STATE OF MARYLAND
PUBLIC SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION PROGRAM
200 W. BALTIMORE STREET
BALTIMORE, MARYLAND 21201
410-767-0617

ROBERT A. GORRELL
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

LARRY HOGAN
GOVERNOR

INTERAGENCY COMMITTEE ON SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION

KAREN SALMON, Ph.D.
CHAIRPERSON

December 8, 2017

Mr. Scott Washington
Director of School Construction
Howard County Public Schools
10910 Route 108
Ellicott City, Maryland 21042

Re: Talbott Springs Elementary School
Replacement – Feasibility Study
Locally-Funded

Dear Mr. Washington:

The Designees for the Interagency Committee on School Construction (IAC) have reviewed the Feasibility Study, received on September 13, 2017, for the replacement of Talbot Springs Elementary School. Additional information provided on September 25, 2017 and October 4, 2017 was considered as well as the outcome of a site visit on November 9, 2017 by Robert Gorrell, Public School Construction Program (PSCP), and Michael Bayer, Maryland Department of Planning (MDP).

According to the study, the 54,089 gross square feet (gsf) school was constructed in 1973 with additions and building renovations in both 2000 and 2008. The existing State Rated Capacity (SRC) of the school is 500 students with a current enrollment of 447 students. The proposed renovation/addition option demolishes 44,089 gsf, renovates the remainder of the facility, and constructs 33,581 gsf in additions. The replacement option, and the one Howard County Public Schools (HCPSS) plans to develop, demolishes the entire existing facility and constructs a new two-story 91,211 gsf elementary school on the 10 acre site. Both options are estimated to have a 27-month construction period. The study indicates that the replacement and renovation/addition solutions are for a 500 student capacity, although the estimated SRC is 638 students, based on the proposed number and type of teaching spaces.

The replacement school project was included in HCPSS's fiscal year 2019 (FY19) Capital Improvement Program (CIP) as a local planning request for a revised State scope of 60,240 gsf of new construction and a proposed enrollment of 500 students. The local scope has a proposed area of 91,211 gsf new construction with a proposed enrollment of 640 students. The project is scheduled for bidding in November 2018 and occupancy in August 2021.

The Designees concluded at their meeting on November 16, 2017 to recommend funding the project on the basis of a renovation/addition, if and when it receives funding approval. Based on the information submitted, the Designees did not find compelling reasons in the feasibility study to support the demolition of the existing structure for the following reasons:

- The replacement option is more expensive to construct and has a greater 40-year life cycle cost than the renovation/addition option.

- The replacement option does not reduce the construction schedule compared to the renovation/addition option.
- The renovation/addition option can, with more intense design effort, significantly address the limitations of the existing facility.
- The proposed replacement facility is large for the student capacity of the school and greater in total area than the renovation/addition option. The replacement option provides 182 gsf per student for a 500 student capacity or 143 gsf per student for the proposed local enrollment of 640 students.
- The existing facility has had $1,601,704 in state expenditures in the last 16 years, including a partial renovation in 2000 and 2008, a kindergarten addition in 2008, and several QZAB projects in the last 3 years. The facility received a "Good" overall rating in a 2013 PSCP Maintenance Evaluation. It scored 83.6% out of 100% in a 2008 facility appraisal by HCPSS consultants. The perception during the site visit is there is more life to the existing building, providing the partial height walls and open return air plenum are fully addressed.

The report does not show overriding limitations that would preclude continued use of the existing 1973 building. The building is in good condition, has solid finish materials, and presents some unique architectural features, such as high ceilings in some of the classrooms. The study includes at least one acceptable renovation/addition option, although we recommend this design layout be reexamined to absorb unnecessary corridors into the adjacent educational spaces and address the lack of window exposure for some of the classrooms. The Designees maintain that the local decision to build a replacement school is not justified, and consequently do not recommend the local planning approval and future funding of the project as a replacement facility.

We understand this project is proceeding as a locally-funded project. The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) staff is available to work with you during the schematic design process or should the feasibility study be revised. If you or your staff has questions, please contact me at 410-767-0097 or *fred.mason1@maryland.gov* or Jillian Storms, MSDE School Facilities Architect, at 410-767-0615 or *jillian.storms@maryland.gov* and we will be happy to assist you.

Sincerely,

Fred D. Mason III
MSDE School Facilities Branch Chief
Designee to the IAC

FM/js

c: Bruce Gist, HCPSS
Daniel Lubeley, HCPSS
Betsy Zentz, HCPSS
Arabia Davis, MDP
Robert A. Gorrell, PSCP
Joan Schaefer, PSCP
Mahmood Yahyai, PSCP/DGS
Michael Bayer, PSCP/MDP
Robyn Toth, TCA Architects