Districtwide Elementary School Prioritization Study

Community Meeting #3
April 29, 2026

DCPS
Dorchester County Public Schools

HCM
Educational Facilities Planning LLC
Szyfer Consulting LLC

agenda

- Introductions
- Prioritization Study
- Project Prioritization Results
- Next Steps
- Questions?

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Introductions

- **Peter Winebrenner, AIA**
  Principal—HCM
- **David Lever, AIA, D. Arch**
  Principal—Educational Facilities Planning
- **Deborah Szyfer**
  Principal—Szyfer Consulting

prioritization study

- Background
- 500-Student ES Standard
- Implementation
- Building condition rubric

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Background of the Prioritization Study:

- **2023 Districtwide Master Plan: Comprehensive study of schools**
  - **DCPS has approximately 40,900 SF of excess square footage**
  - **Open-plan elementary schools are in urgent need of comprehensive improvements**
  - **Right-size the school system**
- **2025 Districtwide Educational Specification: Board-approved goals for elementary schools**
  - **500-student ES as the districtwide standard**
  - **Age-separated wings:** Primary (Grades PreK3–1) and Intermediate (Grades 2–5)
  - **Social-emotional needs** will be met
- **2025–26 Feasibility Studies: Test Concept Plans against Sites**
  - **Five open-space schools need to be replaced** (not renovated)
  - **Hurlock, Maple, Sandy Hill & Warwick:** Replace while occupied
  - **Vienna:** Phase or relocate students during replacement

500-Student ES Districtwide Standard:

- **Approved by Board of Education through Ed Specs Process**
- **3 classes/rounds per grade on average**
- **Benefits:**
  - **Flexible student groupings and the ability to distribute students more evenly as needed**
  - **Stronger professional collaboration within the grade-level team**
  - **Instructional consistency across the grade**
  - **Increased use of resources and staffing**
    - Provide full-time specialists, coaches, art, music, and other electives
  - **Social flexibility for students with access to larger peer groups**

Implementation: Program Costs, Funding Sources, Timeline

Individual school modernization: $55.5 M avg.

Total Program Cost: $220M to $280 M in 2026 dollars

State: $190M +/- 86%

Local: $30M +/- 14%

Note: Construction cost escalation = 4%/year +/-

Timeline: 5 school modernizations

***Assumption*: Continuous funding availability**

	Fiscal Years														
	2023-25	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034	2035	2036	2037	2038	2039
Districtwide Master Plan															
Districtwide Elementary School Specification															
Elementary Schools Feasibility Study															
Board of Education Decision on Prioritization															
School 1--Modernization			Ed Spec	Design	Build		Occupy								
School 2--Modernization					Ed Spec	Design	Build		Occupy						
School 3--Modernization							Ed Spec	Design	Build		Occupy				
School 4--Modernization									Ed Spec	Design	Build		Occupy		
School 5--Modernization											Ed Spec	Design	Build		Occupy

Implementation: Constraints and Results

➢ Constraints:

- **Funding:** Limits on State and Local capital funding
- **Institutional Capacity:** Local staff capacity to manage multiple large projects
- **Design and Construction Capacity:** Industry capacity to run multiple projects
- **Educational Disruption** for students, staff

➢ Result:

- ***One project*** **will be carried out at a time** (as funding permits, there may be overlap in the project schedules)
- ***Prioritization of projects is essential*****:**
  - To use funds efficiently
  - To address the most critical needs first

Prioritization Study: Goals and Objectives

Goals :

- **To prioritize projects in a manner that is:**
  - **Equitable**
  - **Objective**
  - **Fair**
  - **Transparent**
  - **Fiscally responsible**
- **To develop a long-term capital program that:**
  - **Reflects realistic timeframes**
  - **Has the flexibility to adjust as conditions change**

Prioritization Rubric:

- **An objective, mathematical evaluation of the existing schools based on data**
  - **Criteria** that emerge from the Goals and Objectives
  - **Criteria weightings/value** based on relative value of each criterion
- **Results in a point system**
  - **Higher points have higher priority**
- **A *preliminary* screening device, to be supplemented by:**
  - **Evaluation of State and Local funding capacity and readiness**
  - **Common sense and experience**
  - **Community input**

Prioritization Study: Objectives & Prioritization Criteria:

