public school student population of Kent County is anticipated by MDP to decline to a low of 1,540 by 2027. The student population will then steadily increase to 1,610 in 2033. The enrollment will end the 10 year period between 2023 and 2033 with a projected decrease of 40 students from the 2022 enrollment of 1,650 students . All of the school facilities will retain some capacity. This reinforces the need to retain flexibility for growth in the facility plant.

- *Live Births.* The MDP projections indicate that for 2024 through 2028, live births will remain level from the 2023 figure of 170.
- *Kindergarten enrollment.* Based on the live birth-to-kindergarten ratios developed by MDP, kindergarten enrollment is projected to increase to 140 in 2024, and then beginning in 2028 to stabilize at 140 through 2033.
- *Elementary school enrollment* (Kindergarten through grade 5). Overall elementary enrollments are projected to increase in 2024 to 720 from the 2023 level of 717, and then to rise steadily to finish in 2033 at 830 students.
- *Middle school enrollment* (grades 6-8). Middle school enrollments are projected to decrease from 382 in 2023 to 320 students in 2028, and then to increase to 330 in 2033. However, if the elementary school enrollments are correct, then middle school enrollments should begin to increase in the following decade.
- *High school enrollment* (grades 9-12). During the past two decades, high school enrollments peaked at 837 students in 2005 and dropped to 522 students in 2023. This is a decrease of 315 high school students (60.3%) in an 18-year period. The high school enrollment is projected to decline steadily to 450 in 2033. As with the middle school projections, the anticipated increase in the elementary school population may be manifested in an upward trend in the high school enrollment in the decade that begins in 2033.

⁸¹ Telephone interview with Mr. Edward Silver, May 26, 2017.

Table IV-7 - Kent County Public School Enrollment Historical 2023 and Projected 2024 - 2033⁸²

Kent County	Public School Enrollment Historical 2023 and Projected 2024 - 2033											Preliminary for LEA Review
	Grades	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033
	Kindergarten	119	140	120	120	120	140	140	140	140	140	140
	1	113	120	140	120	120	120	140	140	140	140	140
	2	124	110	120	140	120	120	120	140	140	140	140
	3	119	120	110	120	140	120	110	120	140	140	140
	4	112	120	120	110	110	140	110	110	120	130	130
	5	130	110	120	120	110	120	140	120	110	120	140
	6	122	120	110	110	110	100	110	130	110	110	110
	7	124	120	120	110	110	110	100	110	130	110	110
	8	136	120	120	120	110	110	110	100	110	130	110
	9	132	150	140	130	130	120	120	130	110	120	140
	10	122	120	140	130	120	120	110	110	120	100	110
	11	130	120	120	140	120	120	120	110	110	110	100
	12	138	120	110	110	120	110	110	110	100	100	100
	Elementary (K-5)	717	720	730	730	720	760	760	770	790	810	830
	Middle School (6-8)	382	360	350	340	330	320	320	340	350	350	330
	High School (9-12)	522	510	510	510	490	470	460	460	440	430	450
	Total School Enrollment	1,621	1,590	1,590	1,580	1,540	1,550	1,540	1,570	1,580	1,590	1,610

All projected figures rounded to nearest ten
 Totals are sum of rounded enrollments by grade
 Projections prepared by Maryland Department of Planning

⁸² Maryland Department of Planning, March 2024

KCPS School-Specific Projections

The enrollment projections for the entire county and for individual schools shown on IAC/PSCP Forms 101.2 are developed independently by EFP to confirm the MDP enrollment projections and apply them to the individual schools. The KCPS enrollment projections are based on the best data that is currently available regarding the current demographics of Kent County, recent historical enrollment trends, and the impact of the national, state and county economic situation and/or conditions.

Unlike the MDP projections, the school-specific projections include the number of pre-kindergarten students served in each elementary school. The pre-kindergarten program has been in place for many years but only became a full-day program for all students at all five schools starting in the 2012-2013 school year. The projections for each school include Out-of-Zone students, who are counted in the school of attendance rather than in the school associated with their home address.

The overall enrollment figures can mask specific enrollment changes that may occur at individual schools or even in particular grade levels at these schools. Because of the small total size of the Kent County enrollment, single events (such as a large new family-oriented residential development or an employment change) can have a large percentage impact on population and public school enrollment. Careful ongoing monitoring of the character and progress of any residential development within the incorporated towns and/or the unincorporated areas is critical to planning for the future facility and educational needs and requirements for the Kent County Public Schools and future revisions and/or updates to the EFMP. In addition, the expanded prekindergarten requirements of the Maryland Blueprint legislation will likely bring more young students into the early grades, requiring appropriately designed and located spaces in the schools.

The total projections for elementary school, middle school, and high school developed for KCPS are compared to the equivalent totals developed by MDP. Local forecasts should not vary more than 5% from MDP forecasts without agreement between the LEA and MDP. The total KCPS forecast does not exceed the 5% variance. Discrepancies are explained by rounding, differences in assumptions regarding grade succession ratios, and the inclusion of anticipated enrollment growth from forecasted residential development. Variances in the projections are likely to increase with each succeeding year, not only because of the inherent uncertainty of the future events that might influence student enrollments, but also because even slight differences in assumptions – e.g. use of a three-year average vs. a four-year or five-year average – tend to compound into significant discrepancies with each successive application of the grade succession ratio.

One factor of note is the yield factor for housing, particularly in Chestertown and the smaller towns: even if new residential construction maintains its current slow pace of growth, it is still possible that existing housing in the more affordable price range will house larger households or even several households. Extraneous events can lead to rapid and unanticipated changes in the student yield of various housing types. The student yield characteristics of various housing types, particularly multi-family housing, should be monitored to determine if there are changes that may imply an increase in school-age children.

