

Talbot County Public Schools

Educational Facilities Master Plan

2024

Talbot County Board of Education

12 Magnolia Street

Easton, MD 21601

July 1, 2024

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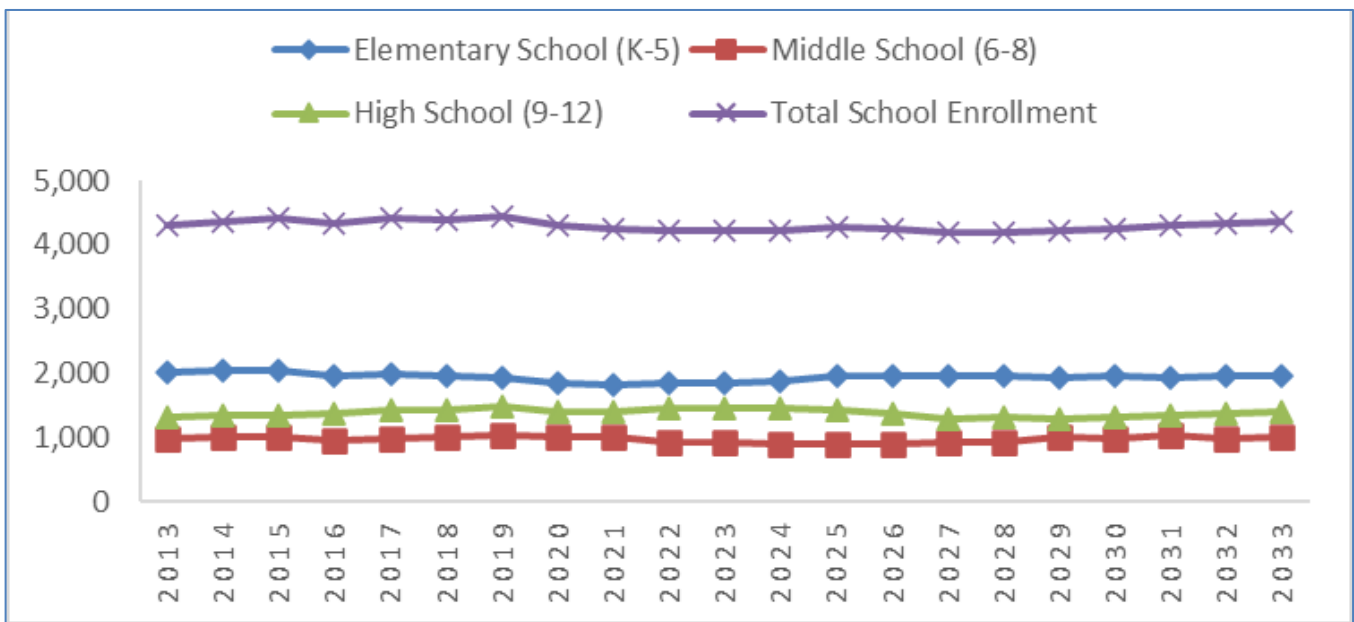
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Educational Facilities Master Plan (EFMP) is a long-range planning document that allows the Board of Education of Talbot County to identify and prioritize the capital improvements that are required to maintain effective and efficient educational facilities. Local school systems in Maryland are required to prepare an EFMP annually, in accordance with the regulations of the Interagency Commission on School Construction (IAC). The capital needs identified in an EFMP are typically divided into three areas: projects to improve the performance of buildings to provide a safe and healthful environment for instruction; projects to improve the educational adequacy of buildings and spaces; and projects to increase the capacity of facilities so that they can house students without overcrowding. The 2024 EFMP will provide justification for the funding requests that will be submitted to the IAC and to the County Government in fiscal year 2026 in the Capital Improvement Program (CIP), the Aging Schools Program (ASP) program, and a number of other funding programs.

The impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic were experienced by school systems throughout the world. The need for school facilities will continue and Talbot County Public Schools is well-positioned to sustain both in-person classroom instruction and online instruction. While the total enrollment gradually fell through the pandemic, the forecast indicates this trend is leveling. Enrollment is expected to increase modestly in the future.

Figure ES-1, Talbot County Public School Historic and Projected K-12 Enrollments, 2013 - 2033

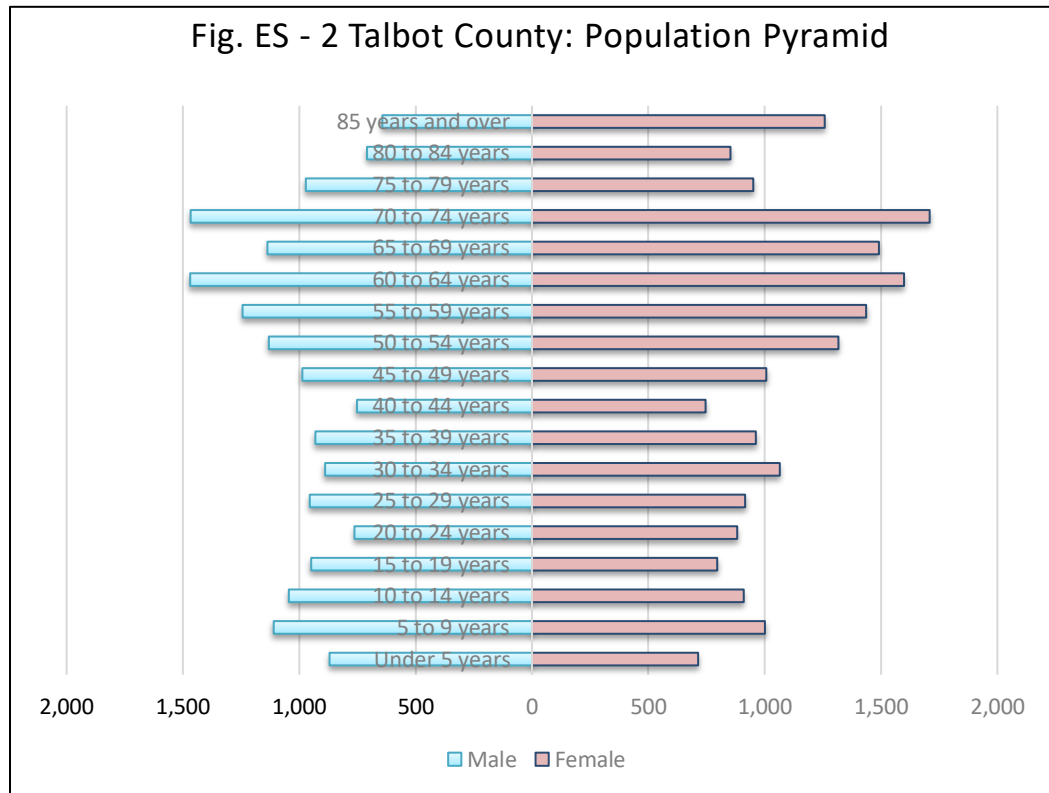


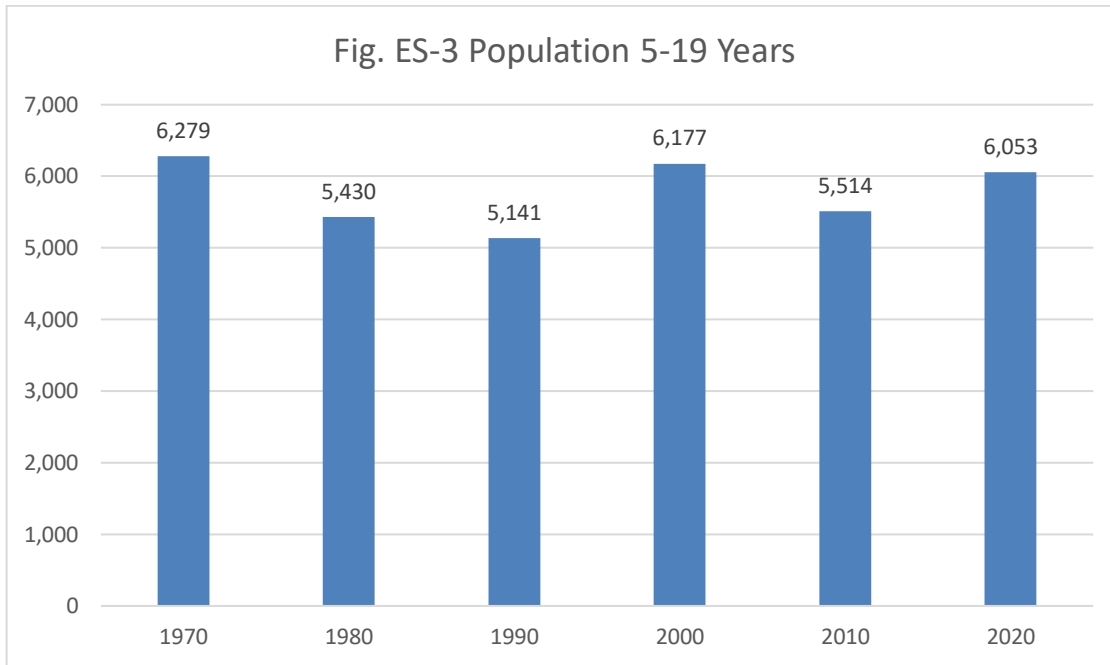
Recent decreases in the total enrollment do not imply that TCPS will have excess capacity in the future.¹ The Maryland Blueprint plan brings new requirements to school system staffing and operations that affect the utilization of school buildings. Growth in the number of students with special needs and new housing developments also impact utilization within school buildings. Consequently, the ongoing tasks of upgrading building systems and modernizing instructional spaces may be joined to an emerging need to also build new classrooms for capacity. This EFMP provides background information and projected needs to support that effort.

¹ Maryland Department of Planning “Public School Historical Enrollments 2013-2023” released March 2024.

Historical Population and Enrollment Growth. The population of Talbot County did not grow from 2010 to 2020. The most recent population estimate by the US Census for Talbot County is 37,823 in 2022. The school-age population is driven by the birth rate and the stability of the child-raising portion of the population. Children in the school-attending age group of 5 to 19 also show a long-term pattern of stability. Public school enrollment patterns follow a similar trend. (Section IV of this report tracks enrollment disaggregated by level and school.) Since the population growth in the county has largely consisted of in-migration of older residents without children, the largest segments of families in the population are not enrolling students in TCPS. However, new housing developments in the county may bring more families with children. The anticipated impact of new housing developments will not be immediate and is described in Section II of this report.

The population pyramid for Talbot County, MD is largest beyond child rearing years.
 Source: 2022 American Community Survey





Children in the school-attending age group of 5 to 19 show a pattern of stability.
Source: US Census.

Key Factors to Monitor. Within this pattern of overall stability, four factors introduce elements of uncertainty:

Changing Student Demographics. [Table IV-4](#) shows a demographic trend that is in line with national trends. The overall proportion of Hispanic students in the school system has grown, increasing more than fourfold since 2006. Demographic changes may drive program needs like English Language Learners (ELL) instruction or other special needs programming. The typical facility impact is increased need for small learning environments for small group and one-on-one instruction and to house support services such as counseling, tutoring, and mentorship programs as well as specialized services (speech, vision, hearing, etc.).

Pandemic Impact. The direct impact of the pandemic on school operations has subsided. Given the possibility of a future pandemic, IT and Risk management processes should be kept up to date to address future calls for lockdowns. Although the transition to working from home was mostly temporary, many employers have incorporated remote work into their long-term plans. With the high quality of life in Talbot County, this could attract some families with children to the area.

New Housing Developments. Measured against the recently revised State Rated Capacity (SRC) of 5,436 for the entire school system,² [Table V-1](#) shows that long-term utilization, measured as the ratio of full-time equivalent enrollment to SRC, for schools in the county is projected to remain stable, from 84.9% in 2023 to 86.9% in 2033. However, [Table V-1](#) does not account for the new housing developments identified in [Table II-6](#) on page 10. This report is monitoring the long-term impact of three residential developments in Easton and one in Trappe. When projects remain in various stages of approval and development, they are not yet incorporated into the enrollment forecast. While this approach is conservative, it avoids large discrepancies with the state projection and there is always an opportunity to adjust the forecast in the following years as units are occupied.

Changes in household occupancy patterns may increase the student yield of existing housing. The most

² The State Rated Capacity for all schools in the state was recalculated in the spring of 2019. The revised SRC for Easton Elementary School was received April 8, 2022.

likely changes will occur in the occupancy of older multifamily units, which are heavily concentrated in Easton. Based on experience, changes in occupancy are likely to increase the number of non-English speaking students. The replacement Easton Elementary School has been designed with an ample number of resource spaces as well as regular classrooms. It is currently anticipated that this facility can accommodate any special learning requirements and contain growth.

The Maryland Blueprint. The Maryland Blueprint for Education is a comprehensive plan for improving education in the state of Maryland. The most important impact to school facility planning is the required expansion of access to high-quality early childhood education programs.³ TCPS has implemented districtwide, full-day, universal PreK for 4-year-olds using existing facilities. Should requirements for 3-year-old eligibility expand there will be limited capacity. The Easton Elementary School replacement design has been flexible in the implementation of the all-day Prekindergarten program at the school, allowing kindergarten and first grade classes to be shifted to accommodate the additional PreK needs. Other space-impacting aspects of Blueprint may arise if additional facilities are needed for professional learning, small group and individual instruction, or Career and College Readiness. The required Community Schools Needs Assessment may also call for space. These requirements that may affect facility capacity will be monitored in future Educational Facility Master Plans.

Managing Capacity. TCPS has taken actions in the last two decades to redistribute enrollment and better utilize existing capacity throughout the system. In the last decade, the Board of Education approved redistricting to reduce overcrowding at Easton Elementary School and to better utilize excess capacity at Chapel District, White Marsh and St. Michaels Elementary Schools. Previously, the Board reassigned sixth graders from Tilghman Elementary and St. Michaels Elementary to St. Michaels Middle/High and reassigned some Prekindergarten students from St. Michaels Elementary to Tilghman Elementary. Most recently the Board approved a boundary change between Easton Elementary School and White Marsh Elementary School that went into effect for the 2020-2021 school year.

These actions, while difficult, prevent individual schools in the system from inequitably deviating significantly from the systemwide utilization average of 84.9%. Consequently, most of the schools enjoy very comfortable utilization figures, providing school administrators with the flexibility they need to adjust the deployment of programs and to address the special learning requirements of individual groups of students.

The low historic utilization of Tilghman Elementary School prompted the Board of Education to initiate a study to determine whether the facility should be retained or should be closed. In 2017 a committee presented recommendations for the closure of Tilghman Elementary and reassignment of the students to St. Michael's Elementary School. The Board chose instead to offer open enrollment at Tilghman to students from the entire county and to monitor the effect of this program on the utilization of the facility. The utilization at Tilghman Elementary is forecast in this report to increase from the present utilization of 56.7% to 65.6% in 2027.

Talbot County Public Schools enjoys the newest average square footage in the state.⁴ This metric indicates the district is providing appropriate and adequately sized facilities to support its educational programs. Facility investment reduces the maintenance and operational burden placed on supporting services and allows scarce budgetary resources to be focused upon instruction. The 2020 replacement of Easton Elementary School and the planned renovation of Chapel District Elementary School,⁵ with

³ Pillar 1 of the Blueprint includes all 4-year-old children in certain income tiers and many 3-year-old children.

⁴ IAC website, "Average Age of LEA Facilities 2014 – 2023"

⁵ The FY 2024 Capital Improvement Program request for approval of planning for the renovation of Chapel

potential occupancy for the 2026-2027 school year, continues this wise tradition of facility management.

While the future replacement and/or major renovation of the other school facilities lies beyond the timeframe addressed within the EFMP, individual building systems in these facilities will age faster than the buildings themselves. An example is the roof of Easton High School, which was approved for funding in the FY 2022 and FY 2023 CIPs; the facility will likely not undergo complete renovation until 2030 or later. An annual evaluation of the building inventory through the Inventory Analysis contained in the EFMP and through the Comprehensive Maintenance Plan (CMP) will ensure that building systems are addressed in a timely manner to protect the educational environment and the performance of the building.

Concurrent State Requirements. Although the Maryland 2024 legislative session did not introduce new facility planning requirements, facility planning will continue to be impacted by recently passed requirements. The *Built to Learn Act* of 2020 required that each LEA submit a capacity analysis. In the event an LEA faces crowding, supplemental funding can be accessed. The *Maryland Blueprint Act* has various space requirements, most importantly for expansion of Prekindergarten. The *Maryland Code, Education Article §5-312.1* required LEAs to adopt a policy regarding the use of energy; the TCPS Energy Management and Conservation Policy and associated regulations were recently adopted to comply with this requirement. Monitoring and reporting may lead to the need for facility investments.

District Elementary School was approved on December 8, 2022, by the IAC.

INTRODUCTION

Talbot County Overview

Located centrally in Maryland's Eastern shore, Talbot County is bordered on the north by Queen Anne's County, on the east by Caroline County, and on the south by Dorchester County. The Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries form the western border of the county. Over half of Talbot County is in agricultural use and a quarter is forested. Most existing residential development is concentrated in the towns. The shoreline is cut by numerous watercourses that form narrow peninsulas, typically served by a single road. This landform impacts the delivery of educational services.

The major commercial activities consist of farming and tourism, the latter based on the attraction of the small and quaint communities and the water-related activities. Many homes serve as vacation and second homes to part-time owners. This trend appears to be increasing and it can be a factor that suppresses enrollment growth.

The population of Talbot County, estimated at 37,823 in 2022, is projected to grow by approximately 3,000 persons by 2040 and 3,440 persons by 2045.⁶ As shown in Fig. ES-2, Talbot County Population Pyramid (page ES-2), much of the population is beyond child rearing age. This disproportion between the younger and older age cohorts reflects both the desirability of the county as a retirement and second home venue, and the lack of housing and employment opportunities for younger people. As a result, enrollment growth is likely to be slow or to remain flat, depending upon the rate of new housing production.

Talbot County is a charter county with five Council members elected for four-year terms. The school board consists of seven elected members, with two student members representing the two high schools. Like all Maryland school systems except Baltimore City, TCPS has no independent taxing authority and is dependent on the local and state governments for capital and operating funds. The County and the five incorporated towns – Easton, Oxford, Queen Anne, St. Michaels, and Trappe - each have independent authority over zoning and building permits. The TCPS EFMP annually monitors the land use plans, zoning changes, and residential permitting activities of all six jurisdictions.

History of Public Education in Talbot County

The Talbot County Free School opened in 1728 and only boys were allowed to attend. The public school system in Talbot County began in 1834 when state law required the establishment of many one-room schoolhouses in the County. Public school education was only provided to white students and only through the elementary level. After the Civil War, the first high school opened in Talbot County on October 1, 1866, offering courses and programs through the tenth grade. The eleventh grade was added in the early 1900s. Subsequently the school year was increased to 180 days in accordance with the Education Article and regulation,⁷ a twelfth grade was added, other schools were closed, and modern school buildings were constructed or renovated.

By the twentieth century there were four high schools, fifteen grade schools, and fifty-one one-room school buildings in Talbot County. A fifth high school was opened in 1913 and the sixth high school opened in 1916. African American students could not attend high school until the Moton High School was completed in 1937. A move to consolidate schools began in the 1920s and 1930s. The 70 schools in 1900 were reduced to 25 in 1945. Among these, the number of high schools was reduced from six to three, including the Moton building. Following the requirement for racial integration with the *Brown vs.*

⁶ U.S. Census Bureau, Population Estimates Program (PEP), updated annually.

⁷ Education Article §7-103, COMAR 13A.09.10

Board of Education Supreme Court decision in 1954, TCPS completed the integration process in 1967. The Moton building has been successively converted to a vocational education center, middle school, and finally to an elementary school.⁸ The consolidations led to a long-standing configuration of nine educational facilities. With the consolidation of the two Easton Elementary School facilities into a single modern facility in 2020, the total number of educational facilities in the county has been reduced to eight.

The Educational Facilities Master Plan and its Purpose

This Educational Facilities Master Plan (EFMP) will provide the Board of Education with the means of identifying and prioritizing the capital improvements that are required to maintain effective and efficient educational facilities. The EFMP is a long-range plan required by state regulations and reviewed by the Interagency Commission on School Construction (the IAC).⁹

The goal of the EFMP is to ensure that public school facilities are safe, healthy and support the educational mission of the school system. It aims to use existing facilities efficiently and to allocate limited financial resources in a way that maximizes value for taxpayers. The EFMP focuses on three main areas: safety and health of buildings, adequacy of buildings and spaces to support education, and capacity of facilities to house students without overcrowding. It is a systematic approach to assessing the condition of school facilities, determining the needs of the district, and developing a plan to address those needs in a financially responsible way.

The 2024 EFMP will provide technical support to project requests in the FY 2026 Capital Improvement Program (CIP), to be submitted to the State in autumn 2024, in the FY 2026 Aging Schools Program (ASP) program requests to be submitted in the spring of 2025, and in other programs that have been or may be approved by the General Assembly.

The principal elements included in this EFMP are as follows:

1. State Public School Construction Program - Review of funding criteria (Introduction);
2. Summary of the Board of Education goals, standards, policies, and guidelines as they may affect educational facilities (Section I), including:
 - Policies for co-location, shared use, and shared cost of existing and planned school facilities;
 - Policies to address school capacity needs in planned growth areas or to address adequate public facilities ordinance (APFO) requirements; and
 - Policies addressing current and planned transportation for students, administrators, and teachers per school.
3. Community Analysis, including County demographics, development, and comprehensive plans (Section II);
4. Facility Inventory and Evaluation, including floor plans, school data, and evaluations of school buildings (Section III);
5. Enrollment Data, including historical and projected public school enrollment (Section IV);
6. Facility Needs Analysis, including recommended facility improvements (Section V); and

⁸ Interview with Ms. Pamela Clay, Curriculum Supervisor (Career and Technical Education and related programs) February 9, 2017.

⁹ The regulations of the new Interagency Commission can be found in COMAR 14.39.02.

7. Supporting Documentation (Section VI)

The FY 2025 EFMP is being developed with consideration of three new requirements that have resulted from recent State legislation:

1. **Capacity Study.** The *Built to Learn Act* of 2020 requires that each LEA submit a capacity study to the IAC and the General Assembly by December 1, 2022.

Status: TCPS submitted the study to the IAC in November 2022.

2. **Expanded Prekindergarten.** The *Maryland Blueprint Act* (HB 1300) requires that the LEA provide a description of the approach that will be taken to meet the Prekindergarten requirements of the Act. This will indicate how the demand for PreK seats is projected, how school facilities will be used to meet the projected demand, and how private providers will be used.

Status: The TCPS Blueprint Pillar One strategy requires all three- and four-year-old children from families with certain incomes to be provided high-quality full-day PreK at no cost. Kindergarten readiness assessment, expanded Judy Center, and P3 services are also required. An upcoming initiative will be expanding partnerships to ensure all PreK programs attain MSDE accreditation and enroll in EXCELS.¹⁰ PreK instructional assistants will receive tuition support to obtain the Child Development Associate credentials. Additional Patty Centers, Judy Centers, and MD Infants and Toddlers Programs will be deployed. PreK enrollment forecasts are made using birth rates and historical enrollment. The utilization figures shown in [Table V-1](#) indicate that there is adequate capacity for an expansion of the Prekindergarten program in most schools.

3. **Energy Policy.** *Chapter 608 of 2021* (HB 630) requires that each LEA provide by July 1, 2022, an approved energy policy that articulates the LEA's guiding principles and strategic vision regarding the use of energy, specifically electricity. A new grant program is available through the Maryland Energy Administration to assist LEAs with data collection and other aspects of the requirements.

Status: TCPS developed an energy policy in cooperation with the IAC.

The State Public School Construction Program

Talbot County Public Schools relies on funding from the Talbot County Council to operate and maintain the school system, including funding for maintaining, repairing, and making capital improvements to public school buildings. In some cases, facility needs can be addressed solely through County funding, while in other cases, County funding is leveraged to obtain State funding through the Interagency Commission on School Construction (IAC) programs. The IAC currently administers four major funding programs: the Capital Improvement Program (CIP), the Built to Learn (BTL) funds, the Healthy School Facility Fund (HSFF), and the Aging Schools Program (ASP). These programs provide funding for facilities used for educational purposes, but central administrative offices are not eligible. Additionally, the IAC also administers several smaller funding programs for which Talbot County Public Schools are eligible: The School Safety Grant Program (SSGP), the Nonpublic Aging Schools Program (NASP) and the Nonpublic Aging Schools Improvement Grants.

The School Safety Grant Program (SSGP) provides grants to address school security improvements.¹¹ Talbot County Public Schools used these funds in FY 2023 to include security film installation at Chapel District ES, White Marsh ES, St. Michaels ES, Tilghman ES, as well as St. Michaels Middle/High. The

¹⁰ Excellence Counts in Early Learning and School Age Care, is a tiered quality rating and improvement system that gives ratings to child care and public prekindergarten programs that meet increasingly higher standards in key areas of quality.

¹¹ IAC, *loc. cit.*, "School Safety Grant Program Administrative Procedures Guide", approved March 6, 2019.

Nonpublic Aging Schools Program (NASP) provides funds for capital improvements to nonpublic school buildings and sites.¹² The Chesapeake Christian School in Talbot County received \$23,542.59 for FY 23 to replace doors and make interior renovations, as well as mechanical, plumbing system, and telecommunications updates. The SS. Peter and Paul Elementary and High School each received a total of \$23,542.59 in FY 2022 for interior and other renovations.

The Nonpublic Aging Schools School Improvement Grants (NPSI) program provides grants for safety improvements to existing nonpublic school buildings.¹³ In FY 23 The Chesapeake Christian School in Talbot County received \$10,880.00. The Country School, Inc. received \$18,070.00 in FY 23. The SS. Peter and Paul Elementary and High School received a total of \$29,510.00 in FY 23.