- **Educational need: Schools should be neither too large nor too small, or over- nor under-utilized:**
  - Enrollment: 2031–2032 SY projected
  - Utilization: Projected enrollment / State Rated Capacity
- **Educational adequacy and student needs: Schools should meet the educational specification requirements:**
  - Total space per student (gross & program square footage)
  - Space per student for social-emotional needs
- **Building condition: Schools should be safe, healthy, and educationally appropriate:**
  - Results from Feasibility Studies
  - Statewide Facility Condition Assessment 2020
- **Budgetary impact: Schools should be efficient to operate and to build:**
  - Maintenance & Operations Costs ($/SF/year) + Work Orders
  - Construction cost per student & SF per student to replace
- **Schedule: Improvements should happen as quickly as possible:**
  - Presence/absence of major impediments (site, permitting, environmental)

Community Feedback:

- **Community meeting: March 18**

- **Feedback Form:**
  - Available March 18 to 25
  - Notification sent via:
    - QR code in March 18 presentation and on DCPS website
    - Text messages to parents
    - Available on Facebook and DCPS website
  - Received 48 responses

- **Feedback Form Questions:**
  - Respondent demographic information: community, relation to school system:
    - **88% were parents and DCPS staff**
    - **Respondents from all areas**
  - Is the rubric fair and objective, & easy to understand?
  - Do you agree with the weightings?
    - **Majority agreed rubric is easy to understand**
    - **Majority agreed with the weightings**

- **Comments:**
  - Comments (March 18 meeting and written): Incorporate safety and student needs
  - Educational Adequacy criterion was revised, using spatial characteristics to maintain objectivity

- **Community meeting: March 31**
  - Presented final prioritization, with changes
  - Acceptance by attendees

Assessment Rubric: Revised Methodology

- Based on feedback from the Community Meeting and the Input Form
- Revised Educational Adequacy to include Student Need in analysis of square feet/student

Note: Link for detailed analysis available with each criterion

Criteria
Enrollment and Capacity:
Projected Enrollment
Utilization
Revised: Educational Adequacy & Student Need
Building Condition
Operating Budget Impact
Construction Costs Impact:
Cost per Student
SF per Student
Ease of Implementation

assessment results

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Summary of Assessment Results: Based on Revised Methodology

Criterion	Points	Weight	Total Max. Points	HES	MES	SHES	VES	WES
Enrollment & Capacity								
Projected Enrollment in SY 2031: In relation to ed spec goal of 500 seats				391	483	393	183	346
Point Value				2	2	2	6	6
Utilization: (In relation to good practice)				85.6%	111.0%	83.6%	109.6%	118.1%
Point Value				4	20	16	20	20
Educational Adequacy & **Student Need** (Total, program & support space) SF/				-8.3	-10.6	8.3	-6.0	-16.4
Point Value				12	20	4	4	20
Building Condition (2026 feasibility studies & 2020 State Facility Condition Assessment)								
Point Value				22.5	22.5	22.5	25	25
Operating Budget Impact: (Measured by work orders)								
Point Value				15	5	5	25	25
Construction Cost Impact								
Point Value				25	25	25	5	25
Point Value				25	25	25	5	25
Ease of implementation								
Point Value				15	9	9	3	9
TOTAL SCORE:				**120.5**	**128.5**	**108.5**	**93.0**	**155.0**