A copy of the letter from the Kent County Public Schools indicating that the KCPS projections are within 5% of the Maryland Department of Planning projections is included in the Supplemental Information section of the EFMP. There is also a letter from the MDP acknowledging that Kent County Public Schools will utilize the locally developed projections for the 2022 Educational Facility Master Plan.

FTE ENROLLMENT PROJECTIONS BY GRADE

LEA:	Kent County Public Schools			DATE:	July 1, 2024		
SCHOOL:	Kent County Public Schools						
	ENROLLMENTS AS OF SEPTEMBER 30 TH						
	ACTUAL	YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 3	YEAR 4	YEAR 5	YEAR 10
	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2033
PRE-K	111	124	109	117	117	119	119
KINDERGARTEN	119	141	125	132	133	134	137
1st	113	125	133	122	129	129	135
2nd	124	116	128	136	126	133	138
3rd	119	121	110	122	130	120	132
4th	112	123	121	110	123	132	131
5th	130	115	114	112	103	115	122
6th	122	135	127	117	113	114	128
7th	124	120	133	125	115	112	126
8th	136	121	117	130	122	113	115
9th	132	146	131	127	140	132	141
10th	122	126	140	125	121	134	113
11th	130	125	129	142	127	123	121
12th	138	118	113	117	130	115	109
SP ED*							
TOT. K-12 w/o PK	1,621	1,632	1,621	1,617	1,612	1,606	1,648
TOT. K-12 w/ PK (FTE)	1,732	1,756	1,730	1,734	1,729	1,725	1,767
TOT. Head Count K-12 w/PK	1,732	1,756	1,730	1,734	1,729	1,725	1,767

IAC/PSCP FORM 101.2							
FTE ENROLLMENT PROJECTIONS BY GRADE							
LEA:	Kent County Public Schools			DATE:	July 1, 2024		
SCHOOL:	Galena Elementary School						
	ENROLLMENTS AS OF SEPTEMBER 30 TH						
	ACTUAL	YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 3	YEAR 4	YEAR 5	YEAR 10
	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2033
PRE-K	46	50	44	47	47	41	41
KINDERGARTEN	44	48	43	45	46	46	47
1st	40	43	48	42	45	45	47
2nd	37	40	44	49	43	46	48
3rd	33	30	38	42	47	41	46
4th	42	42	31	39	43	48	46
5th	49	45	34	23	31	35	38
6th	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
7th	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
8th	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
9th	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
10th	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
11th	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
12th	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SP ED*	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOT. K-5 w/o PK	245	248	238	240	255	261	272
TOT. K-5 w/ PK (FTE & Head Count)	291	298	282	287	302	302	313

FTE ENROLLMENT PROJECTIONS BY GRADE

LEA:	Kent County Public Schools	DATE:	July 1, 2024				
SCHOOL:	H. H. Garnet Elementary School						
	ENROLLMENTS AS OF SEPTEMBER 30 TH						
	ACTUAL	YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 3	YEAR 4	YEAR 5	YEAR 10
	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2033
PRE-K	33	43	38	41	41	52	52
KINDERGARTEN	46	54	48	51	51	52	54
1st	43	48	55	48	52	52	55
2nd	55	50	48	55	49	53	55
3rd	56	60	48	46	53	47	53
4th	49	54	59	47	45	53	52
5th	47	47	55	60	49	47	53
6th							
7th							
8th							
9th							
10th							
11th							
12th							
SP ED*							
TOT. K-5 w/o PK	296	313	313	307	299	304	322
TOT. K-5 w/ PK (FTE & Head Count)	329	356	351	348	340	356	374

FTE ENROLLMENT PROJECTIONS BY GRADE

LEA:	Kent County Public Schools			DATE:	July 1, 2024		
SCHOOL:	Rock Hall Elementary School						
	ENROLLMENTS AS OF SEPTEMBER 30 TH						
	ACTUAL	YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 3	YEAR 4	YEAR 5	YEAR 10
	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2033
PRE-K	32	31	27	29	29	26	26
KINDERGARTEN	29	39	34	36	36	36	36
1st	30	34	30	32	32	32	33
2nd	32	26	36	32	34	34	35
3rd	30	31	24	34	30	32	33
4th	21	27	31	24	35	31	33
5th	34	23	25	29	23	33	31
6th							
7th							
8th							
9th							
10th							
11th							
12th							
SP ED*							
TOT. K-5 w/o PK	176	180	180	187	190	198	201
TOT. K-5 w/ PK (FTE & Head Count)	208	211	207	216	219	224	227

FTE ENROLLMENT PROJECTIONS BY GRADE

LEA:	Kent County Public Schools	DATE:	July 1, 2024				
SCHOOL:	Kent County Middle School						
	ENROLLMENTS AS OF SEPTEMBER 30 TH						
	ACTUAL	YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 3	YEAR 4	YEAR 5	YEAR 10
	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2033
PRE-K							
KINDERGARTEN							
1st							
2nd							
3rd							
4th							
5th							
6th	122	135	127	117	113	114	128
7th	124	120	133	125	115	112	126
8th	136	121	117	130	122	113	115
9th							
10th							
11th							
12th							
SP ED*							
TOTAL	382	376	377	372	350	339	369

IAC/PSCP FORM 101.2							
FTE ENROLLMENT PROJECTIONS BY GRADE							
LEA:	Kent County Public Schools	DATE:	July 1, 2024				
SCHOOL:	Kent County High School						
	ENROLLMENTS AS OF SEPTEMBER 30 TH						
	ACTUAL	YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 3	YEAR 4	YEAR 5	YEAR 10
	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2033
PRE-K							
KINDERGARTEN							
1st							
2nd							
3rd							
4th							
5th							
6th							
7th							
8th							
9th	132	146	131	127	140	132	141
10th	122	126	140	125	121	134	113
11th	130	125	129	142	127	123	121
12th	138	118	113	117	130	115	109
SP ED*							
TOTAL	522	515	513	511	518	504	484

V. FACILITY NEEDS ANALYSIS

Overview

During the 2023-2024 school year Kent County Public Schools operated five (5) public school buildings that served all of the students in Kent County. As noted in Section III Inventory Analysis, the majority of these buildings were constructed over forty years ago and with few exceptions have not received major renovations. The buildings have been well maintained, although their age presents increasing challenges for good maintenance; and they have been awarded funds for the upgrade of individual building systems or the renovation of small areas.

