



Arlington
Public
Schools

2025 Pre-Capital Improvement (Pre-CIP) Report

Facilities & Operations
Planning – August 2025



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Executive Summary

The Pre-Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) report builds upon several complementary studies and annually reported data to recommend priorities for School Board consideration in their upcoming CIP direction.¹ Produced biennially and formerly called the Arlington Facilities Student Accommodation Plan (AFSAP), the Pre-CIP draws on the following resources:

- 2024 Planning Unit Review Study,
- September 30th Membership Enrollment,
- Fall 2024 10-Year Projections,
- 2025 Enrollment Management Plan,
- 2025 Program Capacity Studies at the Elementary and Middle Schools,
- 2025 Relocatable Inventory Management Report,
- 2025 Boundary Reviews for Elementary and Middle Schools, and
- Adopted FY2025-34 CIP.

This report formalizes the content presented during the June 10, 2025, Pre-CIP work session and builds upon the projects included in the adopted FY2025-34 CIP. It considers current enrollment trends across all school levels, explores non-capital strategies for capacity needs, assesses our existing facility conditions, and accounts for economic uncertainties at the local, state, and federal levels.

Recommendations for Consideration in the 2027-36 CIP School Board Direction

The Pre- CIP recommendations address Arlington Public Schools (APS) future capital needs within a fiscally sound framework that considers enrollment projections, school program capacities, the current state of our building infrastructure and systems, and our prior commitments adopted in the 2025-34 CIP. These recommendations align with APS' 2024-30 Strategic Plan priorities specifically the goal of operational excellence to ensure all students learn, thrive, and excel in high-quality, safe, and supportive schools.

Continued Investment in Major Infrastructure Projects

APS remains committed to investing in long-term infrastructure improvements and repairs to ensure school facilities operate sustainably. Deferred maintenance can lead to increased operational costs, safety concerns, and reduced asset lifespans. The *2023 Long-Range Plan to Renovate Existing School Facilities*² identifies long-term infrastructure needs and serves as a planning guide for major projects. Staff recommend continued investment in these areas, as outlined in the FY2025–34 CIP.

Continued Commitment to 2025-34 Adopted CIP Projects

Along with continuing investments in major infrastructure projects, staff recommend continuing and completing projects adopted in the 2025-34 CIP to include:

- Synthetic turf replacement projects in partnership with Arlington County,
- Kitchen renovation projects, and
- The completion of the Career Center campus, to include the relocation of the Montessori Public School of Arlington (MPSA) into a renovated Arlington Career Center building. Following this transition, the existing

¹ [Policy Implementation Procedure \(PIP\) F-1 PIP-1 Capital Improvement Plan](#)

² [2023 Long-Range Plan to Renovate Existing School Facilities](#)

MPSA facility would be demolished, and the site restored as green space.

Continuing and completing these projects demonstrates our commitment to students, staff, and the community.

Selection of a Feasibility Project for Renovation

Upon completion of the five (5) feasibility studies, their options and cost estimates, staff will review with the School Board and Administration. Information from that review will be utilized by staff to provide a recommendation on priorities of projects for the upcoming CIP.

Non-Capital Projects

APS continues to explore non-capital strategies to address projected enrollment needs. As part of this effort, elementary and middle school boundary reviews were conducted during Summer 2025. If adjustments are proposed, they will be introduced in Fall 2025, with School Board action anticipated in December 2025. Any approved changes would take effect in the 2026–27 school year.

The review process is guided by APS Policy B-2.1 and its associated Policy Implementation Procedure (B-2.1 PIP-1), which establish the rationale and framework for boundary adjustments. Any proposed changes must align with the policy's prioritized conditions: efficiency, proximity, alignment, and demographics.

Prevailing Outlook

Enrollment Projections

The Fall 2024 10-year projections³ show K-12 enrollment projected to increase moderately by 1.6% this school year with the largest growth anticipated at the middle school level. These K-12 projections show a five-year moderate growth outlook of 3.7% with the most growth focused at the middle and high school levels. The 10-year outlook indicates a smaller projected enrollment for the 2034-35 school year compared to this school year. The 10-year projected reduction is informed by birth rate trends, which continue to show a decline. Staff will closely monitor the birth rate trend as small gains or drops can have exponential impacts on projections across a 10-year horizon.

School Capacity

Last school year, staff conducted a review of program capacities at both the elementary and middle school levels. Program capacity identifies how current spaces are used during a school year to meet core and specific educational program needs. APS believes a school's program capacity provides a more accurate and real-time view of capacity utilization and seat availability. Through this lens, APS can plan for both short-term and long-term enrollment needs.

In the **short term**, through the annual *Enrollment Management Plan*⁴, APS can identify necessary operational adjustments to manage enrollment. These may include placing specific countywide programs (e.g., PreK) or facilitating neighborhood and targeted transfers to schools with available space.