Talbot County Public Schools is not eligible for several other current State funding programs: the Capital Grant Program for Local School Systems with Significant Enrollment Growth or Relocatable Classrooms (EGRC), which provides funds for a limited number of school systems that meet specific eligibility criteria, and the Innovative Incentive Pilot Program, which applies to three school systems. In addition, a major program that Talbot County Public Schools previously used to advantage, the federal Qualified Zone Academy Bond program (QZAB), was terminated. The QZAB program funded installation of carpet, restrooms, and sound baffling at Easton Elementary School prior to its replacement.

Capital Improvement Program (CIP)¹⁴

Funded annually at over \$300 million statewide since FY 2006, the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) is the largest of the PSCP funding programs. Requests for approval of planning and funding of projects are submitted to the Interagency Commission on School Construction (IAC) in the annual CIP. The IAC grants annual approvals or recommendations for approval in three rounds, by December 31, before March 1, and between May 1 and June 1. Prior to making its preliminary decisions in December, the IAC is advised by the Governor of the preliminary allocations of new General Obligation Debt and capital operating budget funds that will be proposed for public school construction for the next fiscal year. Subsequent approvals are based on the Governor's submitted capital budget, and on the final capital budget approved by the legislature and enacted by the Governor. The submission and approval procedures under the Interagency Commission are largely similar to those of the former Interagency Committee on School Construction, with additional items that are now eligible for funding.¹⁵ The General Assembly has the authority to increase the total capital budget, based on recommendations made by the Capital Debt Affordability Committee (CDAC).

To be eligible for State construction funding, all projects must meet IAC evaluation criteria established in COMAR, be listed in the EFMP, and have the support of the local government. Major projects are required to have IAC planning approval, which represents a commitment by the State to fund the project (but does not guarantee that State construction funding will be available in any specific fiscal year). State funding for a project that has received planning approval may be deferred due to fiscal limitations or delays in the project itself. However, a county government is not prohibited from "locally funding" or "forward funding" a project that has been deferred by the State, and then requesting reimbursement

¹² IAC, *loc. cit.*, "Procedures for The Senator James E. "Ed" DeGrange Nonpublic Aging Schools Program (Fiscal Year 2021), November 6, 2020, p. 2.

¹³ IAC, *loc. cit.*, "Procedures for The Nonpublic School Safety Grants" (Fiscal Year 2021), November 6, 2020.

¹⁴ COMAR 14.39.02.03.

¹⁵ Before FY 2019, the Board of Public Works (BPW) made final decisions on funding and planning approvals, based on recommendations from the then-Interagency Committee on School Construction.

after the project is initiated or completed, at the time that State funding becomes available.¹⁶

Major project types under the CIP include the construction of new schools, renovation of existing schools in use for 15 years or more, and additions for capacity or programmatic purposes. Planning approval is required for these major project types, and site development costs related to construction are eligible for State funding. Requests for planning approval for full renovations and new and replacement projects require calculation of the Total Cost of Ownership (TCO) for a 30-year period.¹⁷ The State also provides capital funding for small renovations such as science classrooms and open-space enclosures, and for systemic renovation projects that improve the learning environment and extend the useful life of school facilities, including such projects as roofs, boilers, chillers, windows and doors, data and security systems, and lighting. These types of projects also require matching funds from the County, but do not require planning approval.

Full lists of eligible and ineligible project expenses are found at COMAR 14.39.02.10 and .11, respectively. Eligible expenses comprise site development costs related to construction, including off-site work that is required as a condition of permit. The Built to Learn Act of 2020 allows architectural and engineering fees, some planning expenses, and most types of furniture, furnishings and equipment (FF&E) to be an eligible project expense. Ineligible costs for which the local education agency (LEA) is responsible on all CIP projects include site acquisition, design and construction contingency, certain types of movable equipment, change orders, insurance, and repairs and maintenance. For major projects, the LEA is also responsible for square footage that exceeds the State's gross area allowance, which is determined by formula based on student enrollment projections applied against a Gross Area Baseline (GAB) that is specific to each type of school and various enrollment sizes. Exceptions can be granted to the square foot allocations if evidence is presented of unique needs or conditions that require a larger facility. The IAC adjusts the GABs from time to time to reflect current educational mandates and practices, as well as social conditions that may affect the size of educational facilities.

A major project is also eligible for State funding participation in up to 3,000 square feet of community use space, upon presentation of agreement from a local government or nonprofit organization. Typical improvements have included community recreation space, fitness facilities used by local police for training, computer learning centers accessible to the public in non-school hours, and community health facilities.

The Board of Education of each county establishes the project scopes and priorities for its local capital improvement program. The local board request to the IAC must also be supported by the County government, acknowledging the County commitment to provide local funds and to cover ineligible costs. Without the support of the County government, the request for State funding will not be considered. Annual requests statewide invariably exceed the available funding. Only the highest priority projects are funded. The IAC may defer approval of a project if it is judged to have a lower priority than other competing requests.

The IAC establishes a maximum State construction allocation for each approved project. A tentative maximum amount is acknowledged with planning approval. The amount is finalized at approval of

¹⁶ A "locally funded" project is one that proceeds to construction prior to State planning approval; a "forward funded" project is one that has been approved for planning by the State, but has used local construction funds in lieu of State funds to address expenditures pending the approval and release of State construction funds. When a project has been deferred for State funding, there are time limits within which State tax exempt general obligation bond proceeds can be used for reimbursement of locally funded or forward funded expenses. Reimbursement for local funding now applies to systemic renovation projects that meet certain procedural requirements.

¹⁷ IAC, *Capital Improvement Program Instructions for Submission*, March 31, 2021.

funding. For major projects, the allocation is computed by multiplying projected enrollment seven years from the date of application by eligible square footage per full time equivalent student for the specific project type and size (elementary, middle, high, etc.), resulting in a gross area allowance. The gross area allowance is then multiplied by a per square foot construction cost determined annually by the IAC. For new construction, 100 percent of the cost per square foot is used in the calculation of the State allocation. For renovation projects, the cost per square foot increases with the age of the building or portion of the building on a sliding scale where buildings newer than 16 years are ineligible and buildings over 40 years are fully eligible. The state does not cover contingency costs or change orders.

Other elements of the calculation of State funding include:

- A site development allowance that varies for renovation and new construction.
- An allowance of 10 percent of building and site costs is provided for design expenses, and 5 percent of building costs only is allowed for FF&E.
- Additional percentage add-ons are allowed for certain eligible conditions (COMAR 14.39.02.05):
 - 10 percentage points for schools with concentration of poverty greater than 80 percent;
 - 5 percentage points for schools with concentration of poverty less than 80 percent but greater than 55 percent;
 - 5 percentage points for schools that meet certain conditions in the IAC school maintenance effectiveness assessment; and
 - 5 percentage points for a project proposed to be net-zero energy (NZE).
- A State-local cost share percentage which includes factors related to local wealth, the local percentage of Free and Reduced Price Meal (FARMS) students, and local enrollment growth. The PSCP cost-share formula for Talbot County has remained 50 percent of eligible project costs.
- For major renovations, the State funding allocated for capital projects in the building within the previous 15 years is deducted from the total State allocation, unless it can be shown that the recent renovation will not be impacted by the new project.

Systemic renovation projects may include architectural and structural renovations. They may also address specific mechanical, plumbing, or electrical systems. Fire safety, communications, and vertical conveying systems are also funded in this program. A systemic renovation project may also “include reasonably related components of other building systems as determined by the IAC or its designee.” The IAC encourages renovations to be comprehensive, so any combination of two or more building systems may be funded in the “building envelope” or “ceiling-and-above” categories.

A “Limited Renovation” provides for renovation at less than the scope of a complete renovation. To be eligible, the project scope must include a minimum of five major building systems and may include widespread educational and architectural enhancements, and the total cost must be less than the cost of complete renovation of the same building area.

Special CIP programs for technology, energy efficiency, and general efficiency have been applied to Talbot County projects. The chiller replacement at Chapel District Elementary School and rooftop air conditioning units at the Easton High School gymnasium were funded through these special programs.

Built to Learn Act (BTL)

The BTL Act, passed in 2020, authorizes the Maryland Stadium Authority (MSA) to issue up to \$2.2 billion in revenue bonds to fund school construction projects and provides for management of the projects by MSA.

Maryland's Board of Public Works has approved the issuance of about a quarter of the funds authorized in the bill. Presently TCPS is utilizing all available funding available through the BTL totaling \$3.87 million, which is being allocated to the Chapel District Elementary School renovation and addition project.¹⁸ IAC staff will prioritize eligible projects that are shovel ready, meaning it is important to advance planning and design for eligible projects. When a project qualifies in the future, TCPS will coordinate with MSA through a memorandum of understanding.

The BTL Act also created the Public School Facilities Priority Fund, which will rely on the recommendations of the Assessment and Funding Workgroup to consider how the results of the Statewide Facilities Assessment (required by Education Article §5-310) may be used to prioritize funding to schools with the highest needs. The Act also made design funding eligible for State participation; mandated an increase to the Enrollment Growth and Relocatable Classroom (EGRC) funding beginning in FY 2026; extended the Assessment and Funding Workgroup to December 2021; and extended the Healthy School Facility Fund (see below).

Healthy School Facility Fund (HSFF)

The Healthy School Facility Fund is intended to correct issues posing an immediate life, safety, or health threat to occupants of a facility. Typical projects improve the conditions related to air conditioning, heating, or indoor air quality, as well as mold remediation, temperature regulation, and plumbing—including the presence of lead in drinking water outlets, roofs, and windows. TCPS has not identified any projects that would qualify.

Aging School Program (ASP)

The Aging School Program annually funds smaller capital projects in existing schools based on a formula that takes account of each school system's proportion of un-renovated pre-1970 square footage. Project costs may be as small as \$10,000, and the State allocation does not require local matching funds. TCPS is eligible for an annual allocation of \$38,292 through the ASP. In the past, the school system used ASP funds for HVAC controls at Chapel District Elementary, an outdoor fitness area at Easton Elementary, and security systems at all of the school facilities, as well as bleachers at St. Michaels High School and a chiller control panel at Easton High School. TCPS is in the process of determining the next use of this allocation.

Other State Capital Funding Programs

Talbot County benefited from the FY 2012 Supplemental Appropriation for school construction projects through legislation approved by the Maryland General Assembly during the 2011 session. The State Board of Public Works approved a project for lighting and a chiller renewal project at Easton High School under this program. TCPS has no State-owned relocatable classrooms, and therefore has not used the PSCP Relocatable Repair Fund. Likewise, the school system has not used funds in the State Emergency Repair Fund, which pays for repair costs resulting from emergency events that are not covered by insurance.

¹⁸ IAC, "Built To Learn Program and Allocations Approved by the Interagency Commission on School Construction," December 1, 2021, found at https://iac.mdschoolconstruction.org/?page_id=3981, P. 6

I. GOALS, STANDARDS, POLICIES AND GUIDELINES

General Overview

Composition of the Board of Education

Talbot County has a Board of Education composed of seven fully elected members, with two non-voting student members who each serve for a one-year term.¹⁹ The Superintendent serves as the secretary-treasurer of the Board. The Board generally holds one regular meeting on the third Wednesday of each month, usually at 7:00 p.m. Special sessions are held and changes to the above schedule are made as needed.

Authority of the Board of Education

The Board of Education is authorized by law to “[m]aintain throughout [the] county a reasonably uniform system of public schools that is designed to provide quality education and equal educational opportunity for all children; to “determine, with the advice of the county superintendent, the educational policies of the county school system;” and to “[a]dopt, codify, and make available to the public bylaws, rules, and regulations not inconsistent with State law, for the conduct and management of the county public schools.”²⁰

School policies relate to enrollment, budget, program of studies, and other subjects. The Superintendent, with the assistance of the professional school system staff, is responsible for the implementation of the policies. All policies of the Board are codified in the Policies and in the *Talbot County Board of Education Handbook*, both available on the Board website at <http://www.tcps.k12.md.us>.

Board of Education: General Mission and Goals

The three major areas of responsibility of the Board are school policy, school budget, and school property. To meet these obligations, the Board of Education has the responsibility to establish a strategic plan, consisting of a mission statement, beliefs, goals, objectives, and strategies for implementation.

Mission Statement

The Talbot County Board of Education remains committed to being an outcomes-based educational organization dedicated to the following mission: “Every Student Graduates College and Career Ready”.²¹

School System Beliefs

Talbot County Public Schools has set forth the following beliefs, which guide all school system administrators, teachers, and support staff as they approach each student and perform their duties to provide for the highest level of effective and efficient delivery of educational programs and services.

- All students can achieve when they are effectively taught how to learn and held to high expectations.
- TCPS staff must demonstrate they have the passion, the will, and the skill needed to ensure racial disparities are eliminated.
- Educational equity is a professional, personal, and moral obligation.
- Partnership between schools and parents can have a positive impact on student achievement.

¹⁹ During the 2016 session the Maryland General Assembly passed Senate Bill 16, adding a second student member to the school board so that each of the two high schools in Talbot County has a student representative.

²⁰ Talbot County Public Schools Policy Code 2.2 (Adopted: 06/14/89; Reviewed: 06/28/10); Annotated Code of Maryland 1957, Art. 77, SS 40, 41; 1978, Ch. 22, SS 2

²¹ *Talbot County Board of Education Handbook*, page 3.

Educational Goals and Objectives

In the spirit of its mission, the Talbot County Public Schools establishes the following profile of a graduate. These characteristics are not the sole responsibility of the high schools. Rather, they are the product of educating the whole child throughout the school experience (PK-12).

A graduate of Talbot County Public Schools will have the academic skills, social disposition, and personal confidence to:

1. *Continue to learn* throughout adult life, both in formal academic settings and in personal pursuit of new knowledge.
2. *Contribute productively to the workforce*, both independently and collaboratively, demonstrating dependability, adaptability, and integrity.
3. *Communicate effectively* in a broad range of settings and purposes through the use of appropriate oral, written, and technological skills.
4. *Participate in society* as an informed citizen with a sense of responsibility and service in a nation and world impacted by social, economic, and environmental decisions.
5. *Respect individuals and groups* of diverse cultural, religious, and ethnic backgrounds, while maintaining a sense of self and pride in one's own heritage.
6. *Assume responsibility* for decisions regarding self, personal relationships, finances, and wellness.
7. *Solve problems* through research and analysis of relevant information, and by the application of creative and critical thinking.
8. *Appreciate the arts* in a well-rounded life, through performance, creative expression, and aesthetic values.

School System Operating and Capital Budgets

The school system's operating budget is approved annually by the Board to fund the public school system's programs and services. The budget is based on the educational needs of the system and is prepared by the Superintendent. The Board-approved operating budget is submitted to the Talbot County Council for approval.

School construction and other capital projects are included in the annual Board of Education Capital Improvement Program (CIP). The general schedule for preparation and approval of the annual capital program is as follows (specific dates for State submissions for the FY 2024 capital budget will be issued in July 2022). In the 2018 session, legislation was approved that withdrew the authority to approve planning and project allocations from the Board of Public Works and assigned it to a new Interagency Commission on School Construction, which replaced the former Interagency Committee on School Construction.²² The schedule for submission of planning and funding requests and for approvals by the IAC is largely similar to the former schedule.

Summer:	LEA Superintendent and staff may meet with IAC staff to discuss prominent upcoming projects.
June:	Board of Education approves Educational Facilities Master Plan (EFMP).
August:	Board of Education approves Comprehensive Maintenance Plan (CMP).
September:	Board of Education approves Capital Improvement Plan (CIP).

²² HB 151 (Chapter 22, Laws of 2017).

October:	CIP is submitted to State for review and approval; LEA staff meets with IAC staff.
October:	County Government approves capital budget.
November:	IAC staff indicates projects that will be recommended in the CIP.
December:	IAC hearing on LEA requests; IAC reviews staff recommendations and considers preliminary CIP approvals.
January	IAC approves first round of CIP projects.
February:	IAC reviews staff recommendations and provides information on interim CIP recommendations as well as the likely final allocations.
May:	IAC approves final CIP projects; IAC also approves Aging Schools Program (ASP) allocations.

Projects in the local capital improvement plan may be locally funded, may be funded through a combination of State and local funds (e.g. CIP), or may be funded entirely by the State (e.g. ASP). For projects that are eligible for State funding participation, the CIP for the budget year is submitted in October of the preceding year to the Interagency Commission; ASP projects are typically submitted in the spring of the budget year. The CIP request to the State must be supported by the County government.

Projects requested of the State must be in substantial agreement with the Educational Facilities Master Plan. Therefore, this FY 2025 EFMP will provide orientation for project requests in the FY 2026 CIP to be submitted in autumn 2024, and for the FY 2025 ASP request to be submitted in the spring of 2025.

School properties, a principal concern of this Educational Facilities Master Plan, are the responsibility of the Board. The Board is the trustee for all public school buildings and lands. Acquisition of new properties by the Board of Education must be approved by the IAC, and disposal of properties must be approved by the Board of Public Works on the recommendation of the IAC.

Strive For 2025 – Talbot County Public Schools Strategic Plan

Strategic Planning Process

Strategic planning has been developed in cooperation with parents, faculty, administrators, support staff and community/business members. *Strive For 2025*, the more recent plan, built upon what was learned in the implementation of *2020 Vision* and having achieved results that exceeded expectations.

Strategic Plan Goals, Outcomes, and Actions

Goals are set in three different areas:

1. Staffing

- Goal 1.1 TCPS will have a highly qualified and diverse workforce.
- Goal 1.2 TCPS will identify, train, and promote high quality staff.

2. Academic Equity and Achievement

- Goal 2.1 TCPS staff and leadership will enact institutional practices, policies, and procedures that equitably serve the educational needs of all students.
- Goal 2.2 All TCPS students will have equitable access to high quality and culturally relevant instruction, curriculum, and support.

3. Social and Emotional Learning

- Goal 3.1 All TCPS students will have access to information, interventions, and support to meet their social and emotional learning needs.
- Goal 3.2 TCPS will make social and emotional learning a priority. All students will engage in high quality prevention (PreK through grade 12)

Educational facility planning is connected to all of the goals indirectly, but successful implementation of Goal 2.2 depends upon quality facilities. The construction of the replacement Easton Elementary School, completed for the 2020-2021 school year, and the upcoming renovation and addition to Chapel District Elementary School contribute to Goal 2.2. These schools are designed to be flexible and efficient, incorporate new technologies, and host service providers to support both students and the community. They maximize views of the outdoors and include features to bring daylight into the heart of the building. The schools incorporate community use space and are designed to allow public use without compromise to security. Other projects mentioned in this EFMP also contribute to this goal including secured capital funding for EHS Parking Lot Resurfacing, Track Replacement, and Cafeteria Floor Replacement, as well as adding additional network cabling at St. Michael's HS, MS, and ES, Tilghman ES, and TCEC, replaced network routers in all schools, and replaced 23 Food Service checkout stations with new workstations.²³

Current projects support these goals. The White Marsh roof replacement project is in process but does not have local funding. The subsequent renovation or replacement of schools through an orderly, sequential process based on facility condition and educational priorities will ensure that Goal 2.2 continues to be met in the future.

Specific Goals and Policies

Grade Organization

The present grade organization structure has been in place since 2014, with all of the schools using the same uniform organizational structure within the school system.

Below is a summary of the grade organization for the Talbot County Public Schools. P3 is a pre-school program for students who require special education services; sessions are offered in both the morning and the afternoon at the Dobson building. Prekindergarten is offered full day at the Dobson and St. Michaels schools and half-day at White Marsh, Chapel District, and Tilghman Elementary Schools.

<u>School</u>	<u>Current Grade Organization</u>
<i>Elementary Schools:</i>	
Chapel District	PK-5
Easton	P3/PK-5
St. Michaels	PK-5
Tilghman	PK-5
White Marsh	PK-5
<i>Middle Schools:</i>	
Easton Middle	6-8

²³ TCPS FY 21 Annual Report, page 4.

Middle/High Schools:

St. Michaels 6-12

High Schools:

Easton High 9-12

Easton Elementary School was organized as a split elementary campus. The Dobson wing houses the P3 program and the primary grades PK to 1. The Moton wing houses intermediate grades 2 to 5. Exceptions in the allocation of space between the two wings occur as needed for annual grade enrollment fluctuations. This grade configuration reflects the history of the school, which until the replacement was organized as two separate buildings on a shared campus.

Tilghman Elementary and St. Michaels Elementary are the feeder schools for St. Michaels Middle/High School. Easton Elementary (Dobson and Moton), Chapel District Elementary, and White Marsh Elementary are the feeder schools for Easton Middle and Easton High Schools.

Staffing Ratios

In order to maintain flexibility in staffing and instructional programs, the Board of Education of Talbot County does not presently have a formal policy governing staffing ratios. The following are general guidelines for staffing ratios that are considered to be ideal:

- Grades PK-1 20:1 or less
- Grades 2-5 25:1 or less
- Grades 6-12 30:1 or less

Where appropriate, these general guidelines for staffing ratios will be used for facility planning purposes, with adjustments that recognize the State Public School Construction Program class size formulas that are used to determine the State Rated Capacity of each specific school (*Administrative Procedures Guide*, Appendix 102A).

School System and Changing Demographics

Talbot County Public Schools takes pride in its historical and continuous commitment to develop, establish, adopt, adapt, and/or modify educational programs and services to meet the identified needs of students and their families. There has been an ongoing process to address individual and family needs, including gifted and talented children; remedial services; teen pregnancies; single parent households; guardianships; English as a second language; students with specific learning disabilities; disruptive students; advanced placement; dual enrollment; unemployment of an adult within a family; separation, divorce, and/or death in a family; children of migrant workers; and the lack of reading materials within the home.

Although the school system’s total enrollments have remained steady, there have been considerable changes in demographics, as can be seen in [Table IV-4](#). While the demographic changes in the racial composition of the student population over the years have been modest, there have been significant increases in the Hispanic student population. Talbot County Public Schools has recognized these changes and adjusted when and where necessary to address the needs of all the students within the school system, regardless of their race or ethnic background. The Board of Education, with the support of the County Council, has authorized the expenditure of funds to enable the school administration, school principals, and staff to provide appropriate educational programs and services to meet the challenges of the changing student demographics in Talbot County.

Attendance Areas, Redistricting, and Retirement of Facilities – Policy Codes 10.4 and 10.4-AR

The Policy Codes addressing Attendance Areas, Redistricting and Retirement of Facilities were adopted on December 19, 2007 and reviewed on July 21, 2010. The policy indicates that the responsibilities of the Board to provide high quality learning environments for public school students will be achieved through the facilities planning process.

Attendance Areas

The locations of the eight current school facilities and their attendance areas, including the new Easton Elementary School, are shown on the following maps. Map 1 shows the location of all schools in the system. Maps 2 and 3 show the attendance areas of the elementary schools and of the middle and high schools, respectively. Map 2 reflects the decision of the Board of Education on February 21, 2018, to re-district an area south of the Town of Easton to Easton Elementary School. The redistricting went into effect for the 2020-2021 school year.²⁴ As presented by the Easton and White Marsh Elementary Schools Redistricting Evaluation Committee, this action was intended to alleviate overcrowding at White Marsh Elementary School, balance class size and staff at both campuses to ensure equity, maximize current resources and services, before and after school; and decrease transportation costs.²⁵

Maps 4 through 8 show the attendance area and location of each of the five elementary school facilities. Maps 9 through 11 show the location and attendance areas of Easton Middle School, Easton High School, and St. Michael's Middle/High School.

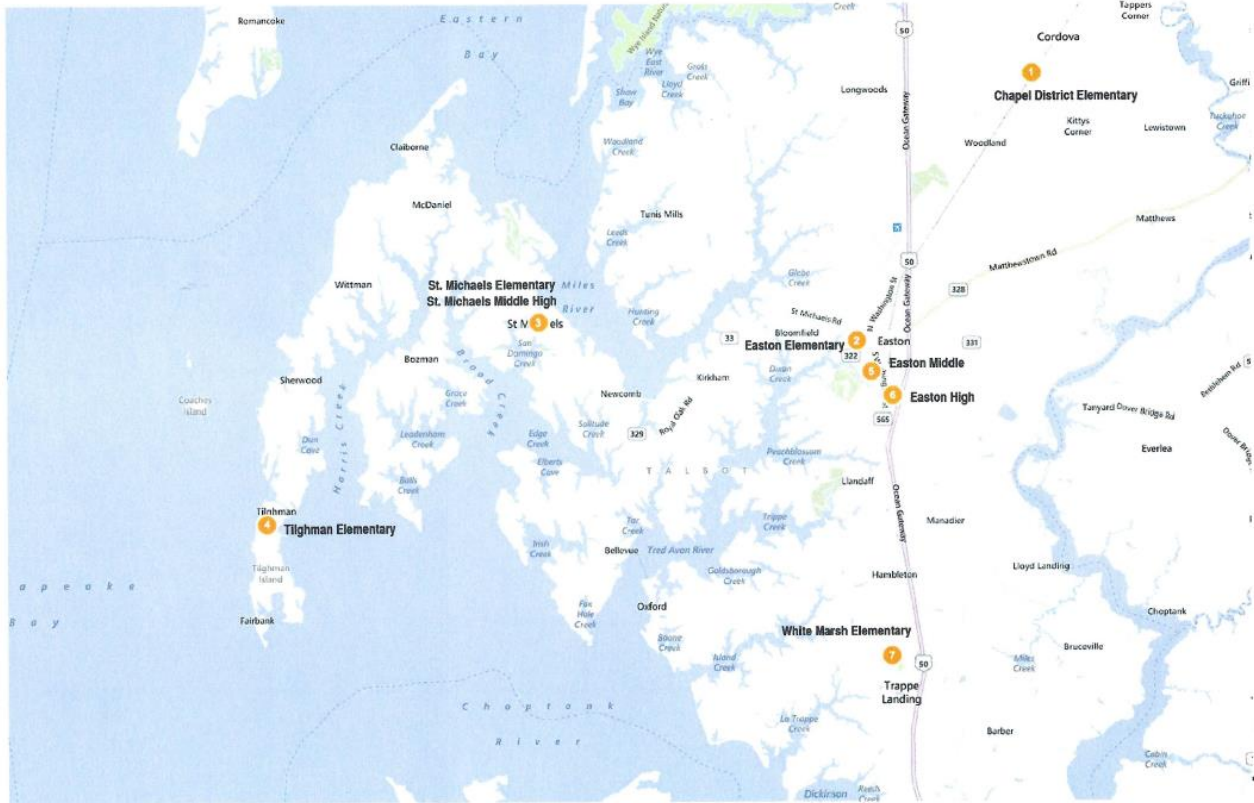
The maps show that Talbot County has geographical limitations which restrict the flexibility of the Board to adjust school district boundaries. The western area of the County consists of peninsulas with limited access to the remainder of the County. For example, the Tilghman area is connected by a single road approximately 20 miles long that runs from Tilghman Island through St. Michaels to Easton. Similar access limitations affect other parts of Talbot County. Geography and water barriers can severely restrict the ability of the Board to make adjustments among a number of the school attendance areas.