Nevertheless, there is a pressing need to bring these facilities to modern, 21st Century standards of educational appropriateness and building performance. For example:

- During the 2011 legislative session the Maryland General Assembly passed HB 334/SB 256 Public School – Physical Education Facilities. This legislation requires a separate space for physical education at all elementary schools, when newly constructed or completely renovated. Each of the three (3) elementary schools in Kent County has a separate gymnasium, but with the exception of modest improvements to the gymnasium at Galena Elementary School, all of the gymnasiums require work to upgrade lighting, finishes, and mechanical systems.
- All three elementary schools have had full-day programs for pre-kindergarten students. This instructional change has led to a slight improvement in the utilization rates at the elementary schools, since for a full-day program the headcount enrollment for PK is equal to the FTE enrollment. However, the instructional spaces where these programs are taught in some schools are not adequate. The completion of the targeted renovations at Rock Hall Elementary School in 2020 has addressed this issue.
- The Maryland Blueprint will require an expansion of prekindergarten services for 3- and 4-year old children. Currently, the total number of students that may require these services is being investigated. However, it will be a challenge to develop instructional spaces that are appropriately located within the elementary schools. The Maryland Blueprint also increases the proportion of time that teachers will spend in planning; this implies the need for planning spaces that are separated from instructional spaces, a feature that is lacking in schools that were built in the decades after World War II.
- As noted in Section III, Kent County Middle School is in need of modernization. The project has been approved for replacement by the Board of Education and funding for design has been approved by the IAC. At this writing, Planning Approval has been approved by the IAC and approval of the County portion of design funds has also been granted.
- As also noted in Section III, Kent County High School suffers from a fragmentation of instructional spaces: spaces that are disconnected from other spaces in the same discipline, spaces too small or too large for their instructional content, and spaces that have a very poor environmental condition. A future feasibility study will determine the renovation needs of the facility and prioritize projects within the then-available funding resources of the State and the County.

The Six-Year Facility Strategic Plan approved by the Board of Education in February 2018 indicated a number of improvements to Galena Elementary and Rock Hall Elementary, and it outlined a process for improvement to Kent County Middle School and Kent County High School. The Rock Hall

Elementary and Galena Elementary improvements are completed. Kent County High School completed its roof replacement project in August 2023. H. H. Garnet Elementary has received recent improvements to the roof and HVAC system.

Facility Utilization

Facility utilization is an important measure of the efficiency of a school system. Educational facilities that are significantly underutilized represent an unnecessary expenditure of maintenance and operational (M&O) funds that could be better used for instructional or other purposes. An underutilized facility may also be difficult to supervise and secure, and it may not be possible to provide a full support staff or the full range of educational offerings for a small student population. By contrast, a school facility that is significantly over-crowded can impair the learning ability of students through classes that are too large, excessive schedule stress placed on core functions (particularly the cafeteria), difficulty in maintaining an orderly environment, and a loss of direct contact between students and the adults who provide for their education.

As described in the Strategic Plan report, it is important to note that “low utilization does not mean there are a great number of unused spaces in these facilities. Utilization provides a general numeric measure of how efficiently a facility is used, but the actual usage is based on the educational program and the educational needs of the students....A school may have a low utilization and yet all the instructional spaces may be fully utilized, as well as additional spaces not originally intended for instruction, such as storage closets.”⁸³ The report identifies multiple reasons why this might occur: the different program requirements specific to each grade level or program offering; grade configurations that preclude mixing grade levels, even if classrooms have fewer than optimal occupants; the requirements of special need students for small group or individual instruction; and highly specialized programs at the high school level that have educational value but attract a small number of students. Low utilization also does not preclude the possibility that a school might have problems related to congested circulation, assigning appropriate instructional space, or overcrowding of some classrooms: the design of the school also plays a significant role in determining whether the number of students can be safely and appropriately housed in it.

As noted in the Community Analysis section, there are a number of factors that could lead to a reversal of the decline in the Kent County public student enrollment, in at least certain parts of the jurisdiction. These include the construction of the Millington bypass on Route 301, which will enhance Kent County’s location in relation to several regional centers of employment, and initiation of developments in several communities that have been poised to proceed but have not done so to date. If they were to proceed to construction, it is possible that they could attract younger families with school-age children. An additional development is the implementation of the Kent County Fiber Project, which will provide high-speed connectivity within the county and to other parts of the Eastern Shore and Maryland.

Thus, while the enrollment projections indicate continuing decline in the student population, the school system must retain the resiliency to accommodate potential increases of students. The enrollment situation in Kent County has led the Board of Education to approve, beginning in the 2017-2018 school

⁸³ Kent County Public Schools Six-Year Facilities Strategic Plan: Recommendations of The Strategic Planning Committee, dated February 10, 2018, page 17, at <http://www.kent.k12.md.us/StrategicPlanning.aspx>.

year, the closure of Millington and Worton Elementary Schools. The consolidation of school populations at the remaining three elementary school facilities has provided relief to the operating budget and enhanced the educational programs at the elementary school level, while also introducing new challenges in assigning appropriate and sufficient space within the elementary schools to educational programs, in managing circulation within the school, and in administering the number of lunch periods that are required at each school. The two targeted renovation projects, at Rock Hall Elementary and Galena Elementary, have addressed the most significant of these operational challenges.

