

DE0202
Public School Construction
Board of Public Works

Committee Narrative

Public School Construction Program Block Grant Funding: The committees understand that there is a great need for school construction funding for Baltimore City and other jurisdictions. A number of alternatives have been put forth that enable the city to rehabilitate and construct school facilities more quickly than the current school construction funding process would allow. One such option would be to provide a block grant to the Baltimore City Public Schools which would be used in conjunction with local funds to leverage a large amount of capital funds through another entity, such as a nonprofit entity. In order to fully understand this issue and the implications of a change in the way school construction funding is appropriated, the committees request the Interagency Committee on School Construction (IAC) to study this issue, in conjunction with the State Treasurer, the Department of Budget and Management, the Baltimore City Public Schools, the Baltimore City Administration, and the Department of Legislative Services. The report should, at a minimum, (1) review the independent needs assessment of school buildings conducted by Jacobs Project Management for the Baltimore City Public Schools; (2) evaluate the feasibility and process of providing a block grant for school construction purposes to Baltimore City Public Schools; (3) assess the implications of providing, or not providing, a block grant to improve Baltimore City's school facilities as expeditiously as possible, and the impact on the Public School Construction Program as a whole and on other counties; (4) review best management practices for the large volume of construction projects that would likely result from such a block grant program; (5) analyze whether and how providing the block grant with proceeds from taxable and tax-exempt State debt could impact the States bond rating, and other legal and tax implications of providing a block grant; (6) examine how other states have implemented such a block grant, and the benefits and consequences of doing so; (7) study the creation and governance of a third party entity for school construction purposes in Baltimore City; (8) evaluate the current bonding authority of the Baltimore City School System and whether the amount is adequate; and (9) evaluate whether the results of this study could be applied to other jurisdictions with significant school facility needs.

Information Request	Author	Due Date
Report on providing a block Grant for school construction	IAC	December 1, 2012