Note: Higher total score indicates higher need

Assessment Results: Based on Revised Methodology

Criterion	Points	Weight	Total Max. Points	HES	MES	SHES	VES	WES
Enrollment & Capacity								
Projected Enrollment in SY 2031: In relation to ed spec goal of 500 seats				**391**	**483**	**393**	**183**	**346**
Too large >550 students	5	2	10					
Too small <350 students	3	2	6				Small	Small
Good 350–550 students	1	2	2	Good	Good	Good		
			Point Value	**2**	**2**	**2**	**6**	**6**
Utilization: (In relation to good practice)				**85.6%**	**111.0%**	**83.6%**	**109.6%**	**118.1%**
Overcapacity >105%	5	4	20		Over		Over	Over
Underutilized <85%	4	4	16			Under		
Good 85–105%	1	4	4	**Good**				
			Point Value	**4**	**20**	**16**	**20**	**20**
Educational Adequacy & Student Need (Total, program & support space) SF/Stud.				**-8.3**	**-10.6**	**8.3**	**-6.0**	**-16.4**
Poor (Rank of 4–5)	5	4	20		Poor			Poor
Adequate (Rank of 3)	3	4	12	Adequate				
Good (Rank of 1–2)	1	4	4			Good	Good	
			Point Value	**12**	**20**	**4**	**4**	**20**
Building Condition (2026 feasibility studies & 2020 State Facility Condition Assessment)								
Poor (Major deficiencies in all spaces and bldg. systems)	5	5	25				Poor	Poor
Deficient (Major deficiencies in most spaces and 1 or more bldg. syst	4	5	20	Deficient	Deficient	Deficient		
Adequate (Significant deficiencies in most spaces and no more than 1	3	5	15					
Good (Minor deficiencies)	2	5	10					
Excellent (No deficiencies)	1	5	5					
			Point Value	**22.5**	**22.5**	**22.5**	**25**	**25**
Operating Budget Impact: (Measured by work orders)								
High (Rank of 4–5)	5	5	25				High	High
Medium (Rank of 3)	3	5	15	Medium				
Low (Rank of 1–2)	1	5	5		Low	Low		
			Point Value	**15**	**5**	**5**	**25**	**25**
Construction Cost Impact								
Cost per student				**$ 110,700**	**$ 111,700**	**$ 111,400**	**$ 177,100**	**$ 110,700**
Cost per student less than $130,000	5	5	25	Less than	Less than	Less than		Less than
Cost per student more than $130,000	1	5	5				More than	
			Point Value	**25**	**25**	**25**	**5**	**25**
Square Foot (SF) per student				**148.8**	**148.8**	**148.8**	**211.8**	**148.8**
SF per student less than 150/SF	5	5	25	Less than	Less than	Less than		Less than
SF per student more than 150/SF	1	5	5				More than	
			Point Value	**25**	**25**	**25**	**5**	**25**
Ease of implementation								
No major impediments (No site constraints)	5	3	15	None				
Significant impediments (Unusual permitting Issues)	3	3	9		Significant	Significant		Significant
Major impediments (Land acquisition needed)	1	3	3				Major	
			Point Value	**15**	**9**	**9**	**3**	**9**
			TOTAL SCORE:	**120.5**	**128.5**	**108.5**	**93.0**	**155.0**

Note: Higher total score indicates higher need

Prioritization Study: Conclusions

- **500 student goal for future elementary schools**
- **One project will be carried out at a time**
- **Prioritization of projects is essential**
- **Prioritization methodology: objective, fair, equitable**
- **Warwick Elementary has the highest score**
- ***Preliminary* screening device, to be supplemented by:**
  - **Evaluation of State and Local funding capacity and readiness**
  - **Common sense and experience**
  - **Community input on additional factors to consider**

next steps

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Capital Program: Next Steps

- **April 30—June 11: Community input on additional factors to consider**
- **June 18: Board of Education approval for ES School #1 (Priority #1)**
- **Summer 2026: Develop project-specific educational specification and scope for ES School #1**
  - Enrollment justification
  - Square footage
  - Cost estimate
- **Fall 2026: Request Planning Approval & Design Funding for ES School #1** (State, w/ County concurrence)
- **Fall 2027: Request Construction Funding for ES School #1** (State & County)
- **Spring—Summer 2028: Start construction**
  - Begin prioritization study for ES School #2
- **August 2029: Occupy ES School #1**

Prioritization Study & Implementation: Schedule

Date	Activities
Community Engagement Meetings and Feedback	
March 18	Prioritization rationale, methodology and schedule
March 19 – 25	Community Feedback on prioritization criteria and rubric
March 31	Finalize prioritization methodology based on community input
April 29	Present draft modernization prioritization to community
April 30 – June 11	**Community Feedback on prioritization process and additional factors**
Superintendent and Board of Education	
April 16 and **May 21**	**Board of Education Work sessions/Public Comment**
June 18	**Board of Education Hearing and Action**
July 1	Educational Facilities Master Plan submitted to State of Maryland IAC
FY 2028 Capital Improvement Program application	
Early October 2026	Application to State for Planning Approval for ES School #1
May 2027	Notification of final approval for ES School #1

Questions?

Please share your input on the modernization prioritization process by June 11, 2026.
https://forms.gle/naA4SuQSAPFTjtV76

Video of the April 29, 2026, Community Meeting is available at:
https://townhallstreams.com/towns/dorchesterboe

Analysis of Building Condition Rubric Criteria

Enrollment and Capacity Analysis

Criterion	Points	Weight	Total Max. Points	HES	MES	SHES	VES	WES
Enrollment & Capacity								
Projected Enrollment in SY 2031: In relation to ed spec goal of 500 seats				**391**	**483**	**393**	**183**	**346**
Too large >550 students	5	2	10					
Too small <350 students	3	2	6				Small	Small
Good 350–550 students	1	2	2	Good	Good	Good		
			Point Value	**2**	**2**	**2**	**6**	**6**
Utilization: (In relation to good practice)				**85.6%**	**111.0%**	**83.6%**	**109.6%**	**118.1%**
Overcapacity >105%	5	4	20		Over		Over	Over
Underutilized <85%	4	4	16			Under		
Good 85–105%	1	4	4	**Good**				
			Point Value	**4**	**20**	**16**	**20**	**20**