However, the projected continuing decline points toward the possibility that further consolidation will be needed in the future; at the same time, the facilities must be master-planned to accept increases of capacity and enhancements of the educational programs if student enrollments increase.

To achieve this complex objective, the Superintendent established a community outreach process in the autumn of 2017 that led to the long-term strategic plan for the facilities and educational programs of Kent County Public Schools. The recommendations of the Strategic Plan are described in greater detail in the Introduction to this document.

Existing and Projected Facility Utilization

For any particular school, utilization is determined by the interaction of two factors, the full time equivalent (FTE) student enrollment and the State Rated Capacity (SRC) of the school facility. The State of Maryland has established uniform measures to compare the utilization of schools across the state. Facility utilization is determined by dividing the current and projected Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) enrollment by the State Rated Capacity (SRC), and is described as a percentage of capacity.

- State Rated Capacity is described in Section III.
- Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) enrollment is determined as the sum of all students in grades K through 12, plus one-half of the students in half-day programs. FTE is distinguished from head count: while head count includes all students, FTE is the count that is used to calculate the number of staff members needed for instruction, the number of instructional spaces needed to support these staff members, and the utilization of the facility. Because Kent County Public Schools has a full-day prekindergarten program, head count and FTE are the same.

Purposes of SRC and Utilization Calculations

State Rated Capacity is utilized for a number of purposes. The IAC uses it to determine the eligibility of a project for State construction funding. Utilization is evaluated in the seventh year from the date of submission of the request. The purpose of this enrollment analysis, in combination with other eligibility factors, is to ensure that scarce State and local capital resources are not directed to a facility that will be significantly under-utilized and should perhaps be considered for closure. The cost impact of such decisions affects not only the capital budget, but also the long-term operational budget of the school system, a portion of which must be directed at the heating, cooling, and other operational costs of the under-utilized facility. Utilization calculations are also used to guide long-range planning in determining the best location and timing of projects that will provide relief for projected over-capacity, and to guide decisions on redistricting to reduce overcrowding in schools by taking advantage of the enrollment capacity in adjacent school buildings. Except under unique conditions that are addressed in regulation, for all major projects the 7th-year enrollment of the subject school and of adjacent schools is taken into

account; for systemic renovation projects, the 7th year enrollment of only the subject school is used to determine eligibility.

To be eligible for State funds for a replacement or new school, a project must show that it will be at least 50% utilized when it opens, with utilization increasing over the following years. A renovation project may be funded if it has a projected utilization of less than 50%, but the State funding allocation will be based on an area calculation that emerges from the projected utilization, not on the existing or projected square footage. For a systemic renovation project such as a roof or boiler replacement to be eligible, the projected enrollment should be 60% or more, except under unique circumstances. This criterion also applies to projects in the Aging School Program (ASP) and the former Qualified Zone Academy Bond (QZAB) program.

State Rated Capacity is also used by a number of local governments in Maryland to determine when housing development can proceed under Adequate Public Facility Ordinance (APFO) rules: school capacity is considered along with the capacity of other public services in determining whether the proposed housing development will impose a burden on the population and reduce the quality of life of the jurisdiction.

Implications of Facility Utilization

The utilization rate of a school is therefore a function of both enrollments and how instructional spaces are used in a facility. When a school is less crowded, more options are available for how each teaching space may be used. Typically, standard elementary classrooms may then be occupied by instructional uses that are not rated in the calculation of SRC, such as art, music and computer labs, or by community use spaces such as day care or senior centers. Standard classrooms may also be used for programs that have a lower capacity rating, such as special education. If enrollments later increase, it is typical for these spaces to be converted back to standard classrooms, which can then increase the SRC of the school. By the same token, a new school in which all spaces are used as originally intended may find that some non-rated spaces need to be subsequently converted to classrooms, which will increase the SRC at the time that it is recalculated. A school that is operated somewhat below 100% of its SRC offers a good deal of flexibility for the principal and staff to make adjustments in space utilization to meet special conditions, or to absorb the kind of short-term increases in the student body that can happen in any school system.

These scheduling and use changes will increase or reduce the school's SRC even while the physical structure of the building remains unchanged. Changes made to accommodate a transitory shift in enrollments are not usually recorded as a change of SRC; the change must be more permanent to warrant a re-examination of the SRC by the Maryland Department of Planning, and the changed SRC is not recorded until approved by MDP and recorded by the IAC. Changes in the physical configuration of the school, for example the installation of a partition to subdivide a very large classroom or the enclosure of open space pods to establish permanent classrooms, may also affect the calculation of the SRC.

If a school is or is projected to be severely under-utilized, the school system has a number of options. These options include:

- Consolidate classes and/or grade levels to achieve better class sizes;
- Utilize regular elementary classrooms for non-rated uses, such as art or music;

- “Mothball” excess space in order to reduce fixed costs of maintenance and operations (however, the spatial arrangement of many schools, the circulation pattern, and the layout of the mechanical and electrical systems generally prevent the complete isolation of under-utilized spaces);
- Allow community partners or other governmental entities to use under-utilized space (with consideration for the appropriate separation of adult and student populations, and for factors such as acoustics and distraction);
- Temporarily “mothball” the entire facility;
- Lease the facility to a private school or another governmental entity, with provisions for return of use to the school system under defined conditions or after a specified term;
- Permanently close the facility and consolidate the student population into one or more other facilities.