In the **long term**, data on program capacity and utilization informs APS' capital planning efforts, helping ensure that future facility investments align with projected enrollment trends and educational priorities.

The Program Capacity studies and resulting capacity utilization rates for elementary schools indicate overall excess capacity for SY2024-25 and future enrollment projections.⁵ Two elementary schools selected for feasibility studies show capacity utilization rates between 77% - 83% currently and in future enrollment projections three and five years out.

Program capacities at the middle school level show less overall excess capacity currently and in future enrollment projections.⁶ The overall projected program capacity utilization rate stands at 94% and 95% in SY2027-28 and SY2029-30, respectively.

Relocatable Inventory Management Study⁷

In June 2025, APS completed an updated inventory of all relocatable structures across APS properties. The study helps APS monitor facility use, plan for future capital investments, and respond to changing enrollment needs. Relocatable structures serve as a non-capital solution, address short- to medium-term enrollment growth, and provide temporary additional space when permanent school buildings are at or near capacity.

³ [2024 Fall 10-Year Enrollment Projections](#)

⁴ [2025 Enrollment Management Plan](#)

⁵ [2025 Elementary School Program Capacity Study](#)

⁶ [2025 Middle School Program Capacity Study](#)

⁷ [School Year 2024-2025 Relocatable Inventory Management Study](#)

Previously Adopted CIP Projects

APS continues to complete projects adopted in previous CIPs that improve, replace, and create optimal learning environments and facilities for our students, staff, and community. Ongoing projects include:

- Kitchen Renovation Projects,
- Major Infrastructure Projects,
- Synthetic Turf Projects, and
- The Grace Hopper Center, and
- The planned refresh of the legacy Career Center building for Montessori Public School of Arlington (MPSA).

Kitchen Renovation Projects – Continued CIP Investments

APS is continuing to upgrade kitchen and serving facilities at elementary schools to align with the standards of our newest campuses. These enhancements ensure that food and nutrition services staff have the space and resources needed to prepare and serve healthy meals for our youngest learners at both breakfast and lunch. Upgrades include expanded serving lines designed to efficiently accommodate each school's student population.

Major Infrastructure Projects – Continued CIP Investments

Replacing major infrastructure—such as roofing systems, central heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) systems, and electrical infrastructure—on a planned cycle is essential to maintaining the safety, functionality, and lifespan of our facilities. The adopted CIP allocates dedicated funding for these ongoing replacements to ensure our buildings operate in a safe and sustainable manner. During the 2025-2034 CIP planning cycle, APS adopted the *Long-Range Plan to Renovate Existing Facilities* as a guiding framework for future infrastructure projects. Recent accomplishments include an HVAC renovation at Barrett Elementary, a roof replacement at Randolph Elementary, and continued lighting upgrades at multiple sites. Currently, staff are preparing for an HVAC renovation at Hoffman-Boston Elementary School.

Synthetic Turf Projects – Continued CIP Investments

During every CIP cycle, APS allocates funding to support the replacement of synthetic turf fields in partnership with Arlington County. All fields are replaced according to a scheduled timeline to ensure they remain in safe and playable condition. The adopted 2025–2034 CIP includes funding to convert the fields at Kenmore Middle School to synthetic turf. This project is currently in the design phase, with Arlington County serving as the lead agency. Future CIPs will continue to include funding for the replacement of APS synthetic turf fields.

Grace Hopper Center (New Arlington Career Center) Project – Adopted in the 2023-32 CIP

Adopted as part of the 2023–2032 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP), the Grace Hopper Center is scheduled to open in the 2026–27 school year. Its completion will mark the final phase of modernization of all APS high schools. This new facility will provide more than 1,600 seats to support four full-time programs and part-time Career and Technical Education (CTE) offerings for students from high schools across APS. The new building will expand access to the Career Center's programs, allowing more students to benefit from Arlington Tech and other high-demand pathways. Designed as a state-of-the-art learning environment, the Grace Hopper Center will feature cutting-edge technology and advanced hands-on learning spaces to help students develop skills across a wide range of career fields.

Refresh of the Legacy Career Center Building for MPSA – Adopted in the 2025-34 CIP

As part of the long-term vision for the Career Center campus, the School Board approved plans in the 2025–2034 CIP to relocate the Montessori Public School of Arlington (MPSA) into the legacy Career Center building. This move fulfills APS' commitment to families and the surrounding community by limiting the total campus capacity to 2,570

students, in recognition of the site's space constraints.

According to the adopted schedule in the FY2025–34 CIP, APS staff will initiate the project in Fall 2025 by selecting a design team to plan the renovation of the legacy Career Center building to accommodate MPSA students. The project will follow APS's standard design process, which includes robust community engagement through the Building Level Planning Committee (BLPC) and the Public Facilities Review Committee (PFRC).