Comments
Projected Enrollment: Number of students expected in SY 2031, compared to ed spec goal (500)
Utilization: Number of students expected in SY 2031 divided by State Rated Capacity *

- *** State Rated Capacity (SRC):** "State-rated capacity means the number of students that the Interagency Commission on School Construction (IAC) or its designee determines that an individual school has the physical capacity to enroll." COMAR 14.39.02.05.A
- SRC is determined by multiplying the number of instructional spaces by the number of students that can be housed in the space effectively and safely, and is available on the IAC Facility Inventory Database.

Educational Program and Student Need Analysis

Criterion	Points	Weight	Total Max. Points	HES	MES	SHES	VES	WES
Educational Adequacy & Student Need (Total, program & support space) SF/Stud.				**-8.3**	**-10.6**	**8.3**	**-6.0**	**-16.4**
Poor (Rank of 4–5)	5	4	20		Poor			Poor
Adequate (Rank of 3)	3	4	12	Adequate				
Good (Rank of 1–2)	1	4	4			Good	Good	
			Point Value	**12**	**20**	**4**	**4**	**20**

- Total Gross Square Foot/Student
- Total Net Program square Foot/Student
- Total Student Need Square Foot/Student
- Average of three per School

Educational Program and Student Need Analysis

Total Gross Square Foot/Student

GSF/Student	2031-32 PK-5 Enr	GSF (exist'g)	GSF/Stu	Ed Spec GSF/stu	Overage/ defic'ncy
HES	391	50,634	129.5	148.8	-19.3
MES	483	62,000	128.4	148.8	-20.4
SHES	393	64,000	162.8	148.8	14.0
VES	183	23,817	130.1	148.8	-18.7
WES	346	40,400	116.8	148.8	-32.0

Total Support Space/Student

Support Space/Student	2031-32 PK-5 Enr	Program SF (exist'g)	Program SF/Stu	Ed Spec Program SF/stu	Overage/ defic'ncy
HES	391	1,187	3.0	7.4	-4.4
MES	483	905	1.9	7.4	-5.5
SHES	393	905	2.3	7.4	-5.1
VES	183	1,890	10.3	7.4	2.9
WES	346	1,130	3.3	7.4	-4.1

Total Net Program Space/Student

Program Space/Student	2031-32 PK-5 Enr	Program SF (exist'g)	Program SF/Stu	Ed Spec Program SF/stu	Overage/ defic'ncy
HES	391	38,942	99.6	100.92	-1.3
MES	483	45,864	95.0	100.92	-6.0
SHES	393	45,874	116.7	100.92	15.8
VES	183	18,064	98.7	100.92	-2.2
WES	346	30,376	87.8	100.92	-13.1

Average Score Per School

Score based on average over/under square footage	GSF/Stu over/under	Program SF/Stu over/under	Support SF/Stu over/under	Sum, all SF over/under	Avg	Rank
HES	-19.3	-1.3	-4.4	-25.0	-8.3	3
MES	-20.4	-6.0	-5.5	-31.9	-10.6	4
SHES	14.0	15.8	-5.1	24.8	8.3	1
VES	-18.7	-2.2	2.9	-17.9	-6.0	2
WES	-32.0	-13.1	-4.1	-49.3	-16.4	5

Building Condition Analysis

Criterion	Points	Weight	Total Max. Points	HES	MES	SHES	VES	WES
Building Condition (2026 feasibility studies & 2020 State Facility Condition Assessment)								
Poor (Major deficiencies in all spaces and bldg. systems)	5	5	25				Poor	Poor
Deficient (Major deficiencies in most spaces and 1 or more bldg. syst	4	5	20	Deficient	Deficient	Deficient		
Adequate (Significant deficiencies in most spaces and no more than 1	3	5	15					
Good (Minor deficiencies)	2	5	10					
Excellent (No deficiencies)	1	5	5					
			Point Value	**22.5**	**22.5**	**22.5**	**25**	**25**

