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TO: Members of the State Board of Education

FROM: Nancy S. Grasmick *Nancy*

DATE: March 24, 2009

SUBJECT: The Public School Construction Program

PURPOSE:

This item will provide members of the Board with a brief overview of the functions and activities of the Public School Construction Program, which reports to the Interagency Committee on School Construction (IAC), of which Dr. Grasmick as State Superintendent is chair. The Capital Improvement Program process will also be outlined. No action is requested from the Board.

BACKGROUND:

The Public School Construction Program (PSCP) was established in 1971 as an independent agency to ensure that all public school buildings in Maryland meet minimum design and performance standards in support of the educational programs that they house. The mission of the PSCP is to achieve equity among school facilities across the entire state. Since the founding of the program, the State has provided almost \$5.6 billion in Capital Improvement Program funding to assist local education agencies with the construction of public school facilities, as well as approximately \$182 million through other construction funding programs.

To administer the PSCP, the Board created the Interagency Committee on School Construction (IAC). The IAC is composed of the State Superintendent of Schools (chairperson), the Secretary of the Department of General Services (DGS), the Secretary of the Maryland Department of Planning (MDP) and, based on legislation passed in the 2005 session of the General Assembly, two members of the public, appointed by the Speaker of the House and the President of the Senate.

Each agency performs critical functions in the administration of the Public School Construction Program and development of the annual Capital Improvement Program (CIP): Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) reviews projects for alignment with local and State educational programs and good architectural practice; DGS reviews projects for constructability, conformance with State construction and procurement

practice, and eligibility for State funding; MDP reviews project sites, enrollment projections and conformity of proposed projects with State and local planning and growth

policies; and the PSCP provides overall coordination as well as fiscal management of State funding.

The PSCP administers five funding programs, the largest of which is the Capital Improvement Program. The other four programs are: 1) The Aging Schools Program (ASP), which provides funding for projects that are typically smaller than those funded through the CIP, and usually without a requirement for a local match; 2) the Qualified Zone Academy Bond (QZAB) program, which funds projects similar to ASP projects, but with a requirement for a 10% private entity contribution and certain eligibility restrictions; 3) the Recycled Tire Grant (RTG) program, which administers funds provided by the Maryland Department of the Environment for the installation of playground equipment and athletic surfaces that use recycled tire materials; and 4) the Relocatable Repair Fund, which provides limited funding to repair and renovate State-owned relocatable classrooms.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

This item is brought to the attention of the Board in order to explain the process for approval of school construction and renovation projects in the annual Capital Improvement Program, and to highlight the crucial role that school facilities play in supporting the educational mission of the school systems and the day-to-day work of teachers, principals and staff. As prominent public buildings, school facilities and their sites should be visible examples of high performance design principles, sustainable site design, and good community planning principles. The large allocation of funding that Maryland has provided to school construction since FY 2006 also serves as a vehicle to enhance Minority Business Enterprise participation in design and construction contracting.

ACTION:

No action required, for discussion only.