Before the design phase, staff recommend APS leadership develop a visioning process for programmatic considerations as discussed during the June 10, 2025, Pre-CIP Work Session. This process should explore options such as:

- Relocating the current MPSA program and increasing Grade 1 seat allocations for satellite Primary Montessori students,
- Relocating the current MPSA program and absorbing seats from existing satellite Primary Montessori programs, or
- Relocating the current MPSA program and expanding to include Grade 6 Montessori, creating a PreK – Grade 6 accredited Montessori program.

In alignment with Policy Implementation Procedure F-1 PIP-1, the School Board must define the project requirements including programmatic vision, capacity, and space needs prior to the start of design to ensure the final plan supports both instructional and operational goals.

Following the selection of the design team in Fall 2025, APS will begin the design phase. Renovations are scheduled to begin in SY2027–28 with the building opening to students in SY2028–29.

Proposed Projects for Fall 2026 Bond Referendum

In the adopted 2025-34 CIP, APS proposed projects for the Fall 2026 bond referendum to include:

- Kitchen Renovation Projects,
- Major Infrastructure Projects,
- Synthetic Turf Projects, and
- Implementation of one or more feasibility projects.

APS recommends initiating a kitchen renovation at Taylor Elementary School to modernize food service infrastructure, improve efficiency, and support the health and wellness of students. This project reflects APS's commitment to providing high-quality nutrition services in facilities that meet current standards for safety, accessibility, and functionality.

Continued investment in major infrastructure projects is essential to maintaining the integrity and performance of APS facilities. These projects will address aging systems such as HVAC, electrical, plumbing, and roofing, ensuring that school buildings remain safe, energy-efficient, and conducive to learning.

The CIP includes ongoing synthetic turf replacement and installation projects to enhance the usability and safety of athletic fields. These upgrades support physical education, extracurricular activities, and community use, while reducing maintenance costs and improving field durability.

APS plans to implement one or more feasibility projects to explore future capital needs and potential solutions. These studies will inform decisions about capacity, site utilization, and programmatic alignment, ensuring that future investments are data-driven and responsive to evolving educational demands.

Together, these projects represent a balanced approach to capital planning—addressing immediate facility needs while laying the groundwork for future improvements. APS remains committed to transparency, fiscal responsibility, and strategic investment in infrastructure that supports student success.

Feasibility Studies – Implementation Project

Staff recommendations will be developed following input from the Superintendent and School Board for projects currently undergoing feasibility studies. As part of the 2023 Long-Range Plan to Renovate Existing Facilities, feasibility studies are in progress at five (5) facilities—Thomas Jefferson Middle School, Taylor Elementary School, Barrett Elementary School, Swanson Middle School, and Randolph Elementary—using the School Board-approved methodology. This methodology, developed in collaboration with APS staff and the Advisory Council on School Facilities and Capital Programs (FAC), is grounded in the Facilities Condition Assessment (FCA) framework, which evaluates building systems, physical environments, and equity considerations to guide capital investment decisions. To support this work, an outline was developed to determine realistic building footprints for each site, enabling estimators to prepare conceptual cost estimates. As directed by the School Board, the feasibility study options are based on each school's current design capacity. Each study also considers the current academic programmatic needs and the program capacity of the building to ensure alignment with instructional goals and operational requirements. The options being evaluated and cost estimated include:

Existing Building Footprint:

- Assess what design capacity can be accommodated within the existing building footprint using current design standards.

- Identify where a future addition could be placed to increase the population to the current design capacity.

Renovation with Addition:

- Evaluate renovation of the existing facility with an addition to accommodate the current design capacity.
- Identify where a future addition could be placed to increase the population with capacity to hold additional students.

New Construction:

- Explore new construction to house the current design capacity.
- Identify where a future addition could be placed to increase the population with capacity to hold additional students.
- For middle schools, where space constraints prevent new construction, evaluate a second planned renovation with different additions, including options for future expansion to increase design capacity by 10%.

The Superintendent will consider the findings and recommendations from these ongoing studies, along with existing and new projects, in preparing the Superintendent's Proposed CIP, scheduled for release in May 2026. The School Board will further refine the CIP through its proposed version and public reviews, leading to the Adopted CIP in June 2026.

2025 Boundary Review Implications

Currently, APS is reviewing elementary and middle school neighborhood boundaries. If changes are recommended, they will be presented in early Fall 2025, with School Board action anticipated in December 2025, and new boundaries taking effect for the 2026–27 school year. This review process is guided by APS Policy B-2.1 and PIP B-2.1 PIP-1, which outline the rationale and considerations for boundary adjustments. Any proposed changes must align with the policy’s stated prioritized conditions: efficiency, proximity, alignment, and demographics.

As part of this review, it is important to account for the operational characteristics of existing County wide programs. Given the range of educational offerings, including multiple option elementary schools, two middle school option programs, and countywide PreK and special education services, it is important to clearly identify the location, capacity, and operational needs of these programs. Clear guidance on County wide option programs provides clarity that supports effective and well-aligned boundary reviews.