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**GOVERNOR O'MALLEY ISSUES EXECUTIVE ORDER TO STUDY
SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION FUNDING IN MARYLAND**

***O'Malley-Brown Administration to examine funding structures to maximize
investments in state school construction projects***

Annapolis, MD (May 6, 2014) -- Governor O'Malley today issued an executive order as part of an effort to build on the record investments Maryland has made in recent years to construct 21st century school facilities across Maryland.

The Governor signed the order directing the Interagency Committee on School Construction (IAC) to work with the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) and the Department of Legislative Services (DLS) and conduct a study on school construction in Maryland. Building on the record school construction funding during the O'Malley-Brown Administration, the State will work to continue investment in school facilities and ensure that we replace temporary learning shacks with 21st century teaching and learning environments to better prepare Maryland students for the new innovation economy.

“We’ve made a commitment to Maryland families to make education a top priority and improve student achievement by 25 percent by 2015. Even in the face of the worst national recession since the Great Depression, we’ve made record investments for the last seven years in our top-ranked public schools, along with \$2.7 billion in school construction, to make this goal a reality,” **Governor O’Malley** said. “We’ve made tremendous progress, and our efforts are paying off, but there is still more work to do. This executive order will lay the groundwork for protecting our hard-earned progress so that every child, parent and educator will have the tools they need to win the 21st century, not just in Maryland, but across the globe.”

“When we invest in school construction, we’re building a brighter future for more of Maryland’s young people and ensuring that every student in our state has the opportunity to learn and train in a safe, high quality facility,” said **Lt. Governor Anthony Brown**. “While we’ve made record investments in Maryland’s schools and built one of the best school systems in the country, our work is far from finished. Together, we’re going to continue to invest in our children’s futures, giving them the education and training today that they’ll need to compete for the jobs of tomorrow.”

The order also directs the IAC to make recommendations -- consistent with the goals of maintaining a structurally balanced state budget and sound debt management practices -- on:

1. developing creative means, financing or otherwise, to increase funding for public school construction;
2. creating more reliable revenue streams that could include leveraging funds by counties to meet public school construction needs;
3. the use of lease payments or other alternative financing methods; and
4. local funding for public school construction, county tax capacity, and county tax effort.

During a recent visit to Maryland, Moody's chief economist Mark Zandi cited investments in education and infrastructure as key components for building a strong business climate. Maryland is already investing an additional \$4.4 billion over the next 6 years on top of what was already planned) -- and creating more than 57,000 jobs -- to build roads, bridges and transit projects as a result of the 2013 Transportation Infrastructure Investment Act.

The study in this executive order will help ensure that we responsibly increase our investment in school construction as well. This will help stimulate business growth, boost Maryland's economy, and develop our students' ability to compete for good jobs in the global, high-technology economy.

Specifically, the order requires the development of a robust school construction program that will further State policies on high performance building design, the revitalization and stabilization of existing communities, resilience in the face of emergency events, as well as Minority Business Enterprise participation. The study will also include efforts to pursue a path forward by looking at the best options for meeting the financial demands of public school construction.

The order also directs lead agencies to solicit input from the State Treasurer's Office, county boards of education, and county governments. The order calls for the final report to be delivered to the Governor on or before September 1, 2015.

After five years of number-one-in-the nation rankings, the O'Malley-Brown Administration's FY 15 budget included over \$6 billion in new investments in education and an additional \$275 million in school construction. The Governor recently signed the Administration's 2014 pre-k education legislation into law,

expanding options for 1600 additional pre-schoolers across Maryland through a grant program and paving the way for further statewide expansion in coming years. According to College Board, Maryland not only has the lowest college tuition in the nation, students in Maryland also rank #1 in AP success.

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See [Executive Order 01.01.2014.06](#) (PDF)