However, if a school is or is projected to have a utilization rate that is greater than 100 percent, the school system also has a range of options. These options include:

- Increase class size;
- Increase the teacher-to-student ratio (e.g. by placing teaching assistants in the classroom);
- Redistrict the attendance areas of the subject and adjacent schools in order to utilize the available capacity at other schools;
- Reorganize the grade structure;
- Utilize one or more relocatable classrooms (pending a more permanent facilities solution);
- Construct one or more additions (sometimes in conjunction with renovation of the existing facility); or
- Construct a new school or replace the existing school with a facility of increased capacity.

The last option is typically only exercised if the new school will provide relief to several schools, and is also warranted by the condition of the existing facility. In the case of a single over-crowded school, an addition is likely to be the most cost-effective option, if site conditions allow. With an addition, consideration should be given to the renovation or expansion of core spaces, particularly the cafeteria, in order to avoid congestion and overcrowding of these critical functions. Additions can also be built to provide programmatic space, such as a high school auditorium. If an existing school that is currently or is projected to be over-crowded also shows deficiencies in building performance or is educationally unsuitable, then consideration should be given to full renovation or to replacement with an increase of capacity, on the same site or on another site.

Situations may arise in which closing an under-utilized school will require capital improvements to the school or schools that will receive students from the closing school. These improvements may include interior renovations to increase the number of instructional spaces, or an addition to increase capacity. In rare circumstances, a complete replacement of the receiving school may be warranted, either at the current site or at a new site.

In the situation that Kent County Public Schools confronts, in which enrollments are projected to remain stable but there are possibilities of enrollment growth in some parts of the jurisdiction, the long-term

Strategic Plan that that was approved by the Board of Education in February 2018 combines attention to urgent facility deficiencies that must be corrected with long term planning that examines the utilization of the two secondary schools. This planning effort is now underway.

Utilization of Kent County Public Schools Facilities

The SRC for each public school in Kent County was reviewed in March 2019 and a revised SRC for each school was approved by the Maryland Department of Planning in April 2019. Due to the recent renovation completions, KCPS is currently reviewing the SRC for Rock Hall Elementary and Galena Elementary. Table V-1 below shows the SRC for each school in Kent County based on the September 30, 2019 FTE; for each school, the approved SRC, the actual FTE enrollment for 2021, the utilization percentage, the projected FTE enrollment for 2026 (the fifth year of the projection), and the projected utilization percentage are given. Projections for 2031 are also provided. Changes in enrollments in the future or changes in the usage of spaces within the school facilities may impact the utilization of individual schools and may also impact the level of State funding for capacity or renovation projects submitted for planning approval and/or construction funding.

Table V-1: School Facility Utilization (Current and Projected), Based on Current Facilities and Revised State Rated Capacities

School	SRC (revised 4/3/19)	Actual P3/PK-12 Enroll- ment 2023 (FTE)	Percent Utilization 2023	Projected P3/PK-12 Enroll- ment 2028 (FTE)	Percent Utilization 2028	Projected P3/PK-12 Enroll- ment 2033 (FTE)	Percent Utilization 2033
Galena ES	438	291	66.4%	302	68.9%	313	71.5%
H.H. Garnett ES	426	329	77.2%	356	83.6%	374	87.8%
Rock Hall ES	317	208	65.6%	224	70.7%	227	71.6%
Kent MS	645	382	59.2%	339	52.6%	369	57.2%
Kent HS	1,070	522	48.8%	504	47.1%	484	45.2%
Totals	2,896	1,732	59.8%	1,725	59.6%	1,767	61.0%

Overall, Kent County Public Schools operates its facilities at a low utilization. With declining enrollment, the under-utilization would continue. However, the closure of Millington and Worton Elementary Schools and the consolidation of their school populations into the remaining three elementary schools, approved on March 20, 2017 by the Board of Education, reduced the total SRC of the school system by 612 seats. This resulted in an improvement in the overall utilization by 10.5 percent. The revision of the SRCs in the spring of 2019 reduced the total SRC of the system by a further 167 seats, improving the overall utilization by an additional 1.2 percent, for a total systemwide utilization that as of the 2019-2020 school year (the last year before the anomalies of the covid-19 pandemic) was 11.7 percent higher than the pre-consolidation utilization.

Both the middle and the high school will continue at very low levels of utilization, calling for further strategies to improve the utilization of the school facilities plant. The utilization of these schools is an important factor, among others, that was considered in the middle school planning study that led to the decision to replace the facility. The State Rated Capacity of the modernized 5-8 middle school is calculated at 612, based on a projected enrollment of 520 students and using the IAC standard ratio of 85% between enrollment and SRC. With the inclusion of expanded PreK for 3 and 4 year-old children, the utilization of the elementary schools is also expected to improve, even with the movement of the 5th grade students to the modernized middle school.

Age of Facility

Another factor that is considered in capital planning is the age of the school building, based upon the initial date of construction and/or the date of the last renovation. To be eligible for State funding for a major renovation or a systemic renovation project, the school and/or building system must have been in use for at least 15 years. Table V-3 below shows the most recent date of renovation/new construction of educational facilities in Kent County. With an average age of square footage that dates to 1981, Kent County Public Schools shares with Baltimore City the oldest average square footage of school systems in the state.⁸⁴ It should be noted that age of square footage stands as a rough surrogate for building condition, but since this metric does not account for investments in systemic renovation projects or most projects funded through the Aging Schools Program or the Qualified Zone Academy Bond program, it does not fully account for the actual condition of building systems and components; similarly, it does not account for the quality of maintenance, which can keep a physical asset in good working order in spite of its age.

