



Education Advocate

September 2013

Release of MOU a Major Milestone for Baltimore's 21st Century School Building Program

Parties Agree to Transform Baltimore's call for open meetings and public forums

The first tangible step has been taken toward implementing the Baltimore City School Construction and Revitalization Act of 2013, with the release of the [proposed Memorandum of Understanding](#) (MOU) September 17 (detailed summary in this [Power Point](#)). City Schools, the City of Baltimore, the Maryland Stadium Authority (Authority), and the State Interagency Committee on School Construction (IAC) negotiated, and its boards now must approve, the MOU. Final approval by the state Board of Public Works is expected October 16; the city school board will take up the MOU at its Sept. 24 meeting.

Key components of the MOU:

- Establishes the roles and responsibilities of City Schools, the Authority, Baltimore City and the IAC, and requires all parties to agree to the scope, schedule, & budget for each school built/renovated.
- Establishes an Executive Committee and requires them to hold open meetings, community forums, and produce Annual Reports
- Creates a Coordinating Committee of City Schools, City, and the Authority to coordinate the building program with community revitalization efforts.
- Creates a Collaborative of City Schools, the City, and the Authority which will engage community representatives for input to maximize work opportunities for BCPS students and City residents, and in developing a comprehensive local hiring plan.
- Specifies the process for annual review of the "10 Year Plan" and each party's opportunity for input into the process.
- Establishes the goal that all buildings be designed for recreational opportunities & cooperative community use, with a separate MOU to be established between City Schools & the City on after-hours building use, with community input.
- Outlines the City's role in the school closure process and empowers the Authority to withhold construction funds if the School Board fails to close buildings.
- Specifies a strict timetable for City Schools to develop a multi-year Comprehensive Maintenance Plan (CMP) for all school buildings with sufficient funding in a multi-year budget. Ties future funding of renovations to City Schools' adherence to the CMP.
- Requires School Board to set "utilization" targets and reduce the amount of under-used building space due to low student enrollment. Ties progress toward meeting targets to annual funding from IAC.
- Establishes "Stat" tracking program for project status.

In This Issue

[BCPS Releases MOU](#)

[Candidates Sought for School Board](#)

[Join us on November 2nd!](#)

Get Involved in your school's design process!

Do you live in Baltimore City? Is one of your neighborhood schools in the first year of the 21st Century Buildings plan? [Click here](#) to check out the list of schools beginning design and for more information on how to get involved.



Envisioning the Schools of the Future

What does a 21st Century School Building look like? [Check out](#) one of the many school design exhibits around town being

"Overall, we commend the MOU partners' work and are pleased to see the parties responded to the [call](#) from the Transform Baltimore campaign that the Executive Committee hold open meetings and community forums on the Program's progress. We are still considering the implications of the MOU's tying funding for the 21st Century Building Program and annual capital improvement to plans and targets outside of the program. We look forward to working with them toward a transparent and inclusive process for revitalizing the schools, together with accountability measures to ensure that the children of Baltimore City receive the highest quality buildings," said Bebe Verdery of ACLU-MD's Education Reform Project.

ACLU's Frank Patinella noted, "Given the volatility of interest rates, it is important that the Maryland Stadium Authority move as quickly as possible to finance a large bond offering. Time is of the essence since interest rates are already rising. Less funding will now be available than several years ago when we first made the alternative financing proposal and interest rates were at an all-time low."

Candidates sought for Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners

Want to help shape the future for Baltimore City schoolchildren? The Maryland State Board of Education is now accepting applications until October 15 from individuals who wish to serve on the Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners. You (or the person you recruit) for the post must be a resident of Baltimore City and have at least one of these qualifications:

- Possess a high level of knowledge and expertise concerning the successful administration of a large business, non-profit, or governmental entity and have served in a high level management position within such an entity.
- Possess a high level of knowledge and expertise concerning education.
- Have a child enrolled in the Baltimore City Public Schools as of the date of appointment.
- Possess knowledge or experience in the education of children with disabilities. This knowledge or experience may be derived from being a parent of a child with a disability.

For full details, see the Sept. 16 press release on this site: <http://www.marylandpublicschools.org/msde/>

American Civil Liberties Union of Maryland Education Reform Project

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