



OFFICE OF RACIAL EQUITY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

Marc Elrich
County Executive

Tiffany Ward
Director

MEMORANDUM

September 15, 2022

To: Jennifer Bryant, Director
Office of Management and Budget

cc: Gabe Albornoz, President
County Council

From: Tiffany Ward, Director
Office of Racial Equity and Social Justice

Re: Racial Equity Impact Assessment (REIA) for Supplemental Appropriation (SA) #23-12
FY23 Capital Budget Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) Planned Life Cycle
Asset Replacement: MCPS (No. 896586)

- I. **FINDING:** The Office of Racial Equity and Social Justice (ORESJ) finds that Supplemental Appropriation #23-12 FY23 Capital Budget Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) Planned Life Cycle Asset Replacement: MCPS (No. 896586), has the ability to advance racial equity and social justice in Montgomery County as the requested funds are needed to support capital improvements in three aging school buildings primarily serving students and families of color. Additionally, over half of students attending two of these three schools were eligible to participate in the Free and Reduced-priced Meals Program (FARMS) during the 2021-2022 school year which primarily serves children identified as low-income, homeless, migrant, runaway, or foster children¹. As such, Supplemental Appropriation #23-12 also has the ability to advance equitable outcomes for low-income children and their families.
- II. **BACKGROUND:** The purpose of Supplemental Appropriation #23-12: MCPS No. 896586 is to support capital improvements in three aging school buildings (James Hubert Blake

¹ U.S. Department of Agriculture. *The national school lunch program: fact sheet*. 2017. Available at: <https://www.fns.usda.gov/nslp>

High in Silver Spring, Watkins Mill High School in Gaithersburg, and New Hampshire Estates Elementary School in Silver Spring) that would protect the school buildings from deterioration, improve safety of students and staff, and enhance the delivery of educational programs. Specific facility components to be addressed include code corrections, physical education facility/field improvements, school facility exterior resurfacing, partitions, doors, lighting, media center security gates, bleachers, communication systems, and flooring.

Previously, a FY21 appropriation was requested to continue these level of effort projects, however, fiscal constraints prompted the County Council in the adopted FY2021-2026 CIP to reduce the Board of Education's request. A FY23 appropriation was approved to continue the projects, however, the County Council adopted FY23-28 CIP which decreased expenditures in FY23 and FY24, therefore reducing the projects to align with the approved expenditures.

- III. **ANALYSIS:** ORESJ has previously commented on planned facilities upgrades and replacements of MCPS buildings, most recently in our assessment of [REIA #23-05 FY23 Capital Budget of Montgomery County Public Schools \(MCPS\) Major Capital Projects – Secondary \(P652102\)](#). Our recommendations regarding these proposed level of effort projects remain the same and as such we ask that readers reference REIA #23-05 for further details as well as references regarding the benefits of improved school buildings for BIPOC and low-income children.

Demographic data shown below finds that during the 2021-2022 school year, the three proposed schools not only serve a majority of children of color and children who participated in the FARMS program, but also a substantial percentage of students who participated in the English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) program² in both Watkins Mill High School and New Hampshire Estates Elementary School at 28.5% and 56.0% respectively. As these schools primarily serve children that most often face the greatest systemic barriers to success, ORESJ supports funding the for planned level of effort maintenance of these school buildings.

² The Department of Materials Management. *FY 2023 educational facilities master plan and the FY 2023–2028 capital improvements program*. 2022. Available at: <https://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/departments/planning/cipmaster.aspx>

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Schools	2021-2022						2021-2022		2020-2021
	Total Enrollment	Two or more races %	Black or Afr. Amer. %	Asian%	Hispanic %	White %	FARMS%	ESOL%*	Mobility Rate%
James Blake HS	1,751	3.4%	40.0%	9.9%	31.9%	14.6%	48.6%	5.8%	6.7%
Watkins Mill HS	1,594	2.5%	23.5%	9.8%	58.6%	5.3%	66.1%	28.5%	10.5%
New Hampshire Estates ES	427	1.9%	17.8%	0.0%	74.9%	4.2%	82.9%	56.0%	23.3%

Source: *FY 2023 Educational Facilities Master Plan and the FY 2023-2028 Capital Improvements Program: Seneca Valley Cluster

cc: Monifa McKnight, Superintendent, Montgomery County Public Schools
 Ken Hartman, Director, Office of Strategic Partnership, Office of the County Executive