The unrenovated square footage in Kent County ranges from the early 1950s (Galena Elementary) to the 1970s; Kent County High School has a substantial amount of square footage that is less than 25 years old, and both Rock Hall Elementary and Galena Elementary have portions that have been renovated within the last five years. Because of their age, four of the five schools are eligible for major renovation at this time; the fifth school, Kent County High School, will be eligible for selective upgrades of building systems and instructional spaces that were not improved through the “hybrid” renovation project that was completed in 2007, or through the numerous smaller projects that were approved before and after the hybrid project. Because of the relatively small area that was affected by the targeted renovations at Rock Hall Elementary and the renovations and addition at Galena Elementary, the average of the school system has only improved marginally with the projects now completed. With the current size of Kent County Middle School representing 18% of the total school plant square footage, the replacement of this facility will have a substantial impact on the total average age of the facilities.

Table V-2: School Facility Age

Name of School	Date of Construction or Last Renovation (date placed in service)
Galena Elementary	1951, 1957, 1962, 1974, 2021
Garnet Elementary	1975, 1983, 2002
Millington Elementary	1974
Rock Hall Elementary	1950, 1963, 1974, 2020
Worton Elementary	1969

⁸⁴ Public School Construction Program *Managing for Results Report*, August 2018.

Kent County Middle	1976
Kent County High	1971, 1994, 1995, 2000, 2005, 2006

Capital Improvement Projects

Past Capital Improvement Projects

In the absence of major renovations to its aging public school facilities, the school system has undertaken numerous individual projects, using a variety of local and State funding sources. One major impediment to pursuing major renovations and/or necessary systemic renovation projects is the availability of County matching funds to access the available State funds for capital improvements. County funds are also necessary to cover the cost of work and services that are ineligible for State funding, including routine maintenance and repairs. Projects approved by the State and supported by the local government in the Capital Improvement Program within recent years have included:

- *Fiscal Year 2014:* Lighting upgrade projects at Kent County Middle School and four elementary schools.
- *Fiscal Year 2015:* Roof and HVAC replacement projects at Garnet Elementary School. A request for a roof replacement project at Galena Elementary was withdrawn by the local board, and a request for an HVAC project at Galena was deemed ineligible by the IAC because of the age of the existing HVAC system.
- *Fiscal Year 2016:* Replacement of HVAC rooftop units at Garnet Elementary School.
- *Fiscal Year 2017:* Repaving of parking lots at three elementary schools.
- *Fiscal Year 2019:* Installation of security vestibules at all schools, and roof replacement at Rock Hall Elementary School;
- *Fiscal Year 2020:* Construction of targeted renovations at Rock Hall Elementary School and at Galena Elementary School.
- *Fiscal Year 2021:* Construction of targeted renovations at Rock Hall Elementary School and at Galena Elementary School.
- *Fiscal Year 2022:* None
- *Fiscal Year 2023:* Replacement of the Kent County High School roof (1st round of funding)
- *Fiscal Year 2024:* Completion of the Kent County High School roof (2nd round of funding)
- *Fiscal Year 2025:* Design Funding for Kent County Middle School

No CIP requests were made by the Kent County Board of Education in Fiscal Year 2017, 2018, 2019, or 2022. In FY 2020, the Board of Education requested and was approved for funding for the security vestibules and the two projects at Rock Hall Elementary School, and planning approval for the renovations at Galena Elementary School. In FY 2021, the Board requested funding for the Galena Elementary project and an increase of funding for the Rock Hall Elementary project. In FY 2023 and FY 2024, the Board requested funding for the Kent County High School Roof Replacement. In FY 2025, the Board requested and was approved for planning approval as well as funding for design services relating to the Kent County Middle School Replacement Project.

Near Term and Long Term Capital Projects

The analysis of facility utilization above points toward the possibility that the Board of Education may need to consider further consolidations in the future in order to operate the Kent County Public Schools facilities plant more efficiently and to meet budgetary expectations. Consideration of the generally advanced age of the facilities also indicates the need for a comprehensive program of renovation or replacement projects (incorporating the previously executed building improvements wherever possible). A program of this magnitude, which will affect portions of every school building, will be difficult to fund under any circumstances. The scarcity of funding resources in relation to the size of the task emphasizes the need to right-size the facility plant to accommodate the anticipated enrollment, and to thoroughly prioritize the capital projects through an objective assessment of facility conditions in relation to educational programs.

The long-term strategic plan approved by the Board of Education in February 2018 outlined short-term projects that have a high degree of urgency, as well as long term planning efforts that will lead to major capital projects at the secondary schools – renovation, addition, or even replacement. For each project, the Strategic Planning Committee estimated the appropriate year in which to request planning approval and/or construction funding in order to maximize the State funding. These requests will require funding from the Kent County Commissioners for the required local matching funds, as well as the local funds required for those aspects of the projects that are not eligible for State funding. As reassessments of the existing facilities and the enrollment and instructional needs of the students are periodically undertaken, capital improvement plans and the priorities of current and future projects will be modified.

Two major factors in determining the scope of work and State funding for major renovation projects are the projected enrollment, and the age of the original school building and its previous additions. In addition to potential major renovation projects, Kent County Public Schools will continue to make capital improvements to its facilities by the expeditious utilization of the limited resources available. Capital investments must be limited to those facilities that are certain to be retained under any future program of consolidations and closures. The replacement of the Rock Hall Elementary roof and targeted small renovations, the replacement of the Galena Elementary School roof and HVAC equipment with associated renovations, and the security vestibules at five schools were the highest priorities identified in the Six-Year Facilities Strategic Plan. All of these projects were supported by both the Board of County Commissioners and the Interagency Commission on School Construction. Other high priority projects include repaving of parking lots and other surfaces at Kent County Middle School, improvements to ensure compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and a series of needed improvements at Kent County High School, including replacement of the roof. The latter project has been approved for funding in the FY 2023 CIP and the FY 2024 CIP, with completion in August 2023.