- Based on 2026 Feasibility Studies and 2020 State Facility Condition Assessment
  - **Poor** (Major deficiencies in all spaces and building systems)
  - **Deficient** (Major deficiencies in most spaces and 1 or more building systems)
  - **Adequate** (Significant deficiencies in most spaces and no more than 1 building system)
  - **Good** (Minor deficiencies)
  - **Excellent** (No deficiencies)

Building Condition Analysis

2026 Feasibility Study Results

Building Condition Code	
1	Aged building (finishes, building systems)
2	Insufficient space for educational program
3	Poor acoustics
4	Not ADA accessible

	Feasibility Study Finding (see number code)	Points	Weight	Score
HES	1, 2, 3, 4; had mechanical, roofing upgrades in past 20 years	4	5	20
MES	1, 2, 3, 4; no major upgrades in past 20 years	5	5	25
SHES	1, 2, 3, 4; new roof 2021; no mechanical upgrades in past 20 years	5	5	25
VES	1, 2, 3, 4; new roof 2020; limited mechanical upgrades 2015	5	5	25
WES	1, 2, 3, 4; new roof 1999; limited mechanical upgrades 2015	5	5	25

Building Condition Analysis

2020 State Facility Condition Assessment Results

	Facility Condition Index (FCI) from State Facility Condition Assessment		Points	Weight	Score
HES	68%	Function unreliable	5	5	25
MES	59%	Needs repair	4	5	20
SHES	59%	Needs repair	4	5	20
VES	73%	Function unreliable	5	5	25
WES	71%	Function unreliable	5	5	25

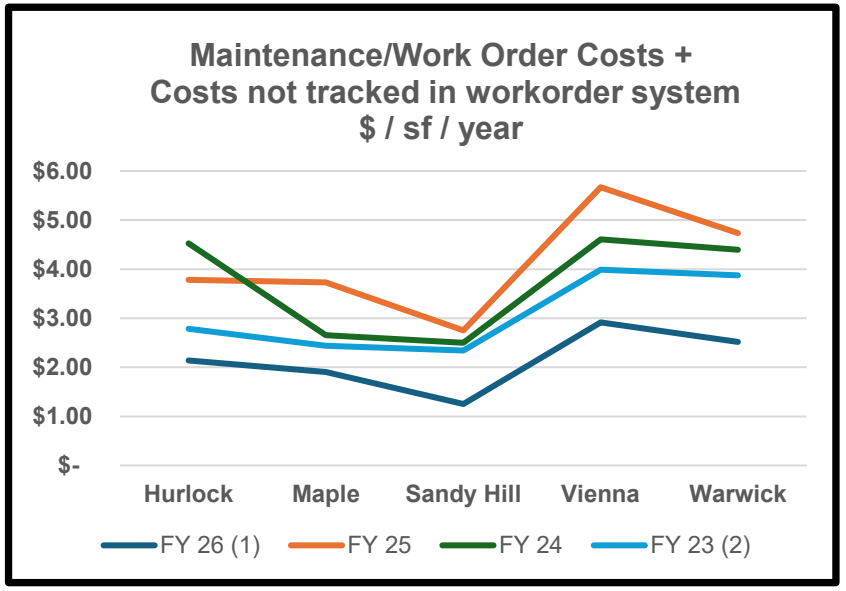
Average Building Condition Score

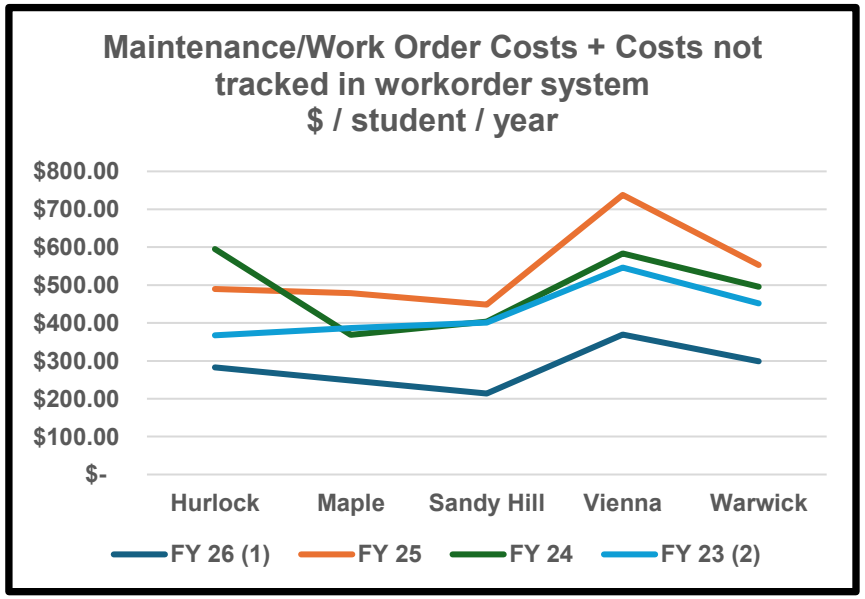
	Points	Weight	Score
HES	4.5	5	22.5
MES	4.5	5	22.5
SHES	4.5	5	22.5
VES	5	5	25
WES	5	5	25

