

Interagency Commission on School Construction  
200 West Baltimore Street  
Suite 200  
Baltimore, MD 21201

**RE: Proposed 14.39.07 Public School Facilities Educational Sufficiency Standards (September 9, 2022)**

Dear Interagency Commission on School Construction:

Thank you for considering our testimony as the Climate Justice Wing in regards to the proposal to adopt *14.39.07 Public School Facilities Educational Sufficiency Standards* as published in the Maryland Register on September 9, 2022. Maryland Legislative Coalition's (MLC) Climate Justice Wing is a statewide coalition of individuals and grassroots organizations focused on getting State level climate justice legislation passed and undertaking other climate justice advocacy initiatives.

Thorough inspection of our school facilities is an important step the State of Maryland must undertake to ensure that learning environments provide for safe air and healthy drinking water for our children to breath and drink and to eliminate wasted energy use to save taxpayers funds and reduce climate causing greenhouse gas pollution. MLC Climate Justice Wing specifically advocated for passage of House Bill 1290 during the 2022 Maryland Legislative Session to further that goal. That is why we wanted to provide some additional insights on the regulations proposed by the Interagency Commission on School Construction (IAC) that do not adequately reflect the requirements in Md. Code Ann., Education §5–310 as amended by House Bill 1290.

Firstly, Md. Code Ann., Education §5–310 (b)(1)(i)(1) requires that there be “a process for a Local Education Agency [LEA] to report any additional information relevant to the inspection...” several factors including issues of lead paint and asbestos. Obviously, schools may have more direct insights into this information and in having the IAC knows this information before-hand possibly save inspectors time and exposure. However, the rule proposal does not appear to outline any process for LEA's to report this information to the IAC. A final rule should include the basic mechanisms of such reporting, even if the details must be relegated to guidance, so this information can be transmitted as required under Md. Code Ann., Education §5–310.

Secondly, Md. Code Ann., Education §5–310 (b)(2) lays out what is required to be inspected by the IAC and also gives the IAC the ability to add additional factors. The IAC does a very thorough job at including these factors into the proposed revisions to the Facilities Educational Sufficiency Standards and adds many important additional factors. However, there is an important oversight that must be corrected in the final rulemaking – there is nothing requiring the inspector(s) to collect the information necessary to complete the full assessment during an inspection. The final regulation needs a requirement placed in 14.39.07 COMAR §17 or another appropriate place such as “each inspection will collect the data required to fully evaluate the standards found in 14.39.07 COMAR §§ 3-16.”

On more specific points we would like to see the following additions to the final Facilities Educational Sufficiency Standards:

- Consumable water should meet applicable lead standards.

- Administrative spaces should also be inspected for carbon dioxide, temperature, and humidity levels.
- Drop-offs areas for personal vehicles should be configured to reduce vehicle idling.
- Drop-off areas for buses should include signage reminding bus drivers of Maryland vehicles no idling regulations.
- Food services areas should have no evidence of vermin.

There are other factors that should be forward looking parts of inspections and data collection. These may not be regularly implemented to an extent that their lack would not be indicative of an insufficient building, but should be collected regardless:

- Installation of air source or ground source heat pumps.
- Electrical vehicle charging stations.
- Availability of scratch cooking facilities.
- Outdoor classroom space.

Finally, we urge that requirements be adopted so that the information collected be available in an open data portal so that the public, parents and other caregivers, in particular, can better advocate for a healthy learning environment for the children.

**MLC Climate Justice Wing:**

Assateague Coastal Trust  
 Maryland Legislative Coalition  
 MD Campaign for Environmental Human Rights  
 Chesapeake Climate Action Network  
 WISE  
 Frack Free Frostburg  
 Mountain Maryland Movement  
 Howard County Indivisible  
 Howard County Sierra Club  
 Columbia Association Climate Change and Sustainability Advisory Committee  
 HoCo Climate Action  
 CHEER  
 Climate XChange - Maryland  
 Mid-Atlantic Field Representative/  
 National Parks Conservation Association  
 350 Montgomery County  
 Glen Echo Heights Mobilization  
 The Climate Mobilization Montgomery County  
 Montgomery County Faith Alliance for Climate Solutions  
 Montgomery Countryside Alliance

Takoma Park Mobilization Environment Committee  
 Audubon Naturalist Society  
 Cedar Lane Unitarian Universalist Church  
 Environmental Justice Ministry  
 Coalition For Smarter Growth  
 DoTheMostGood Montgomery County  
 MCPS Clean Energy Campaign  
 MoCo DCC  
 Potomac Conservancy  
 Casa de Maryland  
 Nuclear Information & Resource Service  
 Clean Air Prince Georges  
 Laurel Resist  
 Greenbelt Climate Action Network  
 Maryland League of Conservation Voters  
 Unitarian Universalist Legislative Ministry of Maryland  
 Concerned Citizens Against Industrial CAFOs  
 Wicomico NAACP  
 Chesapeake Physicians for Social Responsibility  
 Chispa MD  
 Climate Law & Policy Project

Maryland Poor People's Campaign  
Labor Network for Sustainability  
The Nature Conservancy  
Clean Air Prince Georges  
350 Baltimore  
Maryland Environmental Health Network  
Climate Stewards of Greater Annapolis  
Talbot Rising  
Adat Shalom Climate Action

Chesapeake Earth Holders  
Climate Parents of Prince Georges  
Echotopia  
Maryland NAACP State Conference,  
Environmental Justice Committee