In the longer term, the school system addressed the condition of Kent County Middle School through a planning study process that examined options for renovation, renovation with addition, or replacement, resulting in the decision by the Board of Education to replace the facility at its current location in Chestertown. The high school will be separately studied in the future for programmatic improvements that will enhance instructional and operational efficiency. These future capital programs are fully described in the Introduction to the EFMP and in the final report of the Strategic Planning Committee.

As shown in Forms 101.1 in Section III Inventory Analysis, the school system fully utilizes its allocation

of Aging School Program funds each year. When other resources such as QZAB, FSRP, TIMS, EEI, and Supplemental Allocation were made available, Kent County Public Schools has applied for and successfully received funding to make the appropriate improvements. Most recently, KCPS was approved for a grant by the Maryland Energy Administration to enter all of its facilities into an energy management system.

Coordination with Other Facility-Related Plans

In developing future facility improvement project recommendations, it is prudent to examine other facility-related plans of the Kent County Public School system.

- a. Asbestos Plans. Copies of the asbestos plans as required by AHERA are located at each school building in the Building Manager's office, including copies of the six-month re-inspection and the three-year asbestos survey reports. Copies of these same documents and reports are maintained at the central office in the Plant Operations Department. Based upon the information in these reports, abatement was carried out by the school system at Rock Hall Elementary School before construction began in December 2019 as well at Galena Elementary School before construction began in May 2020 and in April 2021. No further abatement work is needed at this time for asbestos containing materials in the Kent County Public Schools.
- b. Water Quality and Sewage. All Kent County Schools are located on municipal water and sewer systems, and no work is required at this time.
- c. Security Systems and Plans. The security systems in all of the then-seven schools were replaced in 2013 or 2014 using Aging Schools Program or Qualified Zone Academy Bond program funds. These recent improvements will not require replacement or upgrade for many years, but it is nevertheless worthwhile to determine if additional security measures are warranted. With the installation of security vestibules at all five schools in the summer of 2019, a new card-reader system was installed to monitor visitors to the schools.
- d. Comprehensive Maintenance Plan. Kent County Public Schools submits the Comprehensive Maintenance Plan (CMP) to the State Public School Construction Program annually, as required by the IAC and as a condition for receiving State funds for capital improvements. The Plan provides information on the condition of the major components and systems in each school, which are rated individually and are compiled into a score for the entire school. The CMP includes detailed results of the LEA and State maintenance surveys that are described in Section III. These overall ratings are also shown on IAC/PSCP Form 101.1 for each school in Section III of this EFMP. The implementation of the KCPS Comprehensive Maintenance Plan is a high priority for the Board of Education.

Facility Needs Summary

The purpose of this Educational Facilities Master Plan is to address major facility needs and capital improvements. These projects will be identified for funding through the annual Capital Improvement Program (CIP) submitted to the State, or through the ASP or other small funding programs. CIP projects that are eligible for State funds will require County matching funds; County funds alone will be needed for aspects of projects or for entire projects which are not eligible for State funding.

IAC/PSCP Form 101.3 *Facility Needs Summary* on the following pages identifies specific projects which are eligible for State funding, and an anticipated date is given for the request for funding for each project. This information is based upon the Six-Year Strategic Facilities Plan and on the 2021 CMP.

In some cases, capital programs are outlined without specific scopes or timeframes; these are projects that will depend on the outcome of other studies, for example the feasibility study for the middle school.

Since Form 101.3 is updated annually as a result of annual inspections of the Kent County Public Schools building plant, other building systems and/or components may be identified for replacement beyond those that are noted in the current Form 101.3. Form 101.3 does not include projects that will be the entire responsibility of the school system and local government. These include repair and maintenance projects that are not eligible under any of the State funding programs, as well as projects that belong to categories that are currently ineligible for State funding due to their age, but that must be addressed to maintain the safety or performance of the school facility.

IAC/PSCP FORM 101.3

DATE: July 1, 2024

IAC/PSCP FORM 101.3

SYSTEMIC RENOVATIONS:					
Kent County Middle School	Systemic renovations	5-8	Extg: 645 Prjct'd: 612	399 (current grades 6-8)	520 (future grades 5-8)
H. H. Garnet Elementary School	Windows	PK-5	426	344	350
Undesignated systemic renovations, various schools	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD
AGING SCHOOLS PROGRAM (or Qualified Zone Academy Bond program, if reinstated)					
TBD	Projects identified in Aramark Conditions Assessment and later individual building assessments	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD
Kent County Middle School	Bleacher replacement	5-8	Extg: 645 Prjct'd: 612	399 (current grades 6-8)	520 (future grades 5-8)
Kent County High School	Running track resurfacing	9-12	1,070	531	468
Kent County High School	Bleacher replacement	9-13	1,161	531	468
FUNDING SOURCES TO BE DETERMINED					
Kent County High School	New concession stand, restroom, ticket, and storage facility.	9-12	1,070	531	468
Kent County High School	Planetarium renovations (seating, painting, digital controls)	9-12	1,070	531	468
Kent County High School	Renovation of press box	9-12	1,070	531	468
Kent County High School	Construction of field house	9-12	1,070	531	468

Kent County Public Schools

5608 Boundary Avenue

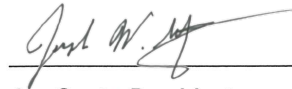
Rock Hall, MD 21661

(410) 778-1595

Non-Discrimination Statement

The public school system of Kent County does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, age, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, or handicapping condition in matters affecting the provision of access to educational programs. Nothing in this "Educational Facilities Master Plan for the Kent County Public Schools is intended to or will be allowed to institute, reinstate, maintain or further such discrimination.

The Kent County Board of Education accepts this Educational Facilities Master Plan as a working document.