Operating Budget Impact Analysis

Criterion	Points	Weight	Total Max. Points	HES	MES	SHES	VES	WES
Operating Budget Impact: (Measured by work orders)								
High (Rank of 4–5)	5	5	25				High	High
Medium (Rank of 3)	3	5	15	Medium				
Low (Rank of 1–2)	1	5	5		Low	Low		
			Point Value	**15**	**5**	**5**	**25**	**25**

- Annual operating cost plus work orders per square foot and per student





Construction Cost Impact Analysis

Criterion	Points	Weight	Total Max. Points	HES	MES	SHES	VES	WES
Construction Cost Impact								
Cost per student				$ 110,700	$ 111,700	$ 111,400	$ 177,100	$ 110,700
Cost per student less than $130,000	5	5	25	Less than	Less than	Less than		Less than
Cost per student more than $130,000	1	5	5				More than	
			Point Value	**25**	**25**	**25**	**5**	**25**
Square Foot (SF) per student				**148.8**	**148.8**	**148.8**	**211.8**	**148.8**
SF per student less than 150/SF	5	5	25	Less than	Less than	Less than		Less than
SF per student more than 150/SF	1	5	5				More than	
			Point Value	**25**	**25**	**25**	**5**	**25**

Cost Per Student

	Projected enr	Total Project Cost	Cost/Stu
HES	500	$ 55,333,000	$ 110,700
MES	500	$ 55,872,000	$ 111,700
SHES	500	$ 55,683,000	$ 111,400
VES	200	$ 35,422,000	$ 177,100
WES	500	$ 55,333,000	$ 110,700

SF/Student

	Projected enr	Square footage	SF/Stu
HES	500	74,400	148.8
MES	500	74,400	148.8
SHES	500	74,400	148.8
VES	200	42,355	211.8
WES	500	74,400	148.8

Note: **Projected replacement enrollment is from educational specification**

Estimated project cost and square footage is from Feasibility Study

HES, MES, SHES, WES: based on Board-approved educational specification

VES: Board-approved educational specification modified for smaller school size

Ease of Implementation/Construction Analysis

Criterion	Points	Weight	Total Max. Points	HES	MES	SHES	VES	WES
Ease of implementation								
No major impediments (No site constraints)	5	3	15	None				
Significant impediments (Unusual permitting Issues)	3	3	9		Significant	Significant		Significant
Major impediments (Land acquisition needed)	1	3	3				Major	
			Point Value	**15**	**9**	**9**	**3**	**9**

- **No major impediments** (Replace while occupied, no Critical Area, no acquisition)
- **Significant impediments** (Replace will occupied, no Critical Area, requires growth allocation)
- **Major impediments** (Cannot replace while occupied, Critical Area, requires growth allocation)

*** C. A. – Critical Area: the "ribbon of land within 1000 feet of the tidal influence of the Bay"** (MD Department of Natural resources website at https://dnr.maryland.gov/critical area/Pages/background.aspx)

Ease of Implementation/Construction
Proposed Site Plans



Hurlock ES



Maple ES



Sandy Hill ES



Vienna ES



Warwick ES

Prioritization Summary

Criterion			HES	MES	SHES	VES	WES
1	Enrollment:						
1.a	Projected Enrollment	School enr	2	2	2	6	6
1.b	Utilization	Utilization	4	20	16	20	20
2	Adequacy to support the Edu. Prgrm & Stud	Combined rank	12	20	4	4	20
3	Building Condition:		22.5	22.5	22.5	25	25
4	Operating and Maintenance Budget Impact:	Combined rank	15	5	5	25	25
5	Construction Cost Impact:						
5.a	Cost per student	less/more th. $130k/st.	25	25	25	5	25
5.b	SF per student	less/more th. 150sf/st.	25	25	25	5	25
6	Ease of implementation:	Impediments	15	9	9	3	9
		TOTAL SCORE:	**120.5**	**128.5**	**108.5**	**93**	**155**


Thank
You!
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