Tilghman Elementary School

In the face of significant under-utilization of the Tilghman Elementary school facility, rather than close the school and consolidate it with St. Michaels Elementary, the Board chose to allow open enrollment to students from the entire county and monitor the effect of this program on the utilization of the facility. Pending further action by the Board of Education, the attendance boundaries of Tilghman Elementary will remain as shown on [Map I-7](#). Other options, including redistricting and a magnet/charter school initiative, are not being considered as viable methods to increase enrollment.

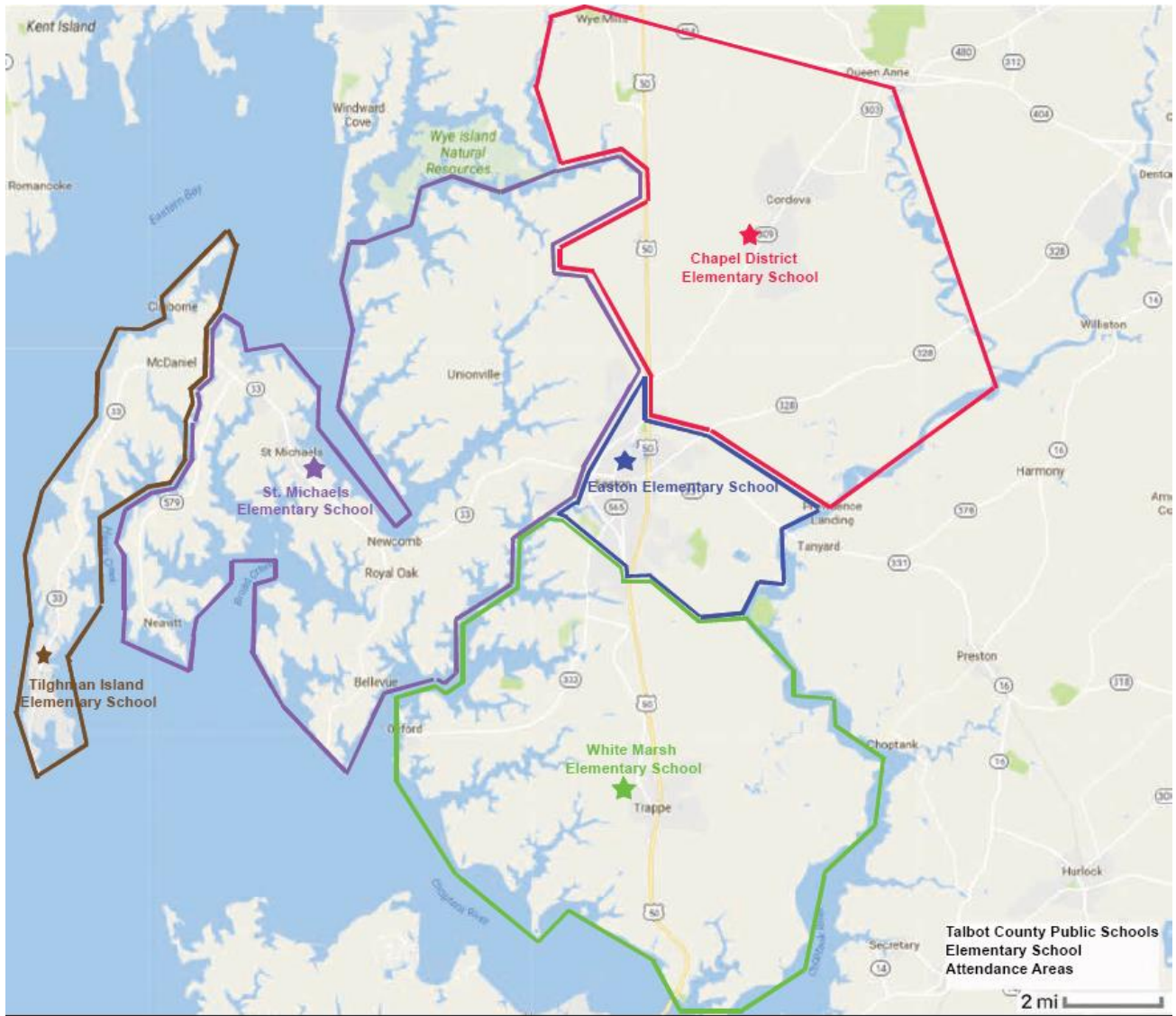
²⁴ The enrollment projections for both Easton Elementary School and White Marsh Elementary School in Section IV are based on the redistricted attendance areas.

²⁵ Easton and White Marsh Elementary Schools Redistricting Evaluation Committee, Recommendation for Redistricting, December 20, 2017.

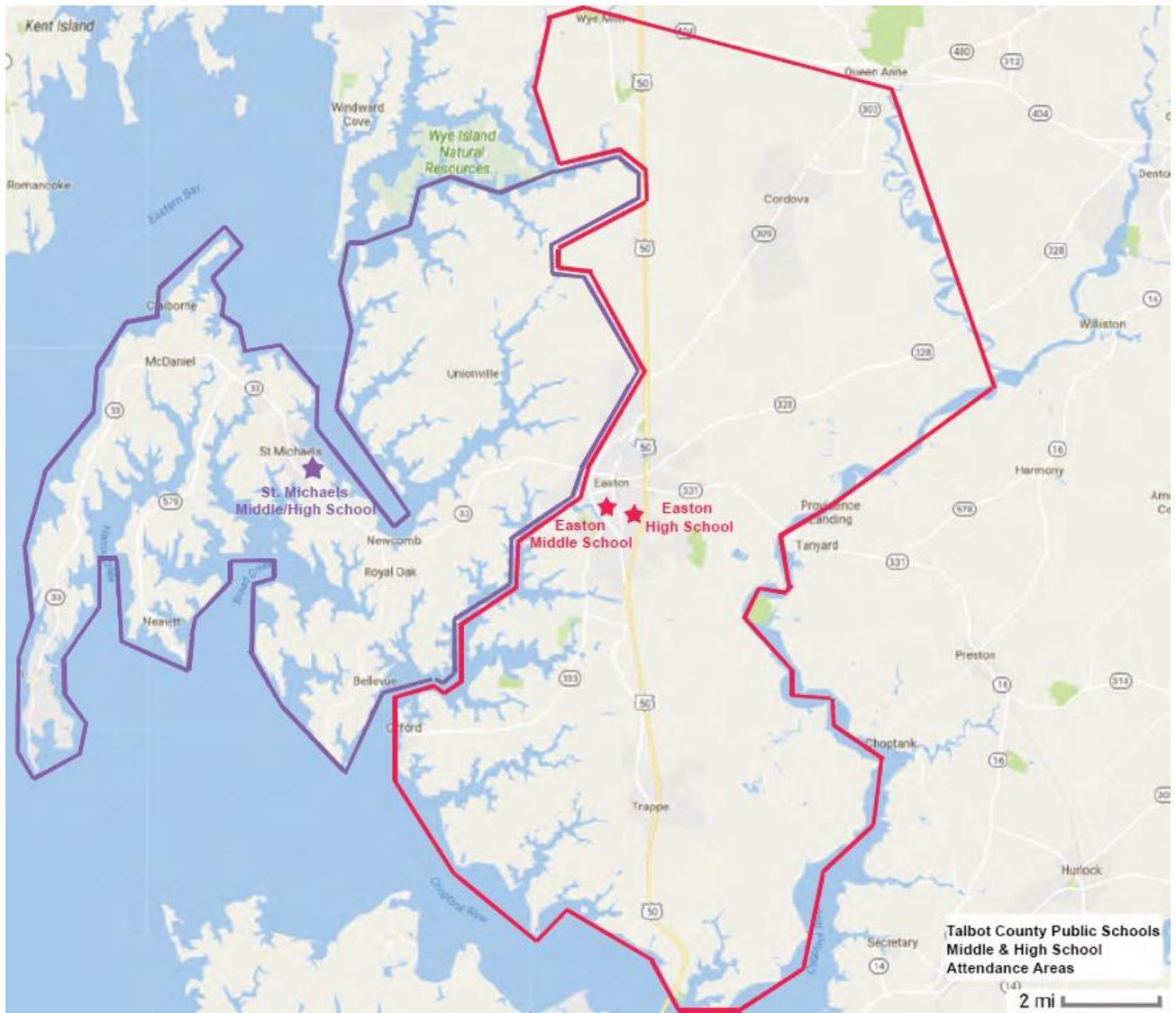


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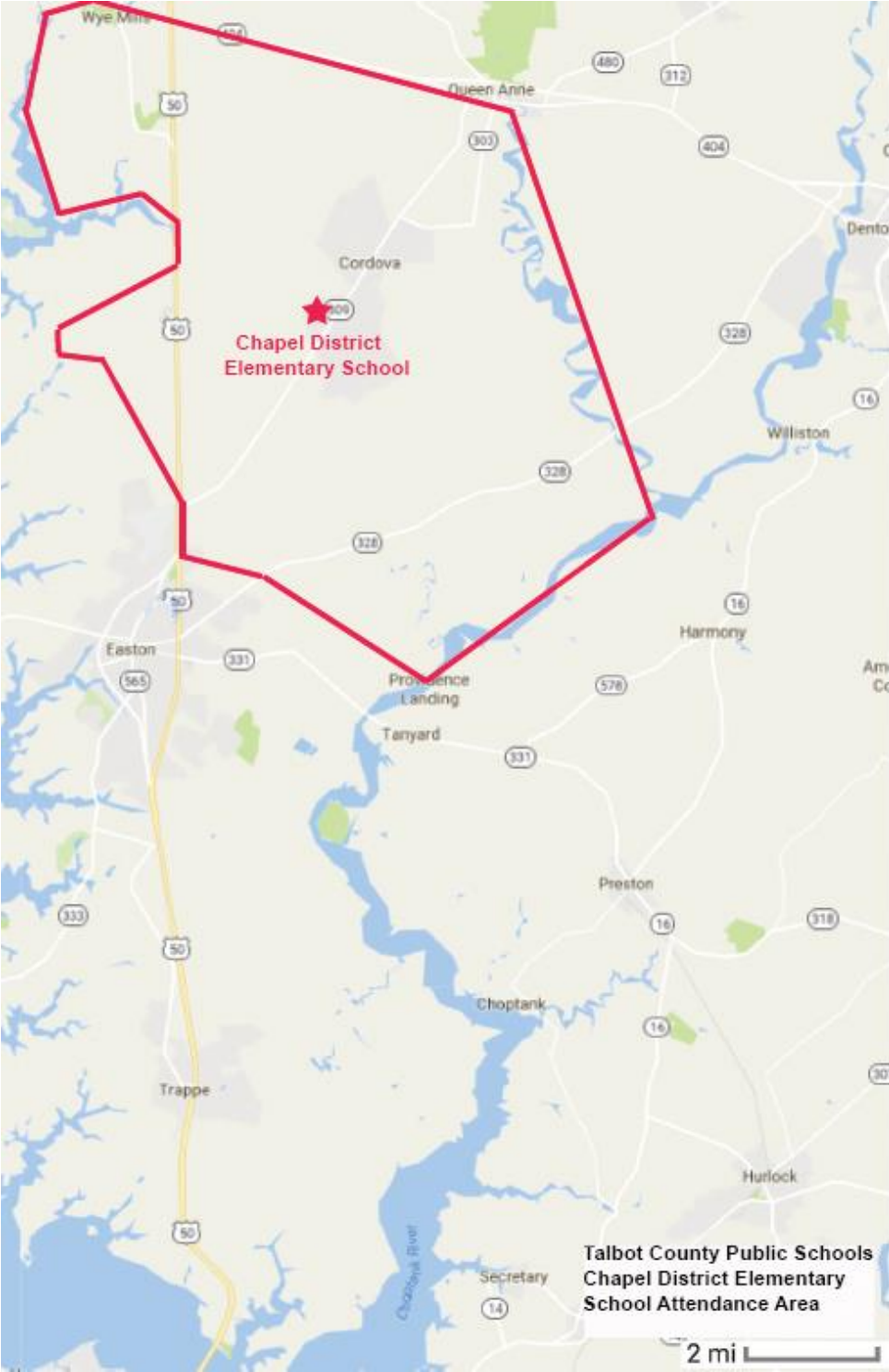
**Map I-1: School Locations
NOT TO SCALE**



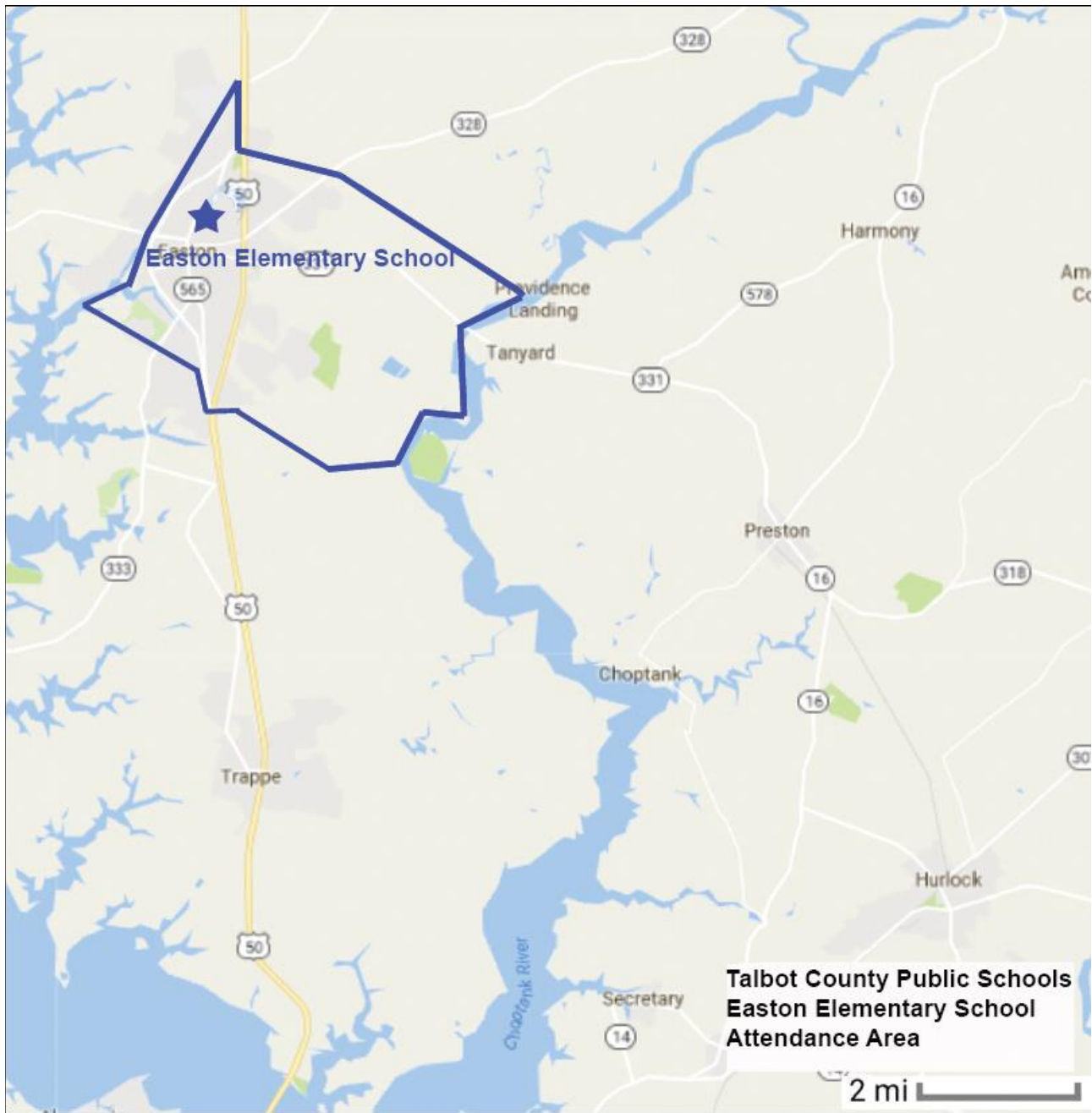
**Map I-2: Elementary School Attendance Areas
NOT TO SCALE**



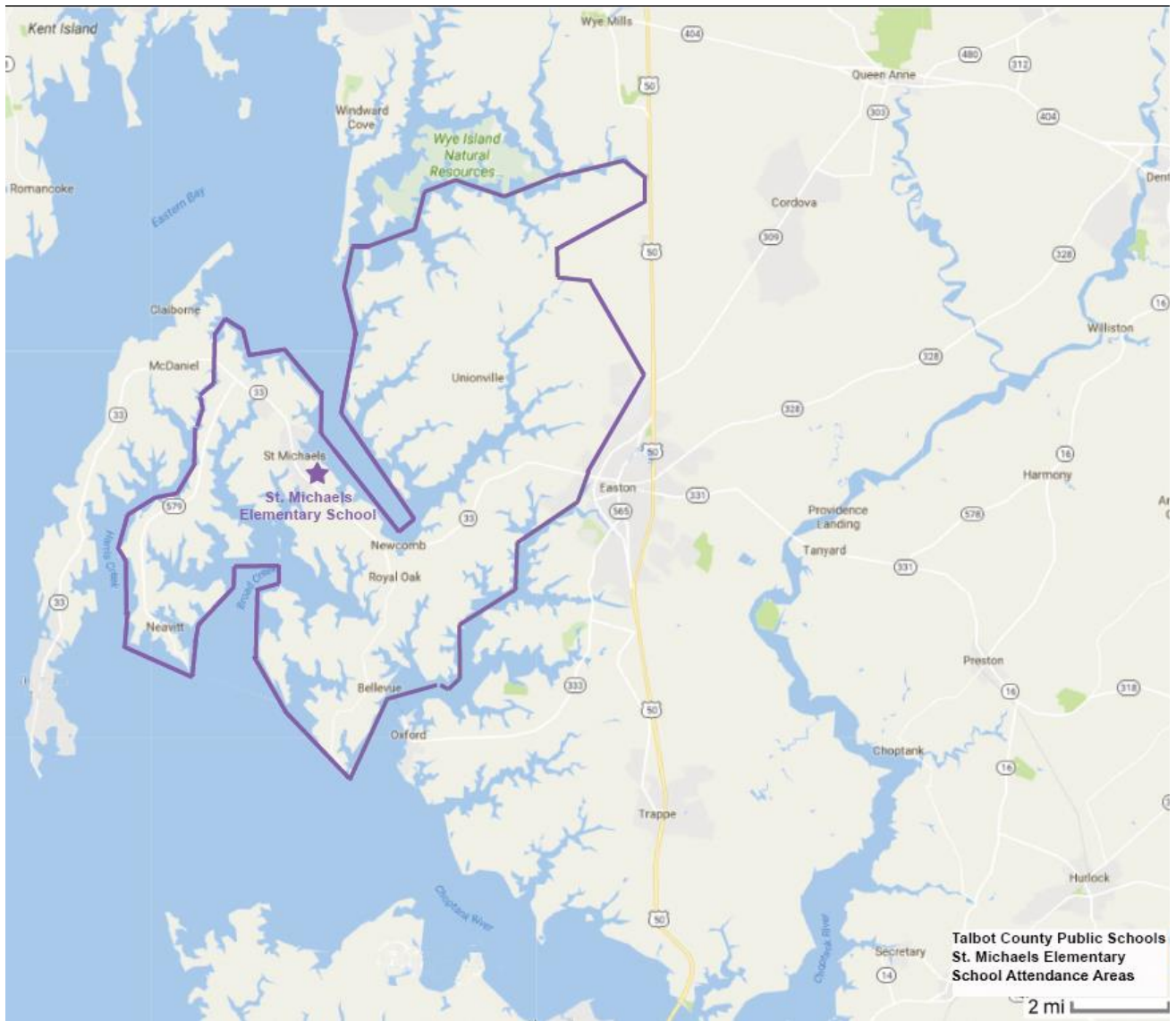
**Map I-3: Middle and High School Attendance Areas
NOT TO SCALE**



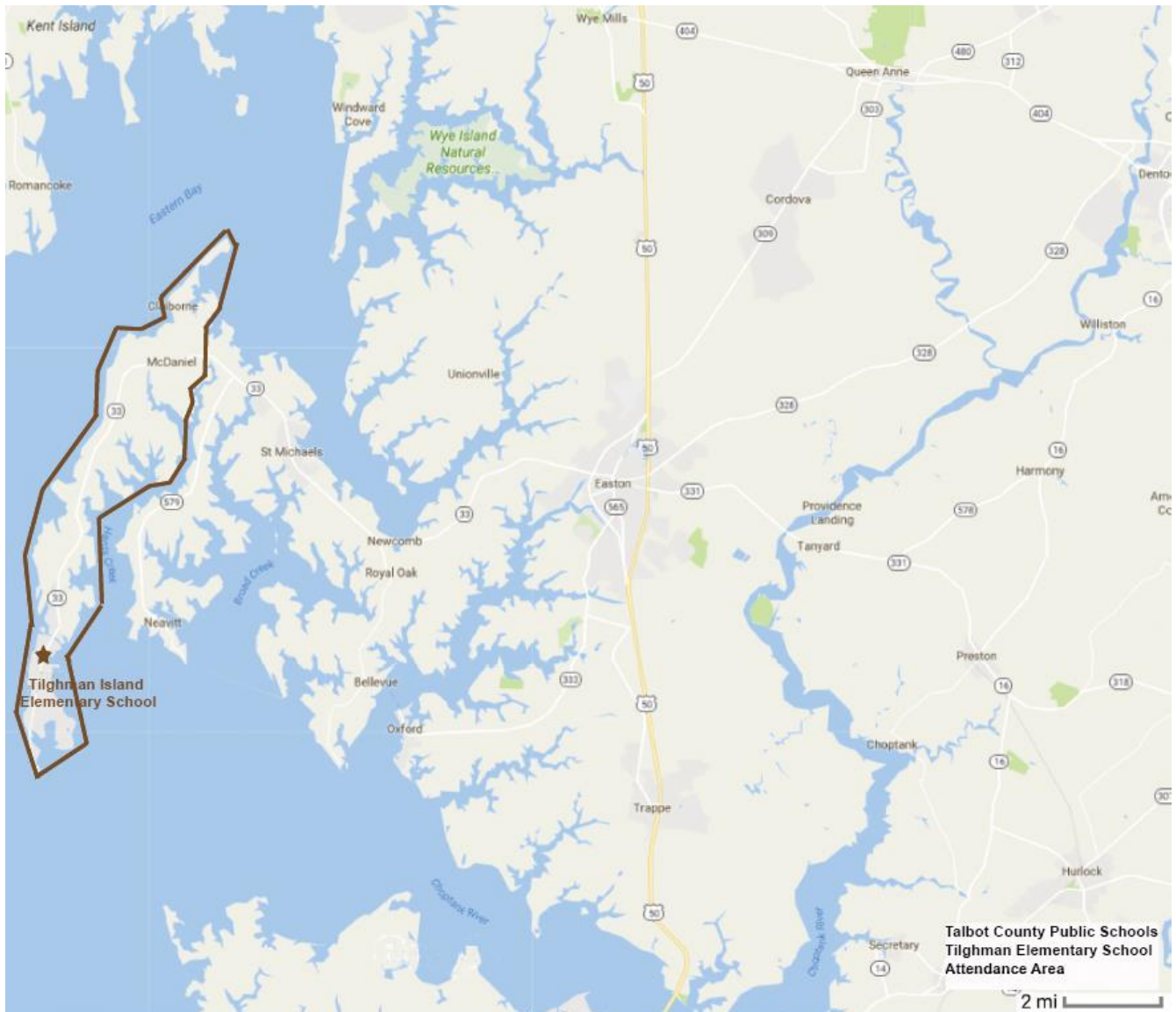
**Map I-4: Chapel District Elementary School Attendance Area
NOT TO SCALE**



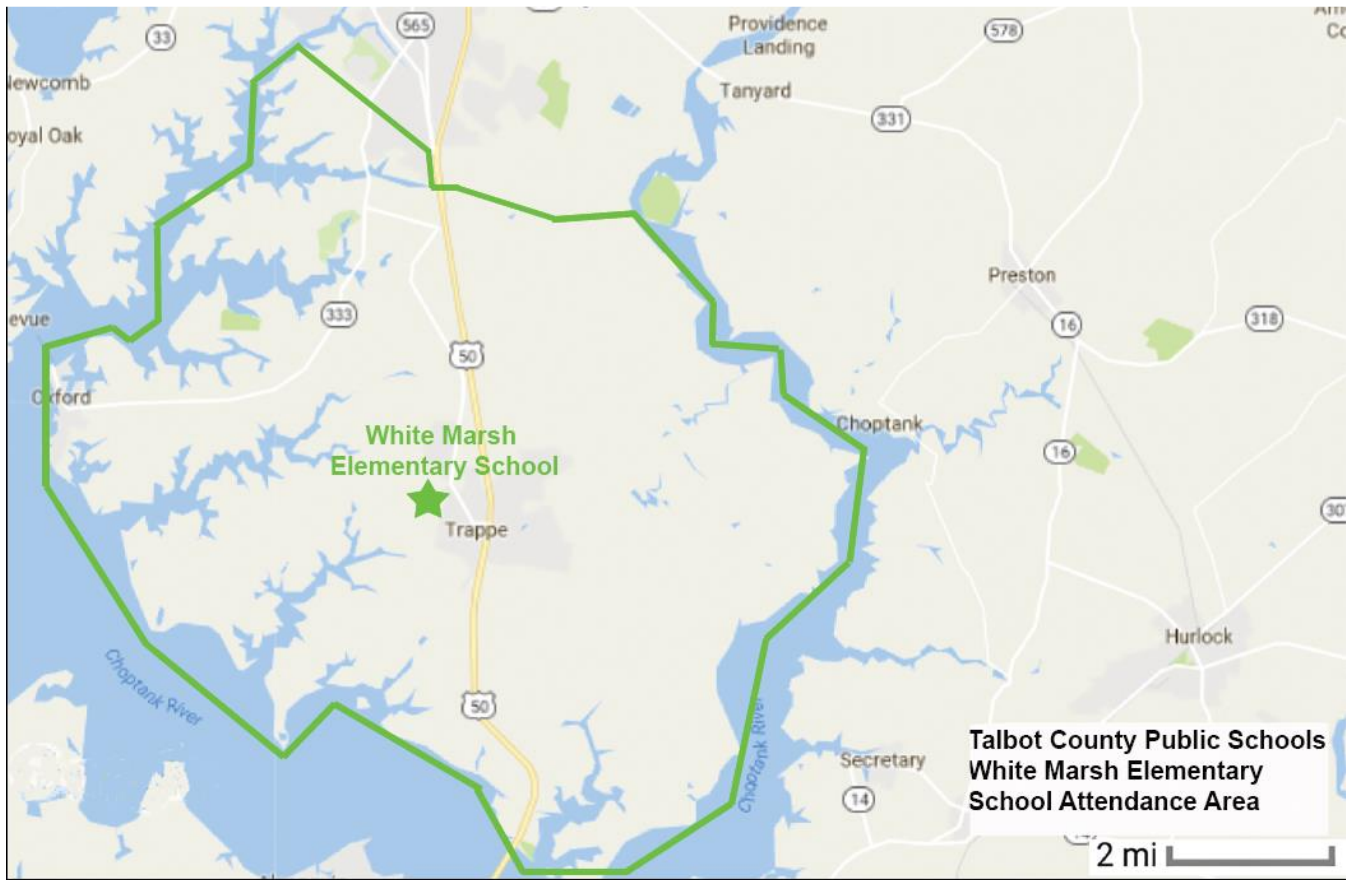
**Map I-5: Easton Elementary School Attendance Area
NOT TO SCALE**



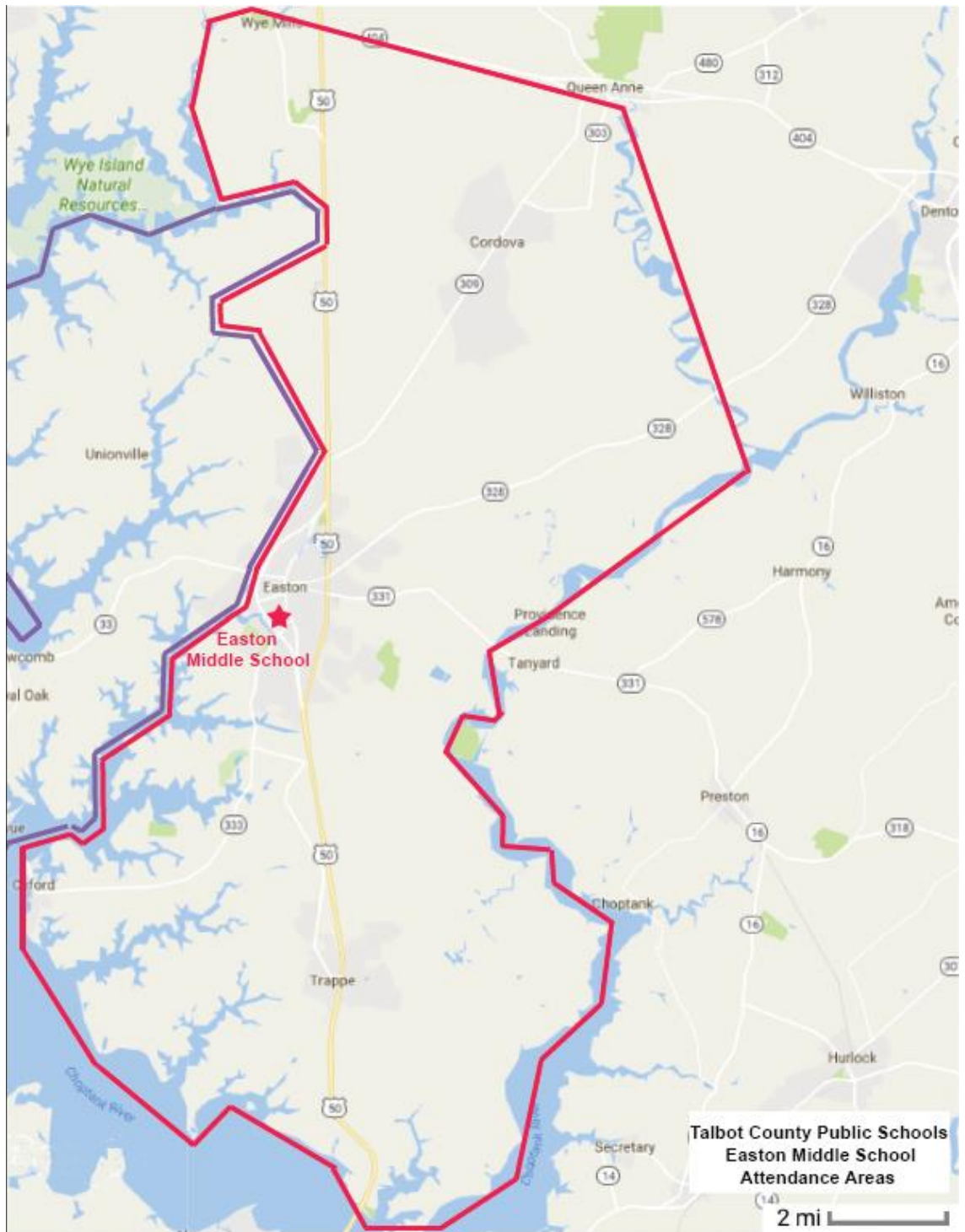
**Map I-6: St. Michaels Elementary School Attendance Area
NOT TO SCALE**



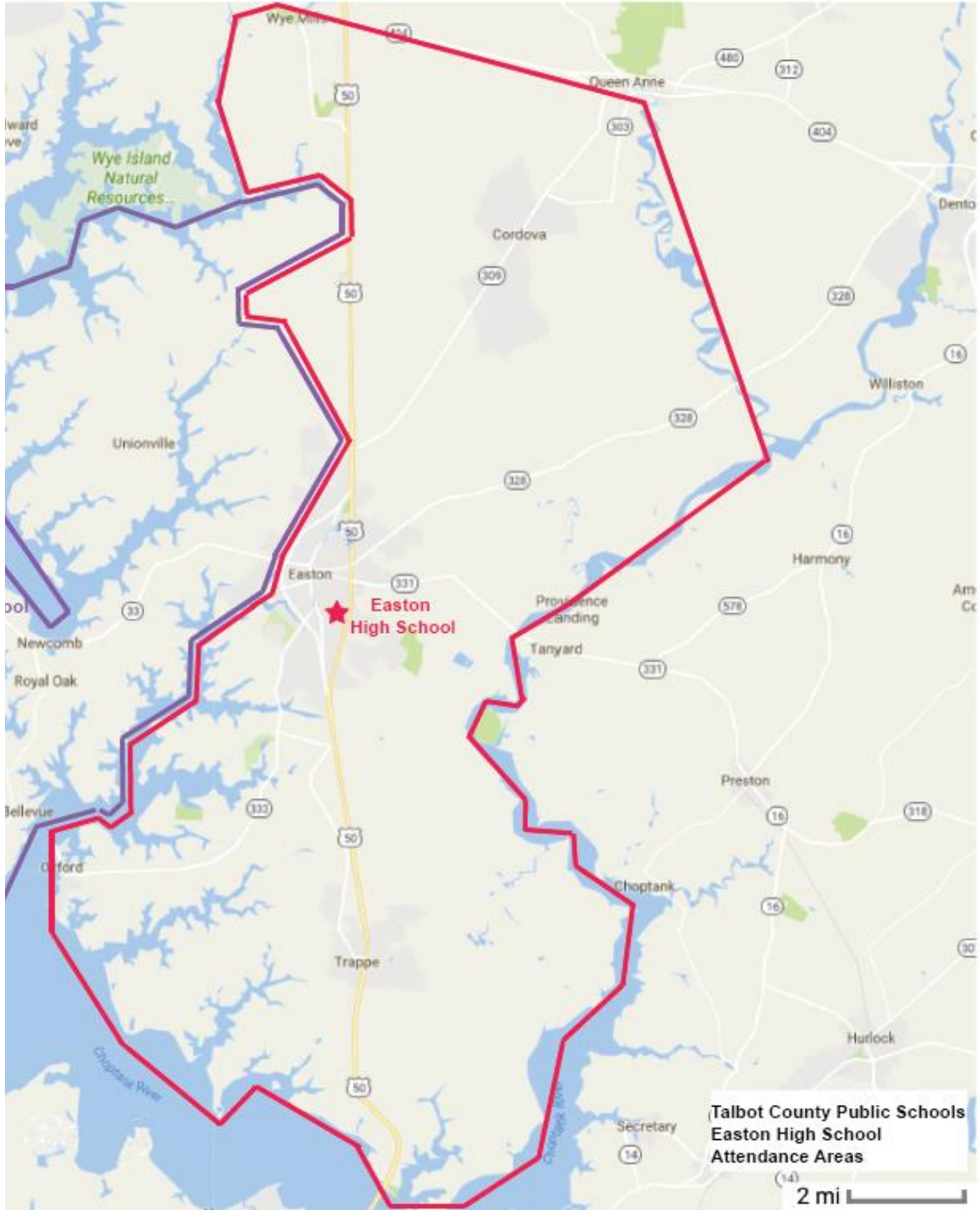
**Map I-7: Tilghman Elementary School Attendance Area
NOT TO SCALE**



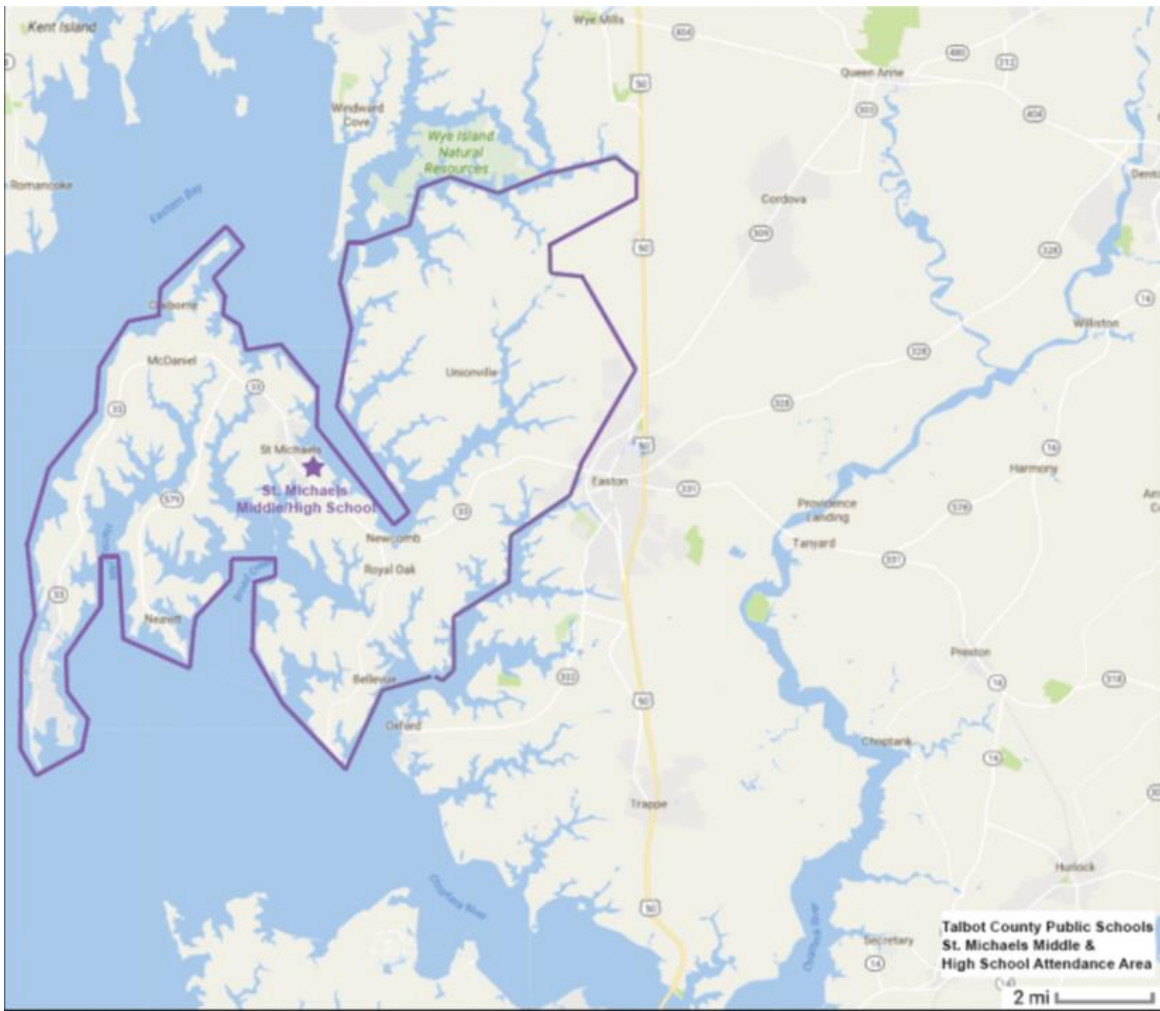
**Map I-8: White Marsh Elementary School Attendance Area
NOT TO SCALE**



**Map I-9: Easton Middle School Attendance Area
 NOT TO SCALE**



**Map I-10: Easton High School Attendance Area
NOT TO SCALE**



**Map I-11: St. Michaels Middle/High School Attendance Area
NOT TO SCALE**

Amendments to Attendance Areas

No changes of attendance areas have been required since 2017.

Out of Attendance Enrollment

Talbot County Public Schools allows parents or guardians to request that their student(s) attend a school other than the designated attendance area school. A request for an out-of-area transfer must be made annually and is subject to review and approval. Talbot County Public School staff members are allowed to enroll their children in the school where the staff member works, subject to approval and only if there is available capacity at the receiving school. Parents of out-of-area students are responsible for providing all of their children's school transportation and childcare needs beyond those already available to all Talbot County students.

The number of out-of-area requests has fluctuated over the years. The table below shows the out-of-area transfers approved. These changes impact projected enrollments. Out-of-area transfers were highest in 2020-2021 at 416, which seems to correspond with Covid 19 impacts. Otherwise the numbers in recent years seem to have stabilized.

Table I-1: Out-Of- Area Transfer Students

	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024
Staff	95	100	90	109	75	119	102	79	111	135
Others	143	198	156	207	265	272	314	283	260	282
Total	238	298	246	316	340	391	416	362	360	417

Special Education

The Talbot County Board of Education provides an educational program to meet the needs of students with disabilities, birth through the age of 21, whose disabling conditions adversely affect their educational performances, in compliance with regulations and laws under P.L. 101-476 (IDEA, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 2004) and COMAR 13A.05.01. As of October 2023, the special education population consisted of 536 students in all disability categories, or 11.8% of the total PK-12 public school population of Talbot County. This percentage has increased slightly since 2007, when it was at 9%. The peak occurred in 1996 at 581 students, or 13.1% of PK-12 enrollment.

TCPS is committed to and capable of providing special educational services in the least restrictive environment. The Talbot County Board of Education has adopted an inclusion model of service delivery for students in Prekindergarten through grade 12. The secondary education inclusion program promotes social skills growth for students with moderate and severe disabilities. Related services are provided to students, pursuant to their Individual Educational Program (IEP), through the Family Support & Resource Center in the regular education and special education settings. The school system continues to operate a full continuum of service options for students with disabilities.

For many years, Talbot County has offered an early childhood special education program (P3) at the Easton Elementary – Dobson School building. The P-3 program is no longer offered at St. Michaels Elementary School. The P-3 program currently serves 17 students (FTE). These programs enroll students who are identified as needing special education services at age three; an equal number of non-qualifying students are also enrolled.

Most special education programs will function effectively in regular sized age-appropriate classrooms that can be used interchangeably with other program needs in the schedule. Plans for new construction and/or renovations will be carefully monitored to ensure that these facilities are designed to accommodate the needs of students with disabilities. A continued growth in the number of students with autism may require the creation of additional self-contained classrooms. The special education parent center, called the Family Support & Resource Center, is located at the Talbot County Education Center.

Career and Technical Education – Policy Codes 9.3 and 9.3-AR

The goal of the Talbot County Public Schools is that all Talbot County graduates be prepared to enter post-secondary education and/or training, employment, or both. The Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs are important ways to meet this goal. TCPS notes that the number of CTE completers has decreased from 161 in the class of 2016 to 153 in the class of 2021 and 142 currently, and that Computer Science, Integrated Manufacturing, and Middle School PLTW courses have been added.²⁶

Today's Career and Technical Education programs incorporate rigorous and challenging academic content standards and provide a sequence of courses leading to an industry-recognized credential or certificate, to an associate or baccalaureate degree, or to entry into apprenticeship programs. Maryland is one of the nation's leading states in the design of CTE programs, linking CTE to a solid academic core that prepares students to be college and career ready. The Counseling and Advisory Program, a guidance model, includes meeting individually with students on a regular basis from the spring of their 8th grade year through the spring of their senior year.

All programs are available to students through the Cross Campus and Cross County Programs. Two programs are currently offered only at the St. Michaels Middle/High School campus, four programs are offered only at the Easton High School campus, five programs are offered at both campuses, and two programs are offered at locations outside of the county. Students attend the Career and Technology Center in Caroline County for

²⁶ TCPS email communications, March 17, 2022 and May 8, 2023.

Careers in Cosmetology, and students attend the Upper Eastern Shore Regional Training Center of the Maryland Fire and Rescue Institute (MFRI) in Centreville, Maryland, for the EMT/Firefighter programs.

Table I-2: Career and Technical Education (CTE) Programs

Program	Year Added/ Revised	Industry Certifi- cation	Tran- scripted Credit	Articula- tion Agree- ment	Offered at:
Automotive Technology - NATEF	2003-2004	√		√	EHS
Pre-Engineering - PLTW ²⁷	2003-2004		√		EHS/ SMHS ²⁸
Teacher Education Academy	2005-2006	√	√	√	SMHS
Firefighter and Emergency Medical Responder	2006-2007	√		√	Centreville, QA Co.
Culinary Arts – ACF	2008-2009	√		√	EHS
Interactive Multimedia Production	2008-2009	√		√	EHS/ SMHS
Biomedical Science - PLTW ¹⁴	2010-2011		√		EHS/ SMHS
Construction Trade Profession – Carpentry	2012-2013	√			SMHS
Curriculum for Agricultural Science	2012-2013		√	√	EHS
Marketing	2015-2016		√	√	EHS
Careers in Cosmetology	2015-2016	√			Caroline Co.
Computer Science	2015-2016		√		EHS
Apprenticeships Maryland Program	2018-2019	√			EHS/SMHS
Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) Program	2021-2022	√	√		EHS
Navy Junior Reserve Officers Training Corps (NJROTC)	2021-2022	√			EHS

Alternative Education – Policy Code 9.8

The Alternative Learning Academy (ALA) supports students with academic or behavioral needs. Working in a smaller instructional environment with more adult supervision, the staff draws out the student’s strengths to develop skills to successfully transition back to the home school. Tier 1 of the ALA, located at Easton High School, is a full day program in which students can also attend regular classes. Tier 2, located at the Board of Education site, involves a shortened school day and addresses more complex behaviors. In a typical year, enrollment fluctuates but averages 10 to 20 students during the day and 20 to 30 students in the evening. The capacity of the ALA facility appears to be adequate for the foreseeable future.

Assignment of a student to the ALA begins with a referral because of an expulsion recommendation or a need for credit recovery. In the intake process, a team of student service providers, behavioral specialists, and teachers coordinate to establish an individualized plan for success. Each student’s academic progress is monitored and reported to the home school and the parent. Grades earned while at the ALA are incorporated with grades from the student’s home school. Students in ALA whose grades and behavior do not indicate they will succeed at their home school may remain in ALA, opt to transfer to home instruction, or may be expelled, depending upon circumstances.

²⁷ Project Lead the Way

²⁸ The first two courses in the sequence are offered at St. Michaels Middle/High School. All four courses are offered at Easton High School.

Checkmate Program

The Checkmate Program provides an alternative to out-of-school suspension, in which students can continue to receive educational services in lieu of remaining at home with no educational services. The Checkmate-Out program provides education in the same trailer at the Board of Education office that is used for the ALA program. Each of the three secondary schools may send up to three students to the Checkmate-Out program daily, for a maximum of nine (9) students.⁷

Busing and Transportation – Policy Codes 5.9 and 5.9-AR

Policies and regulations for busing and transportation adopted by the Talbot County Board of Education have been in effect since 1998. Subject areas covered by these regulations include drivers, passengers, who may be transported, buses and equipment, workmen’s compensation, school administrators’ responsibilities, transportation of non-public school children, and student cars and parking.

Talbot County is a rural county where most students live in areas that require bus transportation to and from school. The TCPS minimum walking distance standard are as follows:

Kindergarten	0.5 miles
Grades 1-8	1.0 miles
Grades 9-12	1.5 miles

Table I-3: Walkers, by School – 2022-2023

School Name	9/30/2023 Enrollment (Head Count)	# walkers	% walkers
Chapel District Elem.	355	0	0%
Easton Elem.	1,082	78	7.2%
Tilghman Elem.	90	2	2.2%
White Marsh Elem.	278	14	5.0%
Easton Middle	711	68	9.6%
St. Michaels Elem/Middle/High	453	33	4.2%
Easton High	1210	111	9.2%
Total	4,514	306	6.7%

Use of Buildings and Grounds – Policy Codes 11.2 and 11.2-AR

The use of public school facilities for community purposes is encouraged by the Talbot County Board of Education. The Board permits the use of public school facilities for presentation and discussion of public questions, public speaking, lectures, or for other civic, educational, social, recreational, or church affiliated civic purposes. The Board also sets reimbursement fees. Application is made to the Superintendent of Schools with a process for verifying non-profit intent, certificate of insurance, and adequate supervision, The gatherings or meetings must be open to the public. Local and COMAR regulations must be followed.

Childcare – Policy Code 11.4

The Board of Education has adopted Policy 11.4 Community Use of School Facilities – Child Care to address the need for childcare facilities in the county. Talbot County has provided space for the Critchlow Atkins Childcare Centers (CACC) to operate before and after school programs in elementary school cafeterias. They have also provided classroom space for Head Start programs at several elementary schools. The table below shows the number of rooms and/or students enrolled in these programs. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, attendance in all of the childcare programs has been reduced.

Table I-4: Childcare Programs

School	CACC Program in cafeteria (before/after) Students	CACC Program – Day Program Students/Rooms	Head Start Program Rooms	Head Start Program Students
Chapel District Elem.	29 AM/ 29 PM (cafeteria)	18 (1 classroom)	0	0
Easton Elem.	0	0 (all day)	3	8
St. Michaels Elem.	0	24 (all day - 2 classrooms)	1	0 (10 are needed for a viable program)
White Marsh Elem.	17AM/ 17 PM (in relocatable)	13 (all day – in relocatable)	0	0

Selection of School Sites

The Talbot County Board of Education has not needed to acquire a site for a new school in over thirty years. Because of Talbot County’s overall current population, population projections, the types of typical residential units being built, the general occupancies of these units, and the number of residential units that have been approved each year, there does not appear to be a need for a new school in the foreseeable future. The replacement Easton Elementary School provides sufficient capacity to prevent the over-utilization of the school, as well as of White Marsh Elementary and Chapel District Elementary Schools.

If the need for a new school should arise, the Board is committed to following the site selection procedures that are specified in the State of Maryland Regulations for the Administration of the Public School Construction Program (COMAR 14.39.02.12 – Site Selection) and the PSCP *Administrative Procedures Guide* Section 104 – School Site Approval, and to working with the Maryland Department of Planning. The Board and the administrative staff recognize the importance of schools in maintaining communities and neighborhoods. The staff works closely with the Talbot County Department of Planning and Zoning to monitor residential development and changes in residential patterns to keep abreast of any potential impact they may have on public school enrollments. The school system staff is also in contact with the planning personnel in the five (5) incorporated towns in Talbot County.

Each of the eight (8) public school buildings is located in a Priority Funding Area (PFA). If an additional school site is required in the future, the Talbot County Board of Education is committed to selecting a site within a PFA, as required under COMAR 14.39.02.12 and 14.39.02.29.

While it is not anticipated that there will be a need for a new school site in the foreseeable future, a study conducted in the fall of 2021 of the impact of three housing developments indicates that additions may be needed at Easton Elementary School and Easton High School. These potential increases are discussed more fully in Section II

Charter Schools – Policy Codes 9.9 and 9.9-AR

The Talbot County Board of Education on February 13, 2013 approved a policy that will enable individuals or groups to apply to the Board of Education if they desire to obtain approval to operate a Charter School in Talbot County. The policy sets forth the procedures that must be followed by the applicant. As of this date, no applications have been received for approval of a charter school in Talbot County.

II. COMMUNITY ANALYSIS

Historical Population Data

Population Changes to 2020. The historical population data for Talbot County provides a picture of relatively slow but consistent growth dating back to 1930 (Tables II-1 and II-2). The census data shows that the County grew from a population of 18,583 in 1930 to 37,526 in 2020, an increase of 18,943 or 101.9 percent over the 90-year period. The data is provided by election district. The Easton district grew at the most significant rate, from 7,020 in 1930 to 22,235 in 2020, or over 200 percent. Prior to the 2020 census, the only election district that showed a decline during the 80 year period from 1930 to 2010 was Bay Hundred (Tilghman Island), which dropped from 2,267 in 1930 to 1,922 in 2010.

In contrast, in the decade between 2010 and 2020, all of the districts except Easton experienced some reduction in population (Tables II-1 and II-2). Data from the recent 2020 census released in September 2021 indicates that between 2010 and 2020 the total population of Talbot County decreased from 37,782 persons to 37,526, a loss of 256 persons (0.70%). The population increased in only one of the five election districts, Easton (579 or 2.7 percent). Chapel decreased by 437, or almost 10 percent. The three other districts, St. Michaels, Trappe, and Bay Hundred, decreased by 1.3 percent, 5.7 percent, and 4.0 percent, respectively.

Table II-1: Historical Population, 1930 – 2020 by Election District²⁹

Election District/ Census Tract	1930	1950	1970	1990	2000	2010	2020
1. Easton 9602.01 9603 9604 9605.01 9605.02	7,020	8,687	11,167	15,470	17,621	21,656	22,235
2. St. Michaels 9606 9607	3,307	3,239	4,413	5,298	5,527	5,318	5,248
3. Trappe 9609	3,201	2,820	3,366	4,071	4,567	4,384	4,132
4. Chapel 9601	2,788	2,481	2,761	3,755	4,148	4,502	4,065
5. Bay Hundred 9608	2,267	2,201	1,975	1,955	1,949	1,922	1,846
Talbot County	18,583	19,428	23,682	30,549	33,812	37,782	37,526

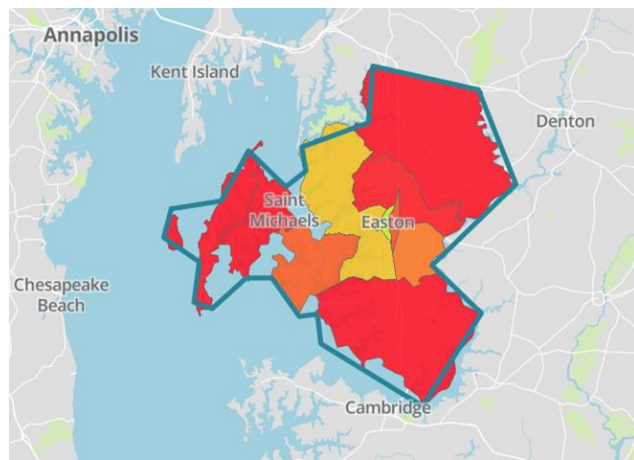
²⁹ Source for Tables II-1 through II-4: Scofield Masone Management, LLC, May 2011, based on 2010 U. S. Census data, and 2020 U. S. Census..

Table II-2: Average Annual Rate (Percent) of Population Change, 1930 – 2020 by Election District

Election District/ Census Tract	1930	1940	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010
	- 1940	- 1950	- 1960	- 1970	- 1980	- 1990	- 2000	- 2010	- 2020
1. Easton 9602.01 9603 9604 9605.01 9605.02	1.0	1.2	1.6	1.0	0.9	2.7	1.4	2.2	2.7
2. St. Michaels 9606	0.2	-0.4	1.8	1.3	0.5	1.4	0.4	-0.4	-1.3
3. Trappe 9609	-0.5	-0.7	0.3	1.5	0.4	1.6	1.2	-0.4	-5.7
4. Chapel 9601	-0.6	-0.5	0.9	0.2	1.9	1.2	1.0	0.8	-9.7
5. Bay Hundred 9608	-1.1	0.8	-1.2	0.1	-0.3	0.2	-0.1	-0.1	-4.0
Talbot County	0.1	0.3	1.1	0.0	0.8	1.9	1.1	1.1	-0.7

Figure II-1 shows graphically that the areas of the county to the west and east of the Town of Easton grew in the decade between 2010 and 2020. Other parts of the county, however, decreased in population.

Fig. II-1: Talbot County, Maryland, Total Population Change, 2010 to 2020³⁰



● Less than -3% ● -3% to 0% ● 0% to 3% ● 3% to 6% ● 6% to 9% ● 9% to 12% ● 12% to 15% ● 15% to 18% ● More than 18% ○ N/A

Of considerable significance for the school system is the change in race and ethnicity that has occurred between 2010 and 2020, and that continues to occur in Talbot County. Table II-3 shows that the overall

³⁰ Source: Ibid

proportion of the white and black populations declined by 7.5% and 11.3% respectively between 2010 and 2020, corresponding to decreases of 2,310 in the white population and 580 persons in the black population. The white proportion of the population declined from 81.4% of the population to 75.8% and the African-American proportion declined from 12.8% to 11.3%. During this same period, the Hispanic population increased by 1,279 persons, or 62%: from 1.8% of the population in 2000, this group increased to 5.5% in 2010 and 8.9% in 2020. These changes in the overall composition of the population are reflected in the composition of the school-age population (Table II-3) and have implications for how schools are designed to ensure that they meet the educational needs of these children in an equitable manner.

Table II-3: Talbot County, Maryland, 2020 Census Information: Race and Ethnicity³¹

		2010		2020		Change	
		#	%	#	%	#	%
Total		37,782		37,526		-256	-0.70%
Race	White	30,746	81.40%	28,436	75.80%	-2,310	-7.50%
	Black	4,829	12.80%	4,249	11.30%	-580	-12.00%
	American Indian	65	0.20%	146	0.40%	81	124.60%
	Asian	472	1.20%	538	1.40%	66	14.00%
	Pacific Islander	22	0.10%	12	0.00%	-10	-45.50%
	Other	1,030	2.70%	1,906	5.10%	876	85.00%
	Two or More	618	1.60%	2,239	6.00%	1,621	262.30%
Ethnicity	Hispanic or Latino	2,073	5.50%	3,352	8.90%	1,279	61.70%

Table II-4 below shows the demographic changes in population among the nine counties on the Eastern Shore and the State of Maryland between 1990 and 2000, between 2000 and 2010, and between 2010 and 2020. Between 1990 and 2000 Talbot County grew by 10.7 percent, placing it among the six counties that grew by more than 10 percent. During this ten-year period the population of the State of Maryland grew by almost exactly the same amount, 10.8 percent. Between 2000 and 2010 Talbot County grew by 11.7 percent. Talbot County was again among the six counties on the Eastern Shore that experienced an increase in the rate of growth of more than 10% between 2000 and 2010. Talbot County's rate of growth was higher than for the State of Maryland as a whole (9.0 percent). Between 2010 and 2020 Talbot County's population remained virtually without change, showing a negligible decline of 0.7%. On the Eastern Shore, four counties (Cecil, Queen Anne's, Wicomico and Worcester) showed marked growth, two counties (Kent and Somerset) showed marked declines, and Talbot was joined by Caroline and Dorchester Counties in showing only small amounts of change. As a whole, the Eastern Shore showed an increase of 2.0%, significantly lower than Maryland as a whole (7.0%).

³¹ Source: "https://data.sj-r.com/census/total-population/total-population-change/talbot-county-maryland/050-24041/. As reported in *USA Today*.

Table II-4: Comparative Population Growth, Talbot County vs. Maryland and Other Eastern Shore Counties³²

	1990 Population	2000 Population	%Change1990 2000	2010 Population	% Change 2000 - 2010	2020 Population	%Change 2010 - 2020
State of MD	4,781,468	5,296,486	10.8%	5,773,552	9.0%	6,177,224	7.0%
Caroline Co	27,035	29,772	10.1%	33,066	11.1%	33,293	0.7%
Cecil Co	71,347	85,951	20.5%	101,108	17.6%	103,725	2.6%
Dorchester Co	30,236	30,674	1.4%	32,618	6.3%	32,531	-0.3%
Kent Co	17,842	19,197	7.6%	20,197	5.2%	19,198	-4.9%
Queen Anne's Co	33,953	40,563	19.5%	47,798	17.8%	49,874	4.3%
Somerset Co	23,440	24,747	5.6%	26,470	7.0%	24,620	-7.0%
Talbot Co	30,549	33,812	10.7%	37,782	11.7%	37,526	-0.7%
Wicomico Co	74,339	84,644	13.9%	98,733	16.6%	103,588	4.9%
Worcester Co	33,028	46,543	40.9%	51,454	10.6%	52,460	2.0%

Although Talbot County remains a rural county, the data in Table II-5 below indicates that the population has shifted toward town life: in 2010 the population was almost evenly divided between the unincorporated portion of the county and the five towns, whereas in 2020 the town populations exceeded those in the unincorporated county by more than 3.5%.

Table II-5: Talbot County Incorporated Towns, 2010 and 2020 Population^{33 34}

	2010 Census Population	Percent of Total County Population	2020 Census Population	Percent of Total County Population
Easton Town	15,945	42.20	17,101	45.57
Oxford Town	651	1.72	611	1.63
Queen Anne Town (pt.)	222	0.59	192	0.51
St. Michaels Town	1,029	2.72	1,049	2.80
Trappe Town	1,077	2.85	1,177	3.14
Unincorporated Areas	18,986	50.25	17,396	46.35
Total	37,782	100.00	37,526	100.00

Population Changes, Distribution, and Projections

Forecasts published by the Maryland Department of Planning (MDP) in January 2015 indicated that the majority of the projected population increase in Talbot County between 2010 and 2040 will be driven by the immigration and aging of current residents into the 65 years and older group rather than by natural increases due to birth rates. (see Fig. II-4 on page7) Although this information is dated it shows trends that still apply. The 2020 census corroborates this trend. In the MDP information, the cohort aged 18 and older increased

³² Maryland Department of Planning, "Total Population: 2020 Adjusted Census Counts by Jurisdiction & Precinct (Voting District) - by Single Race, Two or More Races, Hispanic Origin & Age 18 Plus"

³³ Talbot County Comprehensive Plan, June 2016, page 1-2

³⁴ U. S. Census Bureau; source: <https://data.indystar.com/census/total-population/total-population-change/easton-town-maryland/160-2424475/>

slightly, by 0.9%. This corresponds to anecdotal evidence that Talbot County is a desirable place to live for more mature individuals, for example retirees and householders who can telework from home.

The population projections reflect two factors, the type and level of development experienced in Talbot County in recent years and likely to continue into the future, especially in the Easton area, and the lack of employment opportunities for younger people. Much of the new housing built in Talbot County in recent years has been in a price range that does not attract families with young children, and a significant portion of the new housing construction in the county has also been age-restricted or marketed specifically to retirees. This means that an increasingly larger share of the population will not have children in the public school system. The older residents may place a higher value on capital investments in public facilities other than schools, such as parks or libraries.

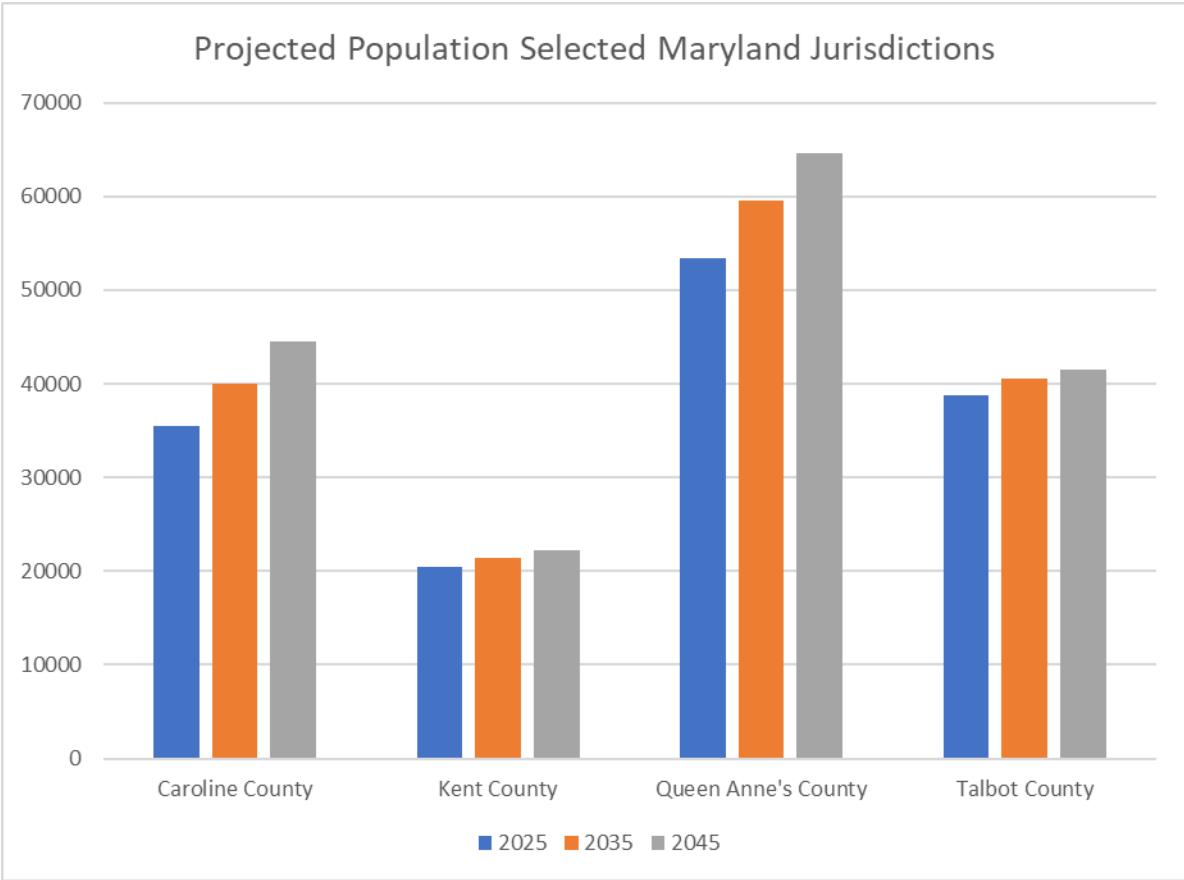
The age projections in Fig. II-4 (based on the 2010 data) showed that population growth in Talbot County between 2010 and 2040 would result from the net migration of residents into the County from outside areas rather than from increases in birth rates. In fact, the population in the primary childbearing age group of 20-44 years old peaked in Talbot County in 1990.

Population Forecast Analysis

The Talbot County Comprehensive Plan, revised June 7, 2016, contains population projections that are essentially the same as the MDP July 2015 projections. The more recent MDP population forecast is for a lower population, but the observations remain the same:

- The modest but steady population growth will be largely driven by in-migration.
- The number of households will increase as household size declines from approximately 2.31 per household in 2010 to approximately 2.19 per household in 2040, including a growing number of non-family households.
- The school-age and prime working population will remain relatively unchanged.
- The average age of the population will increase through the in-migration of retirees.

**Figure II-2: Projected Total Population Upper Chesapeake Counties
(Maryland Department of Planning, Revised December 2020)**



Maryland Department of Planning has forecast more gradual population growth in Talbot County than Queen Anne's or Caroline Counties.

Figure II-3: Talbot County Annualized Growth Rates (Maryland Department of Planning, Revised December 2020)

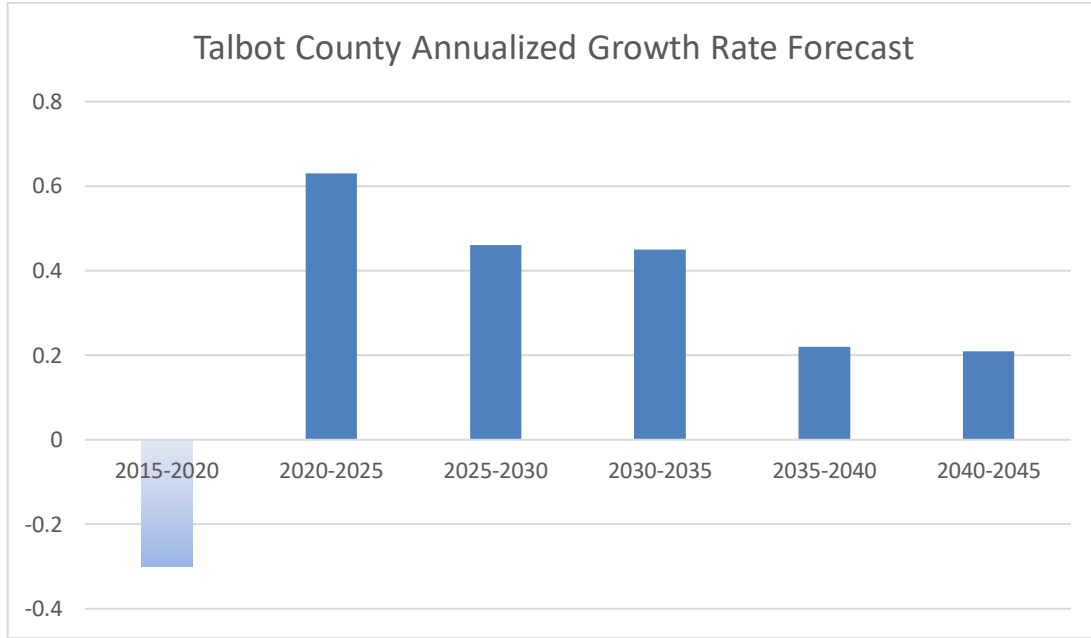
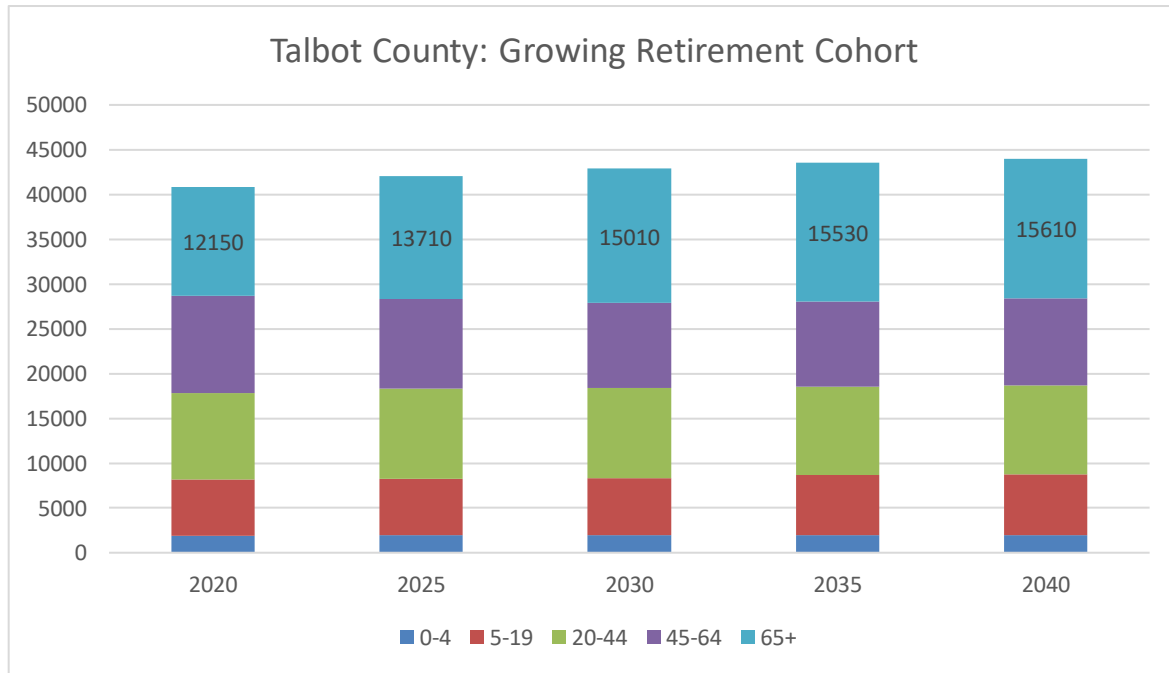


Figure II-4: Talbot County Growing Retirement Cohort (Maryland Department of Planning, Revised December 2020)



Consistency with Comprehensive Plans

Comprehensive Plans serve as guides to the use of public and private land. They influence zoning maps and the provision of necessary public facilities. In this way, they also have a potential effect on the development of homes and utilization of educational facilities. Four of the five municipalities in Talbot County have comprehensive plans filed with the Maryland Department of Planning. The Town of Queen Anne does not appear to have a comprehensive plan on file. Each of the plans are significantly influenced by the visioning from the Maryland Economic Growth, Resource Protection, and Planning Act of 1992. Commonly referred to as “Smart Growth,” the primary thrust of these visions is concentration of development in suitable areas to protect environmental resources and avoid costly extensions of public services into undeveloped areas.

This means TCPS can expect new residential growth to appear within the municipalities or established settlements in areas of the county. Priority Funding Areas (PFAs) are mapped in these areas. State law directs public investment to these PFAs, meaning it is very difficult to build infrastructure or schools away from existing towns and settlements. Water and sewer plans also concentrate development in the incorporated towns. The county and municipal comprehensive plans are briefly reviewed below to evaluate the consistency of the EFMP with these plans. This EFMP for the Talbot County Public Schools was submitted to the County Planning Officer for a determination of consistency with local growth or land use plans. A copy of the Planning Officer’s letter of consistency is included within this EFMP (Appendices).

While developments in Easton and in Trappe are in process, there are no major developments under consideration in the unincorporated county. The overall working population outlook appears to be stable, since the economy itself is stable: no major industries are projected to enter the county, and the agriculture is largely grain-based, allowing for a higher degree of mechanization and consequently a smaller demand for labor than greenhouse-based agriculture. An increase in the number of restaurants generates a small demand for labor, but not sufficient to drive a large increase in the school-age population. Most population increases involve older retirees and temporary residents, who do not have an impact on the school-age population.

Talbot County

The most important of the local community development plans is the Talbot County Comprehensive Plan, revised June 7, 2016. The plan directs growth to villages and calls for each of the 22 villages to be planned. Development has been very slow in the county and anticipated growth may only marginally affect long term school enrollment.

The county, as required by state code, has established programs that limit development. Priority Preservation protects agricultural, forest, and scenic lands with perpetual easements that preclude future development. Development in Talbot County is also significantly affected by the implementation of the Chesapeake Bay Critical Area program, which limits development potential in areas near the Chesapeake Bay. Each jurisdiction has an approved Critical Area program.

Water and sewer extensions are planned for a new hospital planned to open in 2024. This hospital will replace the existing University of Maryland Shore Medical Center on Washington Street, parts of which date back to the early 1900s, with a new campus. The new site is near the Talbot County Community Center just off Route 50, and the sewer system will also cover Hyde Park and some other homes in the vicinity.³⁵ Since the water and sewer extension will mostly serve age-restricted development and the new hospital, few additional students will result from new residential development that would be caused by this expansion of the sewer service area.

³⁵ The Certificate of Need, a key milestone, was filed with the Maryland Healthcare Commission on January 6, 2023.

Easton

The Town of Easton Comprehensive Plan, approved in March 2010, is being updated, but the land use policy will remain consistent with the County Comprehensive Plan in directing development to the town. The plan establishes growth areas, primarily to the east of the present town boundary. This is surrounded by a green belt for land preservation measures. The plan calculates that the maximum total potential for infill, redevelopment and build-out lots was 2,492 units. Recently the growth targets have been increased so there is the possibility that up to 761 new units will be built between 2022 and 2024 or 2025, but this is market dependent and higher interest rates have been slowing development.

Oxford

The Town of Oxford 2010 Comprehensive Plan was a revision of the previous Oxford Comprehensive Plan, which was adopted in 1997. It is intended to guide the future growth and development of the Town of Oxford, Maryland. Since the town occupies the end of the Oxford Neck, a cape extending into the confluence of the Tred Avon and the Choptank rivers, growth can only occur on the inland side of the peninsula. The community is oriented primarily to maritime and recreational activity. The plan identifies a designated growth area to the east between Boone Creek Road and both Bonfield Avenue and Batchelors Point Road. However, the town has grown very little since this plan was approved. The Oxford Planning Commission held numerous work sessions in 2023 to update to the Comprehensive Plan. In December 2023 it was announced that a draft will be released in the future.

St. Michaels

The Town of St. Michaels 2015 Comprehensive Plan seeks to reinforce the vibrant and livable community by preserving the town's strong historic character and long-standing waterfront orientation. Another community oriented primarily to maritime and recreational activity, only modest growth is planned for St. Michaels. The plan identifies a designated growth area to the north of the existing community in the vicinity of Rolles Range Road. The town has grown very little since this plan was approved. St. Michaels has limited vacant sites for residential development. Only a handful of permits are issued each year. Most do not represent new residential units which may contribute students to TCPS. The 2015 Comprehensive Plan supports a range of housing types to provide options for citizens of all ages and incomes.

Trappe

The Comprehensive Plan for Trappe was updated in 2010. It is intended to guide growth and development of the Trappe planning area for the next ten to fifteen years and even beyond this time horizon. The plan identifies designated growth areas to the north and south of the existing community. The Lakeside development is within the town limit and adjacent to the northern growth area. Two decades ago, the town voted to grow and annexed a large area, but little happened until recently. Costly upgrades to wastewater treatment facilities and debt service on the existing system have been issues. Recently the town doubled sewer fees and gained approval for a new spray irrigation system sewer plant. This system remains controversial, but it has passed key approvals so continued development seems likely.

Affordable Housing

Providing affordable housing options for middle- and low-income families is important to the long term economic and social vitality of the County. Over 80% of the County residences are single family detached, more than 10% higher than the statewide average. Affordable housing has been a particular concern in Easton and recent projects have tended not to be oriented toward first-time homeowners and moderate-income professionals (firefighters, teachers, etc.) who seek housing in the lower cost range, or even low-income households.³⁶ Since the Covid-19 pandemic there appears to be an increase in work-from-home employment.

³⁶ Town of Easton 2010 Comprehensive Plan, *Housing*, Page 134.

If this becomes a trend in addition to the normal attractiveness of these towns to retirees and second-home owners, housing affordability will be even more difficult. County and municipal initiatives to address affordable housing. Affordable housing initiative can marginally increase enrollment, but it also helps attract and retain teachers with housing that fits their budget. The EFMP continues to track all housing developments including those which are targeted for affordability.

New Development

Four developments in municipalities of Talbot County hold the potential to add over 3,200 new residential units but the units are only gradually being permitted and included in the forecast. When this report is updated each year all new building permits are checked and the forecast adjusted. Table II-6 tabulates the units associated with three major Easton residential development projects. Table II-7 models the future classroom deficit.³⁷ While the eventual impact should be acknowledged, it is not imminent. None of the projects are pulling building permits and the largest, Poplar Hill, faces a more complex review process. There is also discussion about the development of Easton Point with up to 500 homes at the upper/luxury end of the market, but a project is not under review.

Table II-6: New Easton-Area Housing Projects Under Review³⁸

	Acres	Detached Homes	Town-homes	Apartments	Total Units	Affordable Units
Gannon Farm	76	202			202	0
Elliott Road Apartments	6.8			120	120	24
Poplar Hill	120	109	138	192	439	0
Total	202.8	311	138	312	761	24

Table II-7: New Housing Projects: Potential Impacts on Student Enrollments³⁹

	State Rated Capacity	Projected Seats, w/o New Housing	Deficit in Seats, w/ New Housing	Potential Additional Classrooms Needed
Easton Elementary School	1,310	139	-230	10
Easton Middle School	870	56	-26	1
Easton High School	1,295	36	-69	3
Total	3,475	231	-325	14

³⁷ This scenario is not yet in the forecast because the developments have not completed the approval process and could face delay in a softening economy. The projects will be monitored in future studies.

³⁸ Lever and Gallihue, "Future Residential Development Impact, Talbot County Public Schools," December 13, 2021. Current information indicates that the developer of Poplar Hill will be presenting a revised development proposal in the fall of 2024.

³⁹ Lever and Gallihue, Ibid.

The Lakeside at Trappe Master Plan (formerly Trappe East) project of over 900 acres was approved for annexation by the Town of Trappe following a citizen referendum in 2003. The project scope includes 2,501 residential units as well as 550,000 square feet of commercial space in a joint venture between ICA and Rocks Engineering. Part of the project will be age restricted, lessening the impact on school utilization. Phase 1A and 1B have been approved and recorded in the Talbot County Land Records for a total of 120 lots. The planned build-out is over a 15–20-year period. Phases IA and 1B are included in the enrollment forecast. The Comprehensive Water And Sewer Plan was recently revised to reflect MDE approval for a flow that would allow approximately 400 residential units.

Fig. II-5: The Lakeside at Trappe



Housing Permits

Since 2000, with a few exceptions, new development has been concentrated in municipalities. New housing in Easton alone exceeded the total constructed in the unincorporated area. Table II-8 shows that the percentage of permits issued in the towns increased from 60.1% of the total in the 2000-2004 period to 79.5% in the 2010-2014 period, while the percentage in the unincorporated county decreased. Tables II-8 and II-9 tabulate building permits issued for new residential housing units or replacement units that may lead to an increase in student enrollment. Some units are second homes for weekend use which will not contribute to student enrollment.

Table II-8: Talbot County New Housing Unit Permits, 2000 - 2014⁴⁰

Area	2014 - 2010					2009 - 2005					2004 - 2000				
	Total	Single Family	Multi Family	Avg Tot /year	% Town vs. County	Total	Single Family	Multi Family	Avg Tot /year	% Town vs. County	Total	Single Family	Multi Family	Avg Tot /year	% Town vs. County
MARYLAND	74,878	47,291	27,587			96,165	71,059	25,106			146,006	117,795	28,211		
TALBOT	811	771	40	162.2		2,226	2,226	-	445.2		2,238	2,238	-	447.6	
Easton	592	592	-	118.4		1,585	1,585	-	317.0		1,277	1,277	-	255.4	
Oxford	2	2	-	0.4	79.5%	12	12	-	2.4	73.0%	25	25	-	5.0	60.1%
St. Michaels	50	10	40	10.0		11	11	-	2.2		12	12	-	2.4	
Trappe	1	1	-	0.2		17	17	-	3.4		32	32	-	6.4	
Talbot County Unincorporated Area	166	166	-	33.2	20.5%	601	601	-	120.2	27.0%	892	892	-	178.4	39.9%

The trend occurred in most of the years from 2013 to 2022, as shown in Table II-12.

Table II-9: Talbot County Building Permits Issued for Residential Development, 2012 - 2023⁴¹

Year	Talbot Uninc.	Easton	Oxford	Queen Anne	St. Michaels	Trappe	Total	% Town	% County
2014	10	22	0	0	4	0	36	72%	28%
2015	28	35	0	1	15	0	79	65%	35%
2016	35	28	1	0	3	2	69	49%	51%
2017	32	54	0	1	5	0	92	65%	35%
2018	26	72	0	0	10	0	108	76%	24%
2019	21	44	0	0	5	5	75	72%	28%
2020	36	39	0	0	9	0	84	57%	43%
2021	46	80	0	0	7	20	153	70%	30%
2022	45	59	0	0	9	72	185	76%	24%
2023	17	26	0	0	5	53	101	83%	17%

⁴⁰ Source: U. S. Bureau of the Census. Manufacturing and Construction Statistics Division. Residential Construction Branch. Prepared by Maryland Department of Planning. Planning Services Division. 2015.

⁴¹ Source: Information from each Town and County Planning Office (Yale Stenzler, 2016, updates by EFP for 2017 through 2023; "unknown" indicates that there was no response to the inquiry).

III. INVENTORY AND EVALUATION OF BUILDING AND FACILITIES

System-Wide Facility Data

The Talbot County Public School system operated a total of eight school buildings in the 2023-2024 school year, including five elementary school buildings, one middle school, one high school, and one middle/high school. Because of a systematic program of school renovation projects, starting with the renovation of the Easton Elementary School – Moton Building completed in 1991, Talbot County Public Schools over many years enjoyed the status of having the newest school facility square footage in the state of Maryland. The average age of the square footage now dates from 2002 sharing that date with Howard County Public Schools and Queen Anne's County Public Schools.⁴² With the completion of the Easton Elementary School replacement project in 2020, Talbot County has ensured the continuation of its distinguished record of facility management, and reduced the number of school facilities from nine to the current eight. The proposed modernization of Chapel District Elementary School will continue this prudent approach to facility management.

The elementary schools are located throughout Talbot County so as to be readily accessible to regional population centers. The school locations and the elementary attendance areas are shown on [Map I-1](#) and [Map I-2](#) of Section I, "Goals, Standards, Policies," and the secondary school attendance areas are shown on [Map I-3](#). The attendance area for each school is shown in greater detail on Maps I-4 through I-11. Easton Elementary formerly consisted of two buildings: the Dobson building held the P3 program and grades Prekindergarten to 1, while the Moton building housed grades 2 through 5. Following completion of the replacement of Easton Elementary School, beginning in the 2020-2021 school year the two schools were housed in two wings of a single facility, retaining their separate identities.

Easton Middle School serves students in grades 6 to 8 and Easton High School serves students in grades 9 to 12. St. Michaels Middle/High School serves middle and high school students in grades 6 to 12. The middle and high school attendance areas are coterminous for both of these locations, as shown on [Map I-3](#) and Maps I-9 to I-11.

Individual School Facility Database (Form 101.1)

Individual school facility database information is presented for each school utilizing the IAC/PSCP Form 101.1. This provides a summary of the school facility information as required in the EFMP, including the grades housed, the State Rated Capacity, acreage of the site, building data (year of construction and additions with associated square footage), the TCPS and PSCP physical condition (maintenance) assessment, and comments (other completed capital improvements). The individual school enrollment projections are developed by EFP for TCPS, and are checked against the Maryland Department of Planning's systemwide projections for overall accuracy.

The State Rated Capacity (SRC) is shown for all schools based upon the approval of the Maryland Department of Planning following the State Public School Construction guidelines and procedures. The SRC for individual schools has periodically been updated as a result of changes in the facilities or use of educational and support spaces; all schools in Talbot County and throughout the state were re-evaluated in the spring of 2019 and the SRC for the new Easton Elementary School was approved on April 8, 2022.

⁴² IAC, "Average Age of LEA Facilities 2012 – 2021", at https://iac.mdschoolconstruction.org/?page_id=139

FACILITIES INVENTORY

IAC/PSCP FORM 101.1

LEA: Talbot County Public Schools		DATE: May 13, 2024		IAC/PSCP FORM 101.1				
SCHOOL NAME & ADDRESS	GRADES	SRC	PRIOR FALL ENRLMT	% UTIL	ACREAGE	BUILDING DATA	PHYSICAL COND	COMMENTS
Chapel District Elementary School	PK-5	431	Sept. 2023	82.4%	23	1952 12,748	Fair	Renovations & Additions:
11430 Cordova Road, Cordova, MD			355			1994 30,477	TCPS	1994 Completely renovated the existing 1952 building, formerly Upper County Elementary School.
School No. 20.0402						2000 1,200	Winter 2023	
PSC No. 20.006						2001 1,645		
Tax Assessment ID: 21-04-156242			Total			46,070	Adequate PSCP	2000 day care addition - design/build (private and PSCP funds).
							FY 2021	2001 Kindergarten addition with 2 classrooms (locally funded).
								Systemic Renovations: 2014 Chiller
								Aging Schools Program:
								2006 Playground improvements
								2012 Replace phone system
								2013 Security system
								2014 HVAC control work
								2018 HVAC unit Vent ATC Upgrade
								School Safety Grant Program:
								2019 Door Hardware Replacement
								2019 Security Vestibule
								2023 Security Window Glazing
								Located in Priority Funding Area

FACILITIES INVENTORY

IAC/PSCP FORM 101.1

LEA: Talbot County Public Schools

DATE: May 13, 2024

SCHOOL NAME & ADDRESS	GRADES	SRC	PRIOR FALL ENRLMT	% UTIL	ACREAGE	BUILDING DATA		PHYSICAL COND	COMMENTS
						DATE	SQ. FT.		
Easton Elementary School 307 Glenwood Ave., Easton, MD Combined Dobson & Moton	P3-5	1,310 Approved by MDP on 4/8/2022	Sept. 2023 1,057	90.8%	8	2020	128,755	Superior TCPS Winter 2023	New Facility: 2020 Replaced entire original 1991 Moton building (84,237 sf) and 40,797 sf of the 1992 Dobson building.
Head Start & Family Support Center 305 Glenwood Ave., Easton, MD 21601								Not yet inspected	The balance of the Dobson building will be re-purposed.
School No. 20.0104 PSC No. 20.005 Tax Assessment ID: 21-01-026526 (p/o - shared with EES Moton Building)									The 5.725 sf 2012 Head Start classrooms and administration facility were retained. Replacement: 2020 New building, demolition of original
									Located adjacent to the Easton Hot Spot and serves students from the area.
									School Safety Grant Program: 2022 School Security Window Glazing
									Located in Priority Funding Area

FACILITIES INVENTORY

IAC/PSCP FORM 101.1

LEA: Talbot County Public Schools

DATE: May 13, 2024

SCHOOL NAME & ADDRESS	GRADES	SRC	PRIOR FALL ENRLMT	% UTIL	ACREAGE	BUILDING DATA		PHYSICAL COND	COMMENTS
						DATE	SQ. FT.		
St. Michaels Elementary School 100 Seymour Ave., St. Michaels, MD	6-12	383	Sept. 2023 335	87.5%	45	1953	17,050	Very Good	Renovations & Additions: 1977 Removed part of original building, renovated 20,615 sf and added 56,590 sf.
		Approved MDP on 4/3/2019				1961	3,565	TCPs	
						1977	56,590	Winter 2023	
						2008	3,376		
						Total	80,581	Adequate	1997 Locally funded interior remediation for air quality enhancement.
								PSCP	
								FY 2023	
School No. 20.0202 PSC No. 20.001 Tax Assessment ID: 21-02-066912 (p/o - shared with SMMHS)									2008 Renovated 77,205 sf and added 3,376 sf Systemic Renovations: 1997 replaced 79,013 sf of roof. Coordinated with replacement of roof top HVAC units.
									Aging School Program Projects: 2000 See SMMHS, renovated drives & parking areas; 2004 Playground renovation; 2013 Security system
									School Safety Grant Program: 2019 Door Hardware Replacement
									0.4 acres was added to this site in 2001 for the St. Michaels Community Pool
									School Safety Grant Program: 2021 Security Camera
									2023 School Security Window Glazing
									Located in Priority Funding Area

FACILITIES INVENTORY

IAC/PSCP FORM 101.1

LEA: Talbot County Public Schools		DATE: May 13, 2024		IAC/PSCP FORM 101.1					
SCHOOL NAME & ADDRESS	GRADES	SRC	PRIOR FALL ENRLMT	% UTIL	ACREAGE	BUILDING DATA		PHYSICAL COND	COMMENTS
						DATE	SQ. FT.		
Tilghman Elementary School 21374 Foster Ave., Tilghman, MD	Pk-5	157	Sept. 2023 90	57.3%	8.8	1958 2003 Total	14,200 14,484 28,684	Very Good TCPS Winter 2023	Renovations & Additions: 2003 Completely renovated the 1958 building, added 14,484 sf.
School No. 20.0501 PSC No. 20.009 Tax Assessment ID: 21-05-187753 (p/o - shared with SMMHS)		Approved MDP on 4/3/2019						Adequate PSCP FY 2023	Aging School Program Projects: 2007 Playground renovations; 2013 Security
Note: Effective for 2014-2015 grades pre- k to 5									School Safety Grant Program: 2019 Door Hardware Replacement 2019 Security Vestibule
									School Safety Grant Program: 2021 Security Camera 2023 School Security Window Glazing
									Located in Priority Funding Area

FACILITIES INVENTORY

IAC/PSCP FORM 101.1

LEA: Talbot County Public Schools		DATE: May 13, 2024		IAC/PSCP FORM 101.1				
SCHOOL NAME & ADDRESS	GRADES	SRC	PRIOR FALL ENRLMT	% UTIL	ACREAGE	BUILDING DATA	PHYSICAL COND	COMMENTS
White Marsh Elementary School 4322 Lovers Lane, T rappe, MD 21673	Pk-5	363	Sept. 2023 278	76.6%	11	16,333 14,877 10,965 1,290	Good TCPS Winter 2023	Renovations & Additions: 1997 Completely renovated the 1957 & 1971 building, added 7,875 sf of State funded area and a locally funded gymnasium
		Approved MDP on 4/3/2019				Total 43,465	Adequate PSCP FY 2022	2001 locally funded addition - one K classroom
School No. 20.0302 PSC No. 20.007 Tax Assessment ID: 21-03-126307								Aging School Program Projects: 2005 Playground improvement; 2011 playground improvements; 2013 Security system
								School Safety Grant Program: 2019 Door Hardware Replacement
								1 locally owned portable classroom relocated from Easton Elementary School is used by the Critchlow Adkins Day Care.
								School Safety Grant Program: 2023 School Security Window Glazing
								Located in Priority Funding Area

FACILITIES INVENTORY

IAC/PSCP FORM 101.1

LEA: Talbot County Public Schools

DATE: May 13, 2024

SCHOOL NAME & ADDRESS	GRADES	SRC	PRIOR FALL ENRLMT	% UTIL	ACREAGE	BUILDING DATA		PHYSICAL COND	COMMENTS
						DATE	SQ. FT.		
Easton Middle School 201 Peachblossom Rd., Easton, MD	6-8	870	Sept. 2023 711	81.7%	20	1953	76,619	Good	Renovations & Additions: 2003 completely renovated the 1953, 1957 & 1979 parts and added 1,755 sf to the cafeteria
		Approved MDP on 4/3/2019				Total	106,985	Adequate PSCP FY 2022	Systemic Renovations: 1998 roof replaced portion of 1953 and 1979 sections
School No. 20.0106 P SC No. 20.004 Tax Assessment ID: 21-01-026496									Aging School Program Projects: 2008 outdoor fitness area; 2013 Security system
									School Safety Grant Program: 2019 Door Hardware Replacement 2019 Security Vestibule 2022 School Security Window Glazing
									Serves students from Easton Hot Spot
									Located in Priority Funding Area

FACILITIES INVENTORY

LEA: Talbot County Public Schools

DATE: May 13, 2024

FORM: IAC/PSCP FORM 101.1

SCHOOL NAME & ADDRESS	GRADES	SRC	PRIOR FALL ENRLMT	% UTIL	ACREAGE	BUILDING DATA		PHYSICAL COND	COMMENTS
						DATE	SQ. FT.		
Easton High School 723 Mecklenburg Ave., Easton, MD	9-12	1,295	Sept. 2023 1,210	93.4%	36.2	1966	105,085	Good	Renovations & Additions: 1997 renovated the 1966 & 1971 parts and the music wing in the 1976 part. The remaining auditorium wing in the 1976 part received a new roof and only minor
		Approved MDP on 4/3/2019				1971	25,768	TCPS	
						1976	31,446	Winter 2023	
						1997	17,020		
						1999	3,300		
						1999	4,210	Adequate	1999 added 3,300 sf for auxiliary gym, health, & weight room.
						Total	186,829	PSCP FY 2023	1999 added automotive technology classroom/ lab 4,210 sf (private donations)
School No. 20.0101 PSC No. 20.002 Tax Assessment ID: 21-01-026488									Aging School Program Projects: 1998 Stadium lights 1999 Renovated track 2006 Greenhouse addition 2013 Security system 2015 Recabling 2015 Camera replacement 2018 HVAC supervisory control upgrade
									Supplemental Appropriation: 2012 HVAC (chiller) renewal 2012 Lighting
									School Safety Grant Program: 2019 Door hardware replacement 2021 Security Camera 2022 School Security Window Glazing
									Serves students from Easton Hot Spot
									Located in Priority Funding Area

FACILITIES INVENTORY

IAC/PSCP FORM 101.1

LEA: Talbot County Public Schools		DATE: May 13, 2024		IAC/PSCP FORM 101.1				
SCHOOL NAME & ADDRESS	GRADES	SRC	PRIOR FALL ENRLMT	% UTIL	ACREAGE	BUILDING DATA	PHYSICAL COND	COMMENTS
St. Michaels Middle High School 200 Seymour Ave., St. Michaels, MD	6-12	627	Sept. 2023 453	72.20%	45	1971 2002 2009 Total	Very Good TCPS Winter 2023 Adequate PSCP FY 2022	Renovations & Additions: 2009 Renovated 76,515 sf and added 3,087
School No. 20.0202 PSC No. 20.008 Tax Assessment ID: 21-02-066912 (p/o - shared with SMIES)		Approved MDP on 4/3/2019						Systemic Renovations: 1995 Replaced total roof 1997 HVAC replacement
								Aging School Program Projects: 2000 Renovated drives and parking areas, combined with SMES 2002 added 1,385 sf canopy walkway SMES & SMMHS 2002 renovated track & walks 2004 athletic field improvements 2013 security system 2020 stadium bleacher replacement
								School Safety Grant Program: 2019 door hardware replacement 2021 Security Camera 2023 School Security Window Glazing
								Serves students from Easton Hot Spot
								Located in Priority Funding Area

Building Maintenance Survey

The State Public School Construction Program performs a maintenance inspection of public schools throughout the State each year. At least one school in Talbot County has been inspected each year. The inspection rating is the result of a composite score; consequently, any surveyed school building may have areas or systems that are in significantly better or worse condition than the overall building rating.

In August 2020 the IAC staff presented to the Interagency Commission a new maintenance evaluation process, the Maintenance Effectiveness Assessment (MEA). The intent of the MEA is to allow the ratings to reflect how maintenance impacts the longevity of a building. The new process continues the five previous maintenance categories, with these definitions:

Good and Superior	Maintenance is likely to extend the life of systems within the facility beyond expected.
Adequate	Maintenance is sufficient to achieve the life of each system within the facility and, with appropriate capital spending and renewal, the total expected facility lifespan.
Not Adequate and Poor	Maintenance is insufficient to achieve the expected life cycle of systems within the facility. ⁴³

The IAC website notes that "As a result of this change, results in FY 2021 and forward will not be comparable to results in FY 2020 or previous years....In the new MEA, an assessment score of "adequate" (70% to 79%) indicates that the facility is being sufficiently maintained so that it will achieve its expected life span. Many facilities that received "good" ratings under the previous assessment will receive "adequate" ratings under the new MEA. This should not be interpreted as a decline in maintenance performance." The new process also includes weighting categories of minor and major deficiencies and outlines a process by which the LEA can correct the deficiencies.

Prior to the IAC change, Talbot County received a "Superior" rating for three of the nine schools and five schools were rated "Good". In April 2018 the Easton Middle School received a rating of "Adequate" under the former inspection rating system; the PSCP report commented on the maintenance of the gutters and downspouts, entryways and exterior doors, ventilation equipment, and unit ventilators. The report also noted the flooding conditions in the crawl space area and recommended an evaluation of the drainage conditions adjacent to the building.

The chart illustrates the connection between facility renovation and maintenance quality: the three most recently renovated facilities received good ratings under the pre-MEA program, while the five older facilities received ratings of Good or Adequate. The new Easton Elementary School facility, occupied in the autumn of 2020, has not yet received an IAC maintenance inspection. For Easton Middle School, which received a rating of Adequate in FY 2018, a special note was made of site grading conditions that should be corrected to identify the cause of water infiltration into the crawl space of the facility.

⁴³ Interagency Commission on School Construction, at <https://iac.mdschoolconstruction.org>

Table III-1: PSCP Inspection Results, FY 2015 – FY 2023

School	Year Renovated	Fiscal Year Inspected	PSCP Overall Rating
Chapel District Elementary *	1994. with 2000 day care and 2001 Kindergarten additions	2021	Adequate *
Easton Elementary (new)	2020 new	Not yet inspected	
Easton Elementary (former) – Dobson	1992, with 2012 Head Start addition	2015	Good
Easton Elementary (former) –Moton	1991, with 12,702 sf addition	2015	Good
St. Michaels Elementary	2008, with small addition	2023	Adequate
Tilghman Elementary	2003, with 14,484 sf addition	2023	Adequate
White Marsh Elementary	1997, with additions	2022	Adequate
Easton Middle School	2003, with addition	2022	Adequate
Easton High *	1997, with 1999 additions	2023	Adequate
St. Michaels Middle/High	2009, with small addition	2022	Adequate

* First TCPS schools inspected under the new MEA program.

Talbot County Public Schools completes a separate countywide inspection and rating of each of the school buildings on an annual basis. The overall rating for each school is listed on Form 101.1 under physical condition (along with the PSCP rating). [Table III-2](#) shows the rating report for each of the 34 components for each school. This rating system is somewhat similar to that used by the State Public School Construction Program; there are differences in the rating terminology and scorings, and the PSCP survey includes a separate category for Vertical Conveyance (lifts and elevators). In the TCPS evaluation each item is given one of five ratings, then a total is calculated, and the facility is assigned a corresponding overall score and rating depending on the number of points. An “A” is Superior (95-86), “B” is Very Good (85-76), “C” is Good (75-66), “D” is Fair (65-56), and “E” is Poor (55-0). The corresponding scores in the PSCP rating system are “Superior” (100-96), “Good” (95-86), “Adequate” (85-76), “Not Adequate” (75-66), and “Poor” (65-0).

The table that follows shows the Talbot County Public Schools Building Maintenance Survey prepared in February 2023. One (1) school received a “Superior” (A) rating, three (3) schools received a “Very Good” (B) rating, three (3) schools received a “Good” (C) rating, and one school received a “Fair” (D) rating. The Fair rating was for Chapel District Elementary School, which is undergoing a renovation and addition project that will improve its condition.

**Table III-2: Talbot County Public Schools
2023 Building Maintenance Survey – Inspection Report Justification**

		CDES	EES	EHS	EMS	SMES	SMMHS	TES	WMES	Averages
1	Roadways & Parking Lots	D	A	A	D	E	E	C	D	71.25
2	Site Appearance	C	A	C	C	A	B	B	C	82.50
3	Site Utilities, Secure	D	A	C	C	B	B	B	C	80.00
4	Exterior Appearance	C	A	C	D	B	B	B	C	80.00
5	Playground Equipment	D	A	N	N	D	N	C	C	75.00
6	Ext. Struct. Condition	C	A	C	C	B	B	B	C	81.25
7	Gutters & Downspouts	D	A	N	N	N	N	B	D	77.50
8	Windows & Caulking	E	A	C	C	B	B	B	D	77.50
9	Sidewalks	C	A	D	C	B	B	B	C	80.00
10	Entryways & Ext. Doors	D	A	D	C	B	B	B	C	78.75
11	Roof Conditions	E	A	A	D	B	B	B	E	77.50
12	Flashing & Gravelstop	E	A	A	D	B	B	N	E	76.43
13	Roofdrains	D	A	A	D	B	B	N	E	77.86
14	Equipment On Roof	D	A	D	D	B	B	N	D	75.00
15	Skylights	E	N	N	N	N	B	N	D	68.33
16	Interior Appearance	D	A	D	D	B	B	B	C	68.89
17	Floors	D	A	C	C	B	B	B	C	71.11
18	Walls	D	A	C	C	B	B	B	D	70.00
19	Interior Doors	D	A	D	C	B	B	B	C	70.00
20	Ceilings	D	A	C	C	B	B	B	C	71.11
21	Elect. Distribution	D	A	D	C	B	B	B	C	70.00
22	Lighting	D	A	D	C	B	B	B	C	70.00
23	FCU's/Radiators	D	A	D	C	B	B	B	C	70.00
24	Fire & Safety Equipment	D	A	D	C	B	B	B	C	70.00
25	Equipment Rooms, Gen.	D	A	C	C	B	B	B	C	71.11
26	Boilers/Water Heaters	D	A	C	D	B	B	B	D	68.89
27	Air Conditioning	E	A	D	D	B	B	B	D	66.67
28	Ventilation Equipment	E	A	D	D	B	B	B	D	66.67
29	Electrical Service	D	A	D	C	B	B	B	D	68.89
30	Hot Water Distribution	D	A	D	C	A	A	B	D	71.11
31	Chill Water Distribution	D	N	D	C	N	N	N	D	67.50
32	Plumbing	D	A	D	C	A	A	B	C	72.22
33	Int., Sub., Struct.	C	A	C	C	A	A	B	C	74.44
35a	Factor A x 95	0	2,945	380	0	380	285	0	0	499
35b	Factor B x 85	0	0	0	0	2,040	2,210	2,210	0	808
35c	Factor C x 75	375	0	825	1,500	0	0	150	1,350	525
35d	Factor D x 65	1,430	0	975	650	65	0	0	780	488
35e	Factor E x 55	330	0	0	0	55	55	0	165	76
36	Total Sum (Lines 35a through 35e)	2,135	2,945	2,180	2,150	2,540	2,550	2,360	2,295	2,394
37	Maximum Possible Items Evaluated	33	33	33	33	33	33	33	33	33
38	Less Items Not Applicable	0	2	2	3	3	3	5	0	2
39	Total Items Evaluated	33	31	31	30	30	30	28	33	29
40	Total Score (Line 36 divided by Line 39)	64.7	95.0	70.3	71.7	84.7	85.0	84.3	69.5	78.1
41	Overall Rating:	D	A	C	C	B	B	B	C	B
		A = Superior B = Very Good C = Good D = Fair E = Poor N = N/A								

Relocatable Classroom Buildings

There are a total of nine (9) locally owned relocatable classrooms in use by the Talbot County Public School System.

- a. Central office site (former Mt. Pleasant Elementary School):
 - Three relocatable classrooms are used for the Alternative Learning Academy (ALA).
 - Three relocatable classrooms are used for storage by the maintenance department.
- b. White Marsh Elementary School: A two-classroom relocatable building and a third relocatable classroom moved from Easton Elementary School during construction are used for the Critchlow School Age program.

Former Public School Buildings

During the 1998-1999 school-year the Board of Education moved the Talbot County central administrative offices and maintenance operations to the former Mt. Pleasant Elementary School in Easton. In addition, this site also serves the ALA and Checkmate-Out Programs (Alternative Programs), as well as evening High School for the GED program. There is also a warehouse on this site. The Board of Education transferred 6.25 acres of this site to the Talbot County Council for use as a public park. The remaining site area is 15.40 acres, of which 1.75 acres are leased to the Critchlow Adkins Children's Center for 20 years under an agreement that allows the Center to build and operate a childcare facility. This is the only former school facility that no longer houses students, and this facility is still owned by the Board of Education.

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IV. SCHOOL ENROLLMENT DATA

Historic Enrollment Data

Historical Public School Enrollment

Like other school systems in Maryland and the nation, Talbot County Public Schools experienced the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic. The enrollments at all but two schools decreased significantly in the fall of 2020. In Talbot County the changes were accommodated within the existing schools. As of spring 2023, the pandemic impact on enrollment had largely dissipated. Table IV-1 indicates that all but two of the schools in the system made modest increases in enrollment in the 2021-2022 school year, with the overall student population remaining flat. The changes in the two schools that saw decreased enrollments – White Marsh Elementary with a loss of three students, Easton Middle School with a decrease of 37 students – were so slight that they should not be taken as indications of future declining trends.

Table IV-1: Total Enrollment Changes, 2020 to 2021 and 2021 to 2022 (Head Count)

	Head Count 9/30/2021	Head Count 9/30/2022	Head Count 9/30/2023	Enrollment Changes, 2021 to 2022		Enrollment Changes, 2022 to 2023	
Chapel District ES	336	347	355	1	0.3%	8	2.3%
Easton ES	1,064	1,081	1,051	17	1.6%	-30	-2.8%
St. Michael's ES	327	334	335	7	2.1%	1	0.003%
Tilghman ES	94	89	90	-5	-5.3%	1	1.1%
White Marsh ES	283	289	278	6	2.1%	-11	-3.8%
Easton MS	817	737	711	-80	-9.8%	-26	-3.5%
Easton HS	1,172	1,203	1,210	31	2.7%	7	0.5%
St. Michael's MS/HS	430	443	453	13	3.0%	10	2.3%
Totals:	4,533	4,523	4,483	-10	-0.2%	-40	-0.8%

Projections of future student enrollments affect not only the utilization of facilities, but also anticipated State funding, the future staffing needs of the school system, and the specific grade levels where resources will need to be allocated. Over many decades, Talbot County Public Schools has experienced several major demographic cycles that have produced prolonged periods of gradual enrollment growth and decline. These cycles are the result of the “baby boom” and subsequent “boomlets,” and they continue to this day, although the size of each succeeding wave and trough has gradually diminished. These changes have rarely, however, resulted in school facilities that were either significantly overcrowded or underutilized for any extended period of time. It is anticipated that, aside from the influence of the new housing developments, these same trends will be likely to continue into the future. There is therefore no justification at this time for the Board of Education to consider reducing its overall school capacity. On the contrary, the housing developments described in Section II may indicate the need to begin planning for expansion of schools in the Easton area.

The historic demographic cycles have been independent of the rate of population growth and economic development in Talbot County. Whereas overall population growth has been largely attributable to in-migration associated with development of retirement and leisure communities, student enrollment growth has usually been driven by demographic cycles related to birth rates. As noted in Section II Community Analysis, many residential units in Talbot County are targeted at the retirement, second-home, and estate markets, housing types that do not yield school-age children. Very few multi-family housing units have been built in the county in recent decades. Other factors that explain the difference between building activity, population growth, and enrollment growth include the high cost of housing in Talbot County, which may force families with school-age children to seek more affordable housing in adjacent counties, and the relative lack of employment opportunities. It is anticipated that these same trends will also continue.

Historic enrollment by grades for the current school year and the previous 10 years can be found in [Table IV-3](#). All enrollment figures in the chart are for September 30 of the indicated year. This historical data is provided by the Maryland Department of Planning and does not include Prekindergarten students enrolled in Talbot County Public Schools. The MDP enrollment figures are for the full time equivalent (FTE) K-12 enrollment of the school system, which is to be distinguished from the head count enrollment:

- *Head count* refers to the actual number of students who are enrolled in the school system, irrespective of whether they are full-day or part-day students.
- *Full-time equivalent (FTE)* enrollment accounts for the fact that certain student groups students may attend school for part of the day. The total number of part-day students is divided by half and is then added to the regular full-day population to determine the FTE. FTE is used for the purpose of engaging the appropriate number of staff members and assigning appropriate instructional space. It is also used to determine if a facility is over-crowded or under-utilized in relation to its State Rated Capacity. In Talbot County, all grades are full day, with the exception of the half-day P3 program at Easton Elementary School.

Table IV-2 explains the relation between FTE and head-count for the five elementary schools in Talbot County:

• **Table IV-2: Elementary School Fulltime Equivalent Enrollment (FTE) and Head Count**

School	P3 Program	PreK Program	FTE and Head Count (H.C)
Chapel District ES	No	Full day	FTE = H.C.
Easton ES – Dobson	AM & PM programs	Full day	FTE = (K-5) + Prek + (1/2 X P3 H. C.)
St. Michaels ES	No	Full day	FTE = H.C.
Tilghman ES	No	Full day	FTE = H.C.
White Marsh ES	No	Full day	FTE = H.C.

Talbot County Public Schools enrollment experienced a period of decline from the early 1970s to 1983. A new enrollment growth cycle began in 1984 and peaked in 1998. Enrollment has been stable or has shown modest declines since 1998. The year in which enrollments reached a low point and then began to rise has varied by grade level, reflecting fluctuations in the birthrate. This tendency is shown in the summaries that follow.⁴⁴

- Total Enrollment. Total public school K-12 enrollment in Talbot County reached a low of 3,657 students in 1983 and a high in 1998. From 2010 to 2019 the FTE for kindergarten through 12th grade grew from 4,258 to a total of 4,452, an increase of 4.6%. The subsequent decline to a total FTE of 4,292 in 2020 and 4,230 in 2023 (an annual decrease of 3.59%) most certainly reflected the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic (similar declines were experienced by other school systems). Although enrollments have continued to decline, the rate of decline has decreased significantly, to 1.21% between 2020 and 2021, 0.19% between 2021 and 2022, and 0.05% between 2022 and 2023.
- Total Elementary Enrollment. Total K to 5 elementary school enrollment reached a low of 1,461 students in 1981. Prekindergarten programs began in 1991, which resulted in a PreK to 5 enrollment of 2,213 that year. After 1991, the PreK to 5 enrollment declined to a low of 1,912 in 2006, then

⁴⁴ Minor differences in these summaries from the totals reported by Maryland Department of Planning are due to out-of-district students.

increased to 2,271 in 2012, including a small number of students in the P3 program. The total P3/PreK to 5 head count has fluctuated within a narrow range between 2,263 in 2011 and 2,312 in 2019. In 2020 the P3/PreK to 5 head count declined to 2,082, but it rose to 2,157 in 2022, an increase of 75 students, and then declined to 2,120 in 2023. The expansion of Prekindergarten under the *Blueprint* legislation may lead to an increase in the P3/PreK to 5 enrollment.

- *P3/Prekindergarten Enrollment.* The P3/PreK head count declined in recent years, from 293 in 2012 to 256 in 2019 and 284 in 2023. The increase is most likely a result of the switch to providing full day PreK.
- *Kindergarten Enrollment.* Kindergarten enrollment reached a low of 200 students in 1979, peaked at 352 students in 1986, and then trended erratically lower to 263 students in 2004. The kindergarten enrollment grew by almost 100 students to 359 in 2013. Kindergarten enrollment dropped in 2016 to 290 but remained stable at 320 for 2019, 285 for 2020, and 314 for 2021. In 2022 it increased to 336 but dropped to 305 in 2023. It has hovered within a fairly narrow range for the last ten years.
- Middle School. Middle school enrollment (grades 6-8) reached a low of 797 students in 1987, and then increased to a peak of 1,124 students in 2002. After 2002 the middle school enrollment declined steadily to a low figure of 907 in 2010. It then increased steadily to reach over 1,000 in 2014 and 2015. It subsequently declined slightly but increased again to 1,048 in 2019. Since then, it has declined to 1,025 in 2020, 1,004 in 2021, 928 in 2022, and 921 in 2023.
- High School. High school enrollment in grades 9 to 12 hit its peak in 1979 at 1,580 students. It declined by 36.1 percent to 1,008 students in 1990, and then peaked again at 1,504 students in 2007. The high school enrollment dropped steadily after that time to a low of 1,321 in 2013. There has been growth since then, with the 2019 high school enrollment at 1,475. In 2020, the high school enrollment declined to 1,417 but rose to 1,455 in 2023..

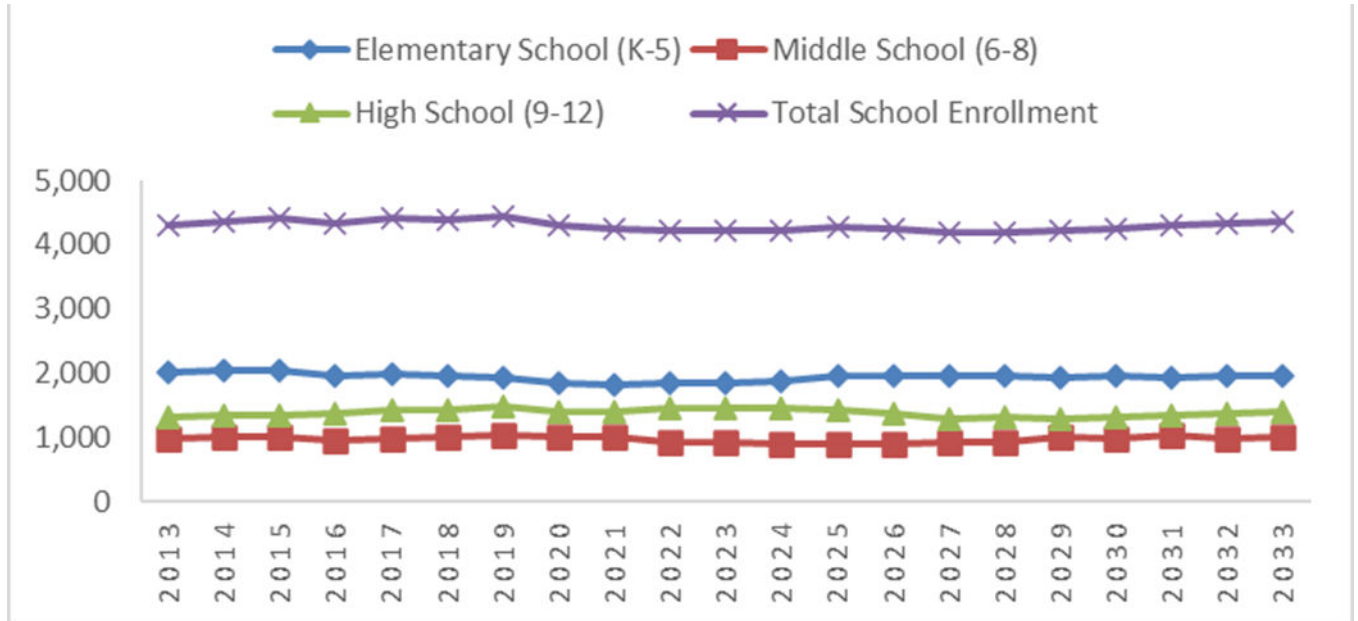
Enrollment growth in recent years has sometimes shifted geographically. For example, during the late 1990s Chapel District and White Marsh Elementary Schools grew while Easton Elementary School had a significant enrollment decline. Because of the relatively small total size of the Talbot County population and public school enrollment, a few large residential developments can have a significant effect on regional growth rates and require change. Beginning in 2009, redistricting moved students from Easton Elementary to Chapel District Elementary, St. Michaels Elementary, and White Marsh Elementary. A Board of Education action taken in February 2018 reassigned students from White Marsh Elementary School to Easton Elementary School in the 2020-2021 school year. The three new residential developments described in Section II, at full build-out, may lead to a noticeable increase in the student population in the Easton area.

Table IV-3: Talbot County Total Public School Historical Enrollments 2013 – 2023

Grades	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Kindergarten	359	325	323	290	335	281	320	285	314	336	305
Elementary Special	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other Ungraded	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1	344	365	330	323	285	337	295	317	284	316	337
2	344	344	362	326	333	295	330	294	318	265	326
3	322	348	349	349	334	338	295	333	288	315	271
4	312	329	350	340	355	342	338	289	320	294	323
5	323	320	331	338	346	360	351	332	297	316	294
6	348	332	326	336	346	349	368	339	308	289	306
7	318	352	324	317	333	334	339	358	333	312	301
8	308	323	352	317	317	332	341	328	363	327	314
9	369	409	399	462	430	415	406	380	408	434	447
10	381	358	389	337	405	388	425	383	385	382	409
11	263	297	289	329	287	351	335	359	321	341	307
12	308	270	277	258	302	274	309	295	301	298	290
Secondary Special	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other Secondary Ungraded	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Elementary Ungraded + (K-5)	2,004	2,031	2,045	1,966	1,988	1,953	1,929	1,850	1,821	1,842	1,856
(6-8)	974	1,007	1,002	970	996	1,015	1,048	1,025	1,004	928	921
(9-12)	1,321	1,334	1,354	1,386	1,424	1,428	1,475	1,417	1,415	1,455	1,453
(6-12) + Secondary Ungraded	2,295	2,341	2,356	2,356	2,420	2,443	2,523	2,442	2,419	2,383	2,374
Total School Enrollment	4,299	4,372	4,401	4,322	4,408	4,396	4,452	4,292	4,240	4,225	4,230

Prepared by Maryland Department of Planning, March 2023

Fig. IV-1: Talbot County Historical Enrollments and Projections, 2013-2033



Another factor of note is the change that has occurred in student demographics. Of significance to the school system is the growth in the Hispanic population throughout the county, and particularly in the Town of Easton. The share of enrollment by Hispanic students has increased by over fifteen percent since the 2007-2008 school year. The share of Hispanic students has bypassed the percentage of African-American students in the school system. The impact on the school system lies not only in the overall increase in the number of children who will be educated, but also in their specific needs as English Language Learners (ELL), generally requiring smaller class sizes and a higher teacher-to-student ratio than for non-immigrant groups.

Table IV-4: Racial/Ethnic Composition of Talbot County Public Schools 2018 to 2023 and Selected Previous Years

	American Indian	Asian	Black	Hispanic	White	NH/OPI*	Two or More	Total
2006-2007	7	83	937	246	3,125	n/a	n/a	4,398
	0.16%	1.89%	21.31%	5.59%	71.06%			
2011-2012	14	82	785	438	3,064	6	153	4,542
	0.31%	1.81%	17.28%	9.64%	67.46%	0.13%	3.37%	
2018-2019	5	89	741	914	2,654	2	269	4,674
	0.11%	1.90%	15.85%	19.55%	56.78%	0.04%	5.76%	
2019-2020	2	94	729	1,036	2,584	2	267	4,714
	0.04%	1.99%	15.46%	21.98%	54.82%	0.04%	5.66%	
2020-2021	2	97	683	1,012	2,463	1	266	4,524
	0.04%	2.14%	15.10%	22.37%	54.44%	0.02%	5.88%	
2021-2022	2	97	657	1,090	2,403	1	283	4,533
	0.04%	2.14%	14.49%	24.05%	53.01%	0.02%	6.24%	
2022-2023	3	92	671	1,141	2,337	2	277	4,523
	0.07%	2.03%	14.84%	25.23%	51.67%	0.04%	6.12%	
2023-2024	2	91	667	1,187	2,277	1	277	4,502
	0.04%	2.02%	14.82%	26.37%	50.58%	0.02%	6.15%	

*Native Hawaiian/ Other Pacific Islander

Concurrently, both the African-American and the White student enrollments decreased in absolute numbers and in percentage of the total student body. Table IV-4 presents Talbot County Public Schools student enrollment by Race/Ethnicity from 2006 to 2023. The following two charts illustrate the changes in student demographics that took place between the 2011-2022 school year and the 2022-2023 school year.

Fig. IV-2: TCPS Demographics, 2011-2012 and 2022-2023 ⁴⁵

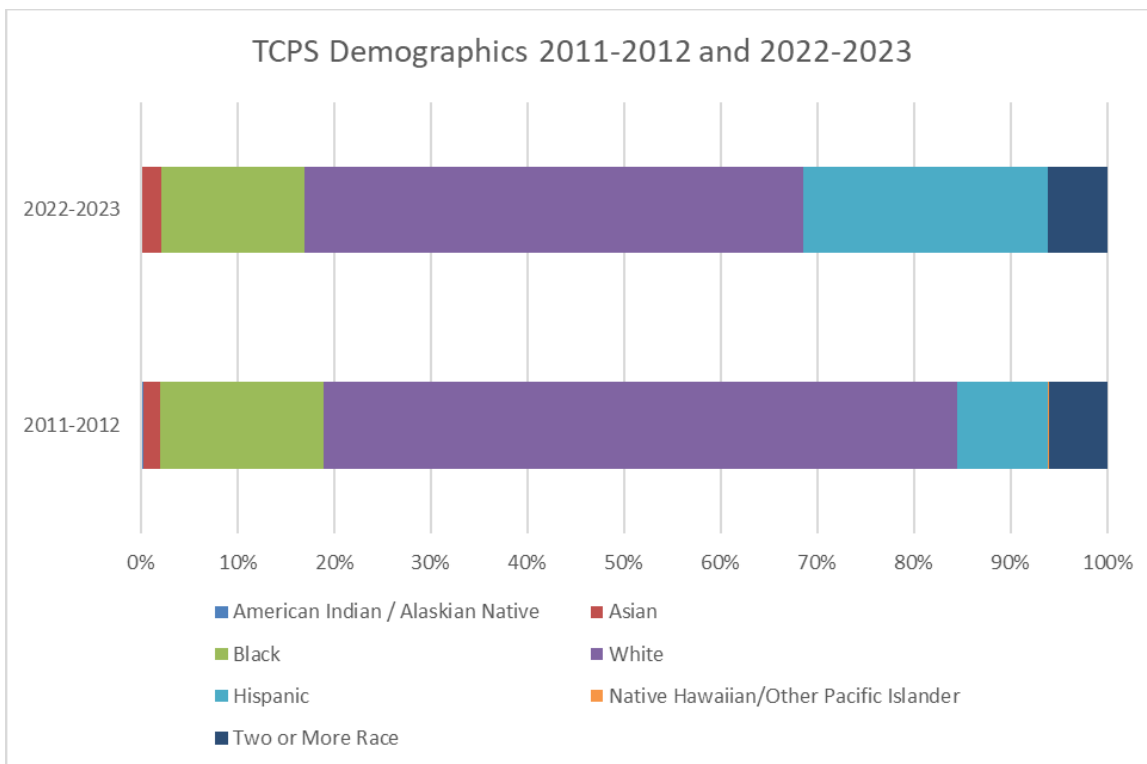
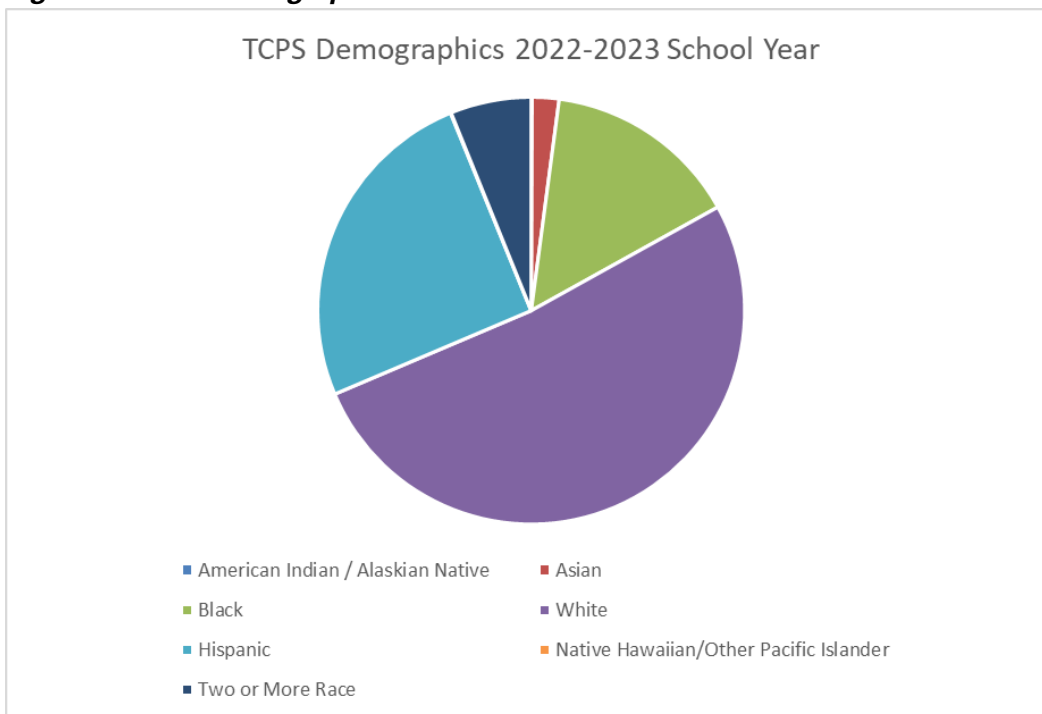


Fig. IV-3: TCPS Demographics 2022-2023 School Year ⁴⁶



⁴⁵ MSDE “Maryland Public School Enrollment by Race/Ethnicity and Gender and Number of Schools”

⁴⁶ MSDE “Maryland Public School Enrollment by Race/Ethnicity and Gender and Number of Schools”

Non-Public School Enrollment

The Maryland State Department of Education reports that for the 2023-2024 school year there were a total of eight non-public programs in Talbot County, three less than reported the previous year.⁴⁷ The total number of students decreased somewhat: 1,205 students were enrolled as of September 30, 2023, a decrease of 40 students but still noticeably higher than the 932 students that were enrolled in these programs in 2021. The increases were noticeable in every type of non-public school: nursery enrollment increased from 45 in 2021 to 65 in 2023, private school enrollments increased from 274 to 454, and church-exempt school enrollments increased from 613 to 686. These figures no doubt represent the decisions made by parents that the non-public school environment would be safe for their children, after the uncertainty they experienced in the 2020-2021 and 2021-2022 school years.

Since non-public schools self-report, a new procedure that began in 2009, the number of schools and the student information obtained from Maryland Department of Education reports pertaining to non-public school enrollment may vary from actual practice, depending on the consistency and accuracy of the self-reported data. While eight of the nine Talbot non-public schools reported to MSDE in 2019, only six reported in 2020; eight out of ten reported in 2021; and 10 out of 11 reported in 2022; however, eight out of eight reported in 2023. Taking into account these limitations in the data, the total non-public school enrollment (including the nursery school enrollment) is shown on Table IV-5 below for the past ten years.

Table IV-5: Non-Public School Enrollment, 2013 – 2023 (Including Nursery School)⁴⁸

Year	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Total Non-Public	1,121	1,143	1,325	1,189	1,002	1,106	309	932	1,245	1,205

No data is available on the county of residence for non-public school students who attend school in Talbot County. However, it is likely that the number of students from outside the county who attend Talbot County non-public schools exceeds the number of Talbot students who attend non-public schools outside of the county. A significant number of the students who attend at least two schools during their elementary and secondary education are drawn from outside of Talbot County.

When reviewing the non-public school enrollment data (exclusive of nursery school) from MSDE compared to the total Talbot County K-12 enrollment (public plus non-public) for the past seven years (and taking account of the potential inconsistencies in reporting from the non-public schools), the non-public school enrollment has represented between 17.0 and 21.4 percent of the total between 2014 and 2022 (with the exception of 2020, the Covid-19 pandemic year). The table below presents the data.

⁴⁷ Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE), “Nonpublic School Enrollment, State of Maryland, September 30, 2023,” Table 5

⁴⁸ Ibid. Table 1

Table IV-6: Non-Public K-12 School Enrollment Compared to Total K-12 Enrollment, 2014 – 2023 (Exclusive of Nursery School)⁴⁹

Year	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
TCPS K-12	4,392	4,300	4,406	4,468	4,435	4,283	4,233	4,232	4,230
Non-Public K-12	1,143	1,077	1,189	918	1,066	309	932	1,154	1,140
Total K-12 Enrollment (Public + Non-Public)	5,544	5,377	5,595	5,386	5,501	4,592	5,165	5,386	5,370
Percentage Non-Public	20.7%	20.0%	21.2%	17.0%	19.4%	6.7%	18%	21.4%	21.2%

Historically, non-nursery non-public school enrollment grew much faster than public school enrollment from the late 1980s through the 1999-2000 school year. The non-public school enrollment, which had been above 1,000 for many years, dropped below that level from 2012 to 2014, but increased above 1,000 in 2015 through 2017 and again in 2019. The increased enrollments in the fall of 2022 and continuing in 2023 are within the normal range for previous years. It suggests that the dramatic decrease in the 2020-2021 school year may have been a singular event, rather than the beginning of a long-term trend.

Home Instruction

Home instruction enrollment has followed a trend like that of non-public school enrollment. In 1990 there were only 16 home instruction K-12 students in Talbot County, or 0.4 percent of the public school enrollment. Home instruction enrollment then increased to 147 students in 2003-2004, or 3.4 percent of the public school K-12 enrollment.

Since the last peak in 2003-2004, home instruction enrollment has generally declined to 2.3% of the total public school enrollment in 2019. However, in the 2020-2021 school year there were approximately 284 Talbot County K-12 students enrolled in home instruction, or 6.3% percent of the public school K-12 enrollment. This marked increase was without doubt related to Covid-19 situation. The fact that this higher rate continued in the 2021-2022 and 2022-2023 school years may indicate that this represents a long-term trend.

Table IV-7: Home School Enrollment as Percentage of Public School Enrollment, 2013 – 2023

Year	Home Schooled Pupils (K-12)	Percentage of County Enrollment (K-12)
2014	102	2.3 %
2015	133	3.0 %
2016	146	3.2%
2017	131	3.0%
2018	102	2.3%
2019	102	2.3%
2020	284	6.3%
2021	255	5.6%

⁴⁹ The percentages are approximate, since the Maryland State Department of Education annual report include 2, 3, and 4 year old children under the category Church Exempt Schools Enrollment. See “Nonpublic School Enrollment, State of Maryland, September 30, 2023,” Table 1.

2022	234	5.5%
2023	226	5.3%

The majority of home-school students are monitored by a church organization or by non-public school organizations approved by the Maryland State Department of Education. In the 2023-2024 school year, the number of home instruction students that were supervised by Talbot County Public Schools was 226, or 5.3% of the total homeschool population.

Projected Enrollment Data

Projection Methodology and Data – Maryland Department of Planning

The Maryland Department of Planning (MDP) publishes enrollment projections each year. The MDP projection methodology uses historical data to relate the number of births in a given year to subsequent grades in the form of ratios. These are called grade succession ratios (GSR) or cohort survival ratios (CSR). These ratios show the relationship between one year’s enrollment in a particular grade and the previous year’s enrollment in the preceding grade. The MDP grade succession ratios reflect the effects of five factors that determine the number of students in the subsequent grades: child mortality, net in-migration and emigration of school age children for the county as a whole, transfer of children between public and private schools, non-promotion of children to the next grade level, and dropouts in the later years of secondary school. Barring unusual circumstances that may cause a rapid increase or decrease in enrollments, the GSRs reflect the cumulative effect of these factors. If any of the factors have changed in recent years, this will affect the historic grade succession ratio.

The enrollment projections for school years 2024 through 2033 developed by MDP are for the entire countywide school system on a grade-by-grade basis, rather than an individual school basis. MDP’s projections for Talbot County are shown in [Table IV-8](#). The MDP projections are for full-time equivalent (FTE) enrollments and do not include Prekindergarten students. The projections are rounded to the nearest ten.

The total K to12 Talbot County public school enrollment is projected by MDP to increase by 97 students during the next 10 years, from the 4,230 FTE reported in 2023 (September 30, 2023) to 4,360 FTE in 2033. The K to 12 projections developed independently by Talbot County Public Schools are 4,323 FTE in 2032, 37 students less than the MDP projection for 2033.

Table IV-8: Talbot County Public School Enrollment Historical 2023 and Projected 2024-2033

Grades	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033
Kindergarten	305	290	360	290	300	300	320	320	320	320	320
1	337	330	300	370	300	310	310	320	320	320	320
2	326	330	340	300	380	300	320	320	330	330	330
3	271	330	340	340	310	380	300	320	320	330	330
4	323	270	330	340	340	310	380	300	320	320	330
5	294	320	280	330	340	350	310	390	310	330	320
6	306	300	320	280	340	340	350	310	390	310	330
7	301	300	290	320	270	330	330	340	300	380	300
8	314	300	300	290	310	270	330	330	340	300	380
9	447	390	380	380	360	390	340	410	420	420	380
10	409	430	370	350	350	340	370	310	380	390	390
11	307	330	370	310	300	300	290	320	270	330	330

12	290	310	300	340	290	280	280	270	290	240	300
Elementary Ungraded + (K-5)	1856	1,870	1,950	1,970	1,970	1,950	1,940	1,970	1,920	1,950	1,950
(6-8)	921	900	910	890	920	940	1,010	980	1,030	990	1,010
(9-12)	1,453	1,460	1,420	1,380	1,300	1,310	1,280	1,310	1,360	1,380	1,400
(6-12) + Secondary Ungraded	2,374	2,360	2,330	2,270	2,220	2,250	2,290	2,290	2,390	2,370	2,410
Total School Enrollment	4,230	4,230	4,280	4,240	4,190	4,200	4,230	4,260	4,310	4,320	4,360

Notes: All projected figures rounded to the nearest ten
Totals are sum of rounded enrollments by grade
Projections prepared by Maryland Department of Planning March 2022

Projection Methodology and Data – Talbot County Public Schools

Educational Facilities Planning LLC has developed systemwide and individual school grade enrollment forecasts for all TCPS schools, based on the historical enrollment data for all grades. Because of the Covid-19 pandemic, the 2020-2021 school year presented an unprecedented situation. However, the enrollment projection methodology used for the 2021 EFMP was still consistent with that of previous years.

The events of the last four years have introduced considerable change in the enrollment patterns of public school systems across Maryland and the United States. For small, largely rural systems like Talbot County Public Schools, enrollments before 2020 were nearly constant from year to year, providing a high degree of predictability. This changed suddenly with the pandemic in 2020, when a number of parents withdrew their children from public school for the fall semester. At that time, it could not be known whether this represented a one-time event or the onset of a new enrollment trend.

Consequently, in the 2021 EFMP, the TCPS enrollment projections were based on the 2019-2020 school year enrollments. This treated the 2020-2021 enrollment decrease as an anomaly, with the expectation that enrollments would show noticeable signs of recovery in the fall of 2021. However, as shown in [Table IV-1](#), the fall 2021 enrollments remained almost flat, suggesting that a recovery from the 2020 sudden decline would occur slowly.

As a result, for the 2022 EFMP, the TCPS projections were calculated using the September 30, 2021, enrollments as the base, and using an average of the past 3 years to calculate the grade-succession ratios. This method acknowledged that the students who left the system in the fall of 2020 were likely to return slowly and perhaps not completely, but that the growth pattern for the remaining students would reflect those of Talbot County in the pre-pandemic period. The same methodology has been followed for the 2024 EFMP, and barring a return of pandemic conditions, will be the methodology used in future years. This method is both realistic and optimistic: it recognizes the reality of the pandemic impacts, but it also suggests confidence in a slow but steady return to normalcy.

For each historical grade transition, grade succession ratios (GSR) were calculated. In order to forecast each grade, an average succession ratio was selected from the history that most closely aligned with the MDP projection for that grade. As noted earlier, State-reported births from five years prior to the recorded kindergarten enrollment were used in the same way to calculate the birth to K succession ratios for purposes of forecasting the future countywide kindergarten enrollment. Since there is not a reliable way to forecast PreK enrollment, the five-year average PreK enrollments at individual schools were assumed for the future years. School birth forecasts were made by apportioning the countywide births to each school in the same proportion

as the countywide kindergarten enrollment. Countywide and school projections are adjusted to include anticipated enrollment from future residential development when imminent.

The total projections for elementary school, middle school, and high school developed by TCPS are compared to the equivalent totals developed by MDP. Local forecasts should not vary more than 5% from MDP forecasts without agreement between the LEA and MDP. The total TCPS forecast does not exceed the 5% variance. Discrepancies are explained by rounding, differences in assumptions regarding grade succession ratios, and the inclusion of anticipated enrollment growth from forecasted residential development. Variances in the projections are likely to increase with each succeeding year, not only because of the inherent uncertainty of the future events that might influence student enrollments, but also because even slight differences in assumptions – e.g. use of a three-year average vs. a four-year or five-year average – tend to compound into significant discrepancies with each successive application of the grade succession ratio.

One factor of particular note is the yield factor for housing, particularly in Easton. The three housing projects described in Section II are projected to increase the school system by as many as 370 students at full build-out. However, even if new residential construction were to maintain the slow pace of growth it has shown in recent years, and were to remain largely focused on higher-priced housing for retirees and vacationers, it is still possible that existing housing in the more affordable price range could be occupied by larger households or even several households. Events external to Talbot County can lead to rapid and unanticipated changes in the student yield of various housing types. Accordingly, the student yield characteristics of various housing types, particularly multi-family housing, should be periodically monitored to determine if there are changes that may imply an increase in the number of school-age children. Other external factors that are unique to a specific school's enrollment trend, e.g. a rapid increase in English Language Learners, could be a factor in enrollment projections. Finally, the potential impact of the current coronavirus epidemic is likely to remain unknown for some years.

Special Considerations: P3 and PreK, Out-of-Area Students, ALA Students; Attendance Area Changes

- *P3 and Prekindergarten* enrollments are based on the information provided by TCPS rather than on the classroom capacity for these programs.
- *Out-of-Area* transfer requests that are approved each year also impact the projected enrollments at individual schools. These were described in Part I - Goals, Standards, Policies and Guidelines. The enrollment projections are based upon the actual number of students attending all schools in each grade, which includes the approved transfers. The trends associated with the transfer students cannot be isolated in preparing the school-by-school enrollment projections. The methodology therefore assumes that the number of transfer students at each school will remain reasonably constant from year to year.
- *Alternative education* students who attend the ALA for a portion of the school year are counted in the enrollment of their home school.
- *Speakers of Foreign Languages*. Since the likelihood is very high that English is not spoken in the home environment among this student group, the school system must accommodate the special needs of the children to ensure that they receive an education that is equitable with that of their English-speaking peers. This educational objective typically requires that instruction be provided in smaller learning groups, very often in schools that were not originally designed with adequate resource rooms or other small pull-out spaces. In this circumstance accommodation must be achieved in an *ad hoc* manner in older schools; observation indicated, for example, that the staff at the former Easton Elementary School made use of virtually every available space, including storage closets and the teachers' lounge, for instruction. This factor is of great importance not only in determining the future capacity of school facilities, but in also the detailed design of the instructional spaces.
- *Attendance Areas*: Three specific sets of changes are incorporated into the projections:

- Beginning with the 2009-2010 school year, the Board of Education approved redistricting intended to reduce overcrowding at Easton Elementary School and to better utilize excess capacity at Chapel District, White Marsh and St. Michaels Elementary Schools. Because of grandfathering provisions, the effects were phased in over several years, becoming fully implemented by the 2015-2016 school year. In 2009-2010 the Board reassigned sixth graders from Tilghman Elementary and St. Michaels Elementary to St. Michaels Middle/High, and in 2014 reassigned some Prekindergarten students from St. Michaels Elementary to Tilghman Elementary. In December 2016 the Board approved a boundary change between Easton Elementary School and White Marsh Elementary School, resulting in a more balanced projected utilization for the two schools. This reassignment went into effect for the 2020-2021 school year.

Pending additional decisions on redistricting, it is assumed that further enrollment projections for the elementary schools will be based on grade succession ratios. If in the future the Board of Education approves consolidation of Tilghman Elementary School with St. Michaels Elementary, the projections for the latter will be adjusted accordingly.

- The enrollment projections include the change in grade organization and school assignment approved by the Board of Education effective for the 2014-2015 school year. The sixth graders from St. Michaels Elementary and Tilghman Elementary are now included in the projections for St. Michaels Middle/High School. The Prekindergarten students who would have attended St. Michaels Elementary School but who live within the Tilghman Elementary attendance area are now included in the projection for Tilghman Elementary School.
- Beginning with the 2020-2021 school year, students residing in the southern portion of the Easton area who attended White Marsh Elementary School were redistricted to attend Easton Elementary School. The enrollment projections in this 2022 EFMP reflect these changes.

Future Enrollment Projections (Form 101.2)

The FTE local enrollment projections developed by EFP are shown on IAC/PSCP Form 101.2 for the entire county and then for each school. The school-by-school projections include the full time equivalent enrollment of P3 and PK students. For the County totals, the FTE and head count totals are shown.

All five elementary schools have full day PreK programs, and therefore the PreK head count is the same as the FTE. Likewise, in accordance with State law, kindergarten is a full-day program at all five elementary schools; the kindergarten head count is therefore equal to the FTE. The P3 program at Easton Elementary School is now a morning and afternoon program, and accordingly the P3 FTE is one-half of the head count. Notes at the bottom of each elementary school Form 101.2 explain these calculations.

A copy of the letter from Talbot County Public Schools accepting the Maryland Department of Planning's enrollment projections for use in this EFMP is included in the Appendices, with a letter from MDP acknowledging that Talbot County Public Schools will utilize the MDP enrollment projections as a basis for the 2024 EFMP.

FTE ENROLLMENT PROJECTIONS BY GRADE

LEA: Talbot County Public Schools DATE: May 13, 2024

SCHOOL: Talbot County Public Schools

ENROLLMENTS AS OF SEPTEMBER 30TH

	ACTUAL	YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 3	YEAR 4	YEAR 5	YEAR 10
	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2033
P3 (FTE)	26	26	26	26	26	26	26
PREK (FTE)	233	245	288	225	249	249	249
KINDERGARTE N	305	313	360	290	321	322	325
1st	337	305	312	358	288	321	322
2nd	326	339	305	311	357	288	321
3rd	271	331	342	309	315	361	326
4th	323	277	335	345	313	320	330
5th	294	326	277	336	347	313	329
6th	306	281	311	263	322	333	318
7th	301	311	286	316	268	328	291
8th	314	301	311	286	316	268	360
9th	447	398	385	395	370	401	398
10th	409	427	378	365	375	350	369
11th	307	426	364	315	302	312	341
12th	290	270	309	327	278	265	293
SP ED*							
TOT. K-12 w/o P3 & PK	4230	4305	4275	4216	4172	4182	4323
TOT. K-12 w/ P3 & PK (FTE)	4489	4576	4589	4467	4447	4457	4598
TOT. Head Count K-12 w/ P3 & PK	4514	4601	4614	4492	4472	4482	4623
TOT. K-5 w/o P3 & PK	1856	1891	1931	1949	1941	1925	1953
TOT. K-5 w/ P3 & PK (FTE)	2120	2175	2258	2213	2229	2213	2241
TOT. Head Count K-5 w/ P3 & PK	2120	2175	2258	2213	2229	2213	2241
Total 6-8	921	893	908	865	906	929	969
Total 9-12	1453	1521	1436	1402	1325	1328	1401

FTE ENROLLMENT PROJECTIONS BY GRADE							
LEA:	Talbot County Public Schools			DATE:	May 13, 2024		
SCHOOL:	Chapel District Elementary School						
	ENROLLMENTS AS OF SEPTEMBER 30TH						
	ACTUAL	YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 3	YEAR 4	YEAR 5	YEAR 10
	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2033
P3 (FTE)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
PREK (FTE)	50	55	63	51	57	57	57
KINDERGARTE N	44	51	59	47	52	53	54
1st	65	45	52	59	48	53	54
2nd	52	66	45	52	59	48	54
3rd	51	52	65	44	51	59	54
4th	40	51	51	64	44	51	53
5th	53	44	54	55	68	47	56
6th							
7th							
8th							
9th							
10th							
11th							
12th							
SP ED*							
TOT. K-5 w/o P3 & PK	305	309	326	321	322	311	325
TOT. K-5 w/ P3 & PK (FTE)	355	364	389	372	379	368	382
TOT. Head Count K-5 w/ P3 & PK	355	364	389	372	379	368	382

NOTE: Chapel District Elementary School has a full day PreK program. There is no P3 program in this school. The FTE is therefore equal to the head count.

FTE ENROLLMENT PROJECTIONS BY GRADE							
LEA:	Talbot County Public Schools			DATE:	May 13, 2024		
SCHOOL:	Easton Elementary School						
	ENROLLMENTS AS OF SEPTEMBER 30TH						
	ACTUAL	YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 3	YEAR 4	YEAR 5	YEAR 10
	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2033
P3 (FTE)	26	26	26	26	26	26	26
PREK (FTE)	112	101	122	90	104	104	104
KINDERGARTEN	145	152	175	141	156	156	158
1st	167	144	151	174	139	155	156
2nd	159	164	140	147	170	135	152
3rd	131	163	167	144	151	173	156
4th	176	134	165	169	146	153	158
5th	141	177	134	165	169	146	158
6th							
7th							
8th							
9th							
10th							
11th							
12th							
SP ED*							
TOT. K-5 w/o P3 & PK	919	934	932	940	931	918	938
TOT. K-5 w/ P3 & PK (FTE)	1057	1061	1080	1056	1061	1048	1068
TOT. Head Count K-5 w/ P3 & PK	1082	1086	1105	1081	1086	1073	1093

NOTE: Easton Elementary School has a full day PreK program and a morning and afternoon P3 program. The FTE is therefore equal to the number of PreK to 5 students plus one-half of the total number of P3 students. The total number of P3 students is 51; 26 is the full-time equivalent number of students.

FTE ENROLLMENT PROJECTIONS BY GRADE

LEA:	Talbot County Public Schools	DATE:	May 13, 2024				
SCHOOL:	St Michaels Elementary School						
ENROLLMENTS AS OF SEPTEMBER 30TH							
	ACTUAL	YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 3	YEAR 4	YEAR 5	YEAR 10
	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2033
P3 (FTE)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
PREK (FTE)	37	38	44	36	39	39	39
KINDERGARTEN	43	49	56	45	50	50	50
1st	45	42	48	55	44	49	49
2nd	63	49	46	51	58	48	52
3rd	44	63	49	46	51	58	52
4th	53	48	67	52	49	55	56
5th	50	53	47	66	52	49	56
6th							
7th							
8th							
9th							
10th							
11th							
12th							
SP ED*							
TOT. K-5 w/o P3 & PK	298	304	313	315	304	309	315
TOT. K-5 w/ P3 & PK (FTE)	335	342	357	351	343	348	354
TOT. Head Count K-5 w/ P3 & PK	335	342	357	351	343	348	354

NOTE: St. Michaels Elementary School has a full day PreK program. There is no P3 program in this school. The FTE is therefore equal to the head count.

FTE ENROLLMENT PROJECTIONS BY GRADE							
LEA:	Talbot County Public Schools			DATE:	May 13, 2024		
SCHOOL:	Tilghman Elementary School						
	ENROLLMENTS AS OF SEPTEMBER 30TH						
	ACTUAL	YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 3	YEAR 4	YEAR 5	YEAR 10
	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2033
P3 (FTE)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
PREK (FTE)	9	17	20	16	14	14	14
KINDERGARTEN	19	12	13	11	12	12	12
1st	17	19	11	13	11	13	12
2nd	12	17	19	11	13	11	12
3rd	7	15	20	22	14	16	15
4th	14	7	15	20	22	14	15
5th	12	13	6	14	19	21	12
6th							
7th							
8th							
9th							
10th							
11th							
12th							
SP ED*							
TOT. K-5 w/o P3 & PK	81	83	84	91	91	87	78
TOT. K-5 w/ P3 & PK (FTE)	90	100	104	107	105	101	92
TOT. Head Count K-5 w/ P3 & PK	90	100	104	107	105	101	92

NOTE: Tilghman Elementary School has a full day PreK program. There is no P3 program in this school. The FTE is therefore equal to the head count.

Enrollment at this school increased in the 2018-2019 school year due to a Board of Education policy allowing open enrollment for all elementary students in Talbot County. The enrollment projections for future years are based on the understanding that this policy will be continued.

FTE ENROLLMENT PROJECTIONS BY GRADE

LEA:	Talbot County Public Schools	DATE:	May 13, 2024				
SCHOOL:	White Marsh Elementary School						
ENROLLMENTS AS OF SEPTEMBER 30TH							
	ACTUAL	YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 3	YEAR 4	YEAR 5	YEAR 10
	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2033
P3 (FTE)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
PREK (FTE)	25	34	39	32	35	35	35
KINDERGARTEN	54	49	57	46	51	51	51
1st	43	55	50	57	46	51	51
2nd	40	43	55	50	57	46	51
3rd	38	38	41	53	48	55	49
4th	40	37	37	40	52	47	48
5th	38	39	36	36	39	50	47
6th							
7th							
8th							
9th							
10th							
11th							
12th							
SP ED*							
TOT. K-5 w/o P3 & PK	253	261	276	282	293	300	297
TOT. K-5 w/ P3 & PK (FTE)	278	295	315	314	328	335	332
TOT. Head Count K-5 w/ P3 & PK	278	295	315	314	328	335	332

NOTE: White Marsh Elementary School has a full day PreK program. There is no P3 program in this school. The FTE is therefore equal to the head count.

FTE ENROLLMENT PROJECTIONS BY GRADE							
LEA:	Talbot County Public Schools			DATE:	May 13, 2024		
SCHOOL:	Easton Middle School						
ENROLLMENTS AS OF SEPTEMBER 30TH							
	ACTUAL	YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 3	YEAR 4	YEAR 5	YEAR 10
	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2033
P3 (FTE)							
PREK (FTE)							
KINDERGARTEN							
1st							
2nd							
3rd							
4th							
5th							
6th	238	215	242	206	238	259	244
7th	233	242	219	246	210	243	222
8th	240	231	240	217	244	208	277
9th							
10th							
11th							
12th							
SP ED*							
TOTAL	711	688	701	669	692	710	743

FTE ENROLLMENT PROJECTIONS BY GRADE

LEA: Talbot County Public Schools DATE: May 13, 2024

SCHOOL: Easton High School

ENROLLMENTS AS OF SEPTEMBER 30TH

	ACTUAL	YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 3	YEAR 4	YEAR 5	YEAR 10
	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2033
P3 (FTE)							
PREK (FTE)							
KINDERGARTEN							
1st							
2nd							
3rd							
4th							
5th							
6th							
7th							
8th							
9th	385	316	307	316	293	320	315
10th	340	364	295	286	295	272	284
11th	256	364	308	239	230	239	261
12th	229	218	247	271	202	193	204
SP ED*							
TOTAL	1210	1262	1157	1112	1020	1024	1064

FTE ENROLLMENT PROJECTIONS BY GRADE							
LEA:	Talbot County Public Schools			DATE:	May 13, 2024		
SCHOOL:	St Michaels Middle/High School						
	ENROLLMENTS AS OF SEPTEMBER 30TH						
	ACTUAL	YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 3	YEAR 4	YEAR 5	YEAR 10
	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2033
P3 (FTE)							
PREK (FTE)							
KINDERGARTEN							
1st							
2nd							
3rd							
4th							
5th							
6th	68	66	69	57	84	74	74
7th	68	69	67	70	58	85	69
8th	74	70	71	69	72	60	83
9th	62	82	78	79	77	81	83
10th	69	63	83	79	80	78	85
11th	52	62	56	76	72	73	80
12th	60	52	62	56	76	72	89
SP ED*							
TOTAL	453	464	486	486	519	523	563

V. FACILITY NEEDS ANALYSIS

The building program of Talbot County Public Schools has been focused since the mid-1990s on the modernization of all existing schools. This objective was attained with the renovations at St. Michaels Elementary and St. Michaels Middle/High Schools in 2008/2009 and the replacement of Easton Elementary School in 2020. As a result of its thorough and systematic approach to building renovation, Talbot County Public Schools has for many years shared with Howard County Public Schools and Queen Anne's County Public Schools the distinction of having the newest average square footage in the state. The average adjusted age of the TCPS school facility plant is 18.1 years at this writing.⁵⁰ With the proposed renovation of Chapel District Elementary School, TCPS will continue to upgrade its building plant to provide a safe and healthy environment for teaching and learning, and to support and enhance the delivery of educational programs and services.

Existing and Projected Facility Utilization

Facility utilization is an important measure of the efficiency of a school system. Educational facilities that are significantly underutilized represent an unnecessary expenditure of maintenance and operation (M&O) funds that could be better used for instructional or other purposes