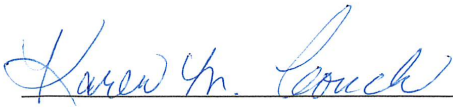


Joe Goetz, President

Kent County Board of Education

6/15/2023

Date



Karen M. Couch

Superintendent of Schools

6/14/23

Date



Kent County Board of Education

Growing a Community of Leaders

Dr. Karen M. Couch
Office of the Superintendent

April 22, 2024

Ms. Rebecca L. Flora, AICP, Secretary of Planning
Maryland Department of Planning
301 West Preston Street, Suite 1101
Baltimore, Maryland 21201-2305

Dear Ms. Flora:

This is in response to your transmittal of the latest Maryland Department of Planning (MDP) public school enrollment projections for Kent County Public School System (KCPS) for the years 2024–2033. We have compared MDP projections with projections we will use in our Educational Facilities Master Plan (EFMP) in the table below. None of the projections differ by more than five percent.

Comparison of MDP and KCPS Forecasts for Kent County Public Schools (excluding Pre-K)

	2023 (Actual)	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028
MDP Projection	1621	1590	1590	1580	1540	1550
KCPS Projection	1621	1632	1621	1617	1612	1606
Difference		2.6%	1.9%	2.3%	4.6%	3.5%
		2029	2030	2031	2032	2033
MDP Projection		1540	1570	1580	1590	1610
KCPS Projection		1596	1599	1596	1597	1648
Difference		3.6%	1.8%	1.0%	0.4%	2.3%

5608 Boundary Avenue

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Maryland DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING

5/6/2024

Dr. Karen M. Couch
Superintendent
Kent County Public Schools
5608 Boundary Avenue
Rock Hall, MD 21661

Dear Dr. Couch:

Thank you for submitting the Kent County Public Schools enrollment projections for 2024-2033, in accordance with the regulations of the Interagency Commission on School Construction (IAC).

The Maryland Department of Planning reviewed your submission and compared your data to the school enrollment projections generated by the State Data Center (see attached) and have found the difference to be less than five percent for the years 2024-2033. Therefore, your projections can be used to prepare your 2024 Educational Facilities Master Plan (EFMP) and 2025 Capital Improvement Program submissions.

When preparing your EFMP submission, please ensure the 2023 actual enrollment on your calculation worksheet is consistent with the official enrollment figure generated by the Maryland State Department of Education. The Maryland Department of Planning recognizes the Maryland State Department of Education's K-12 enrollment figure as the official enrollment for the 2023/2024 school year.

We look forward to receiving your EFMP in July. A copy of this letter and its attachment should be included in the plan. If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to contact me at chuck.boyd@maryland.gov or (410) 767-1401.

Sincerely,

Charles W. Boyd, AICP
Assistant Secretary of Planning Services

cc: Alex Donahue, Executive Director, Interagency Commission on School Construction
Alfred Sundara, AICP, Manager, Projections and State Data Center

Maryland Department of Planning • 301 West Preston Street, Suite 1101 • Baltimore • Maryland • 21201

Tel: 410.767.4500 • Toll Free: 1.877.767.6272 • TTY users: Maryland Relay • Planning.Maryland.gov

**Agenda Item Details**

Meeting Jun 12, 2023 - Open Session Meeting
Category 8. Administrative Services
Subject F. Educational Facilities Master Plan
Type Action, Discussion, Information
Recommended Action Administration requests board approval for the updated 2023 EFMP.

TO: Members of the Board of Education
FROM: Dr. Karen Couch, Superintendent of Schools
Kreigh Kirby, Accountant
RE: Educational Facilities Master Plan (EFMP)
DATE: June 12, 2023

PURPOSE:

Administration requests board approval for the updated 2023 EFMP.

SUMMARY:

The EFMP is updated annually for approval by the Board of Education and subsequently, by the County Commissioners. Dr. Lever was contracted to provide administration with technical assistance to complete the update.

ACTION:

The administration recommends approval by the Board of Education for the FY 2023 Educational Facilities Master Plan.

[KCPS EFMP 2023 Final Version.pdf \(6,335 KB\)](#)

Motion & Voting

Administration requests board approval for the updated 2023 EFMP.

Motion by Francoise Sullivan, second by Trish McGee.

Final Resolution: Motion Carries

Yea: Trish McGee, Joe Goetz, Francoise Sullivan, Aretha Dorsey, Frank Rhodes



Department of Planning, Housing, and Zoning

June 16, 2023

Alleesa M. E. Stewart, MBA
Supervisor of Financial Services
5608 Boundary Avenue
Rock Hall, MD 21661

Re: 2023 Educational Facilities Master Plan

Dear Ms. Stewart:

Thank you for the opportunity to review the 2023 Educational Facilities Master Plan (EFMP).

It's my understanding that the 2023 EFMP continues the implementation of the Six-Year Facilities Master Plan that was approved by the Board of Education in January 2018, and the 2018 Plan is reflected in this EFMP. The 2018 Plan is being actualized through the current and future proposed Capital Improvement Programs (CIP), which have been and will be reviewed by the County.

Overall, the EFMP and its purpose are consistent with the Goals and Strategies identified in the 2018 Kent County Comprehensive Plan, and specifically with the first Strategy found on page 105 of the 2018 Comp Plan, which states: *Maintain and upgrade existing educational facilities and programs*. This supports "aggressively pursuing funding from the State for major renovations, modernization, and necessary maintenance of the existing educational facilities within the public-school system (2018 Comp Plan, p. 106)." Also, please note that staff have identified that all Kent County Public Schools are located within the Priority Funding Areas of Kent County.

If you have any questions, please let me know.

Sincerely,

William A. Mackey, AICP
Director

c: The Honorable Ronald H. Fithian, President, Kent County Board of County Commissioners
Shelley L. Heller, County Administrator

400 High Street, 1st Floor, Chestertown, MD 21620 | (410) 778-7423 | planningandzoning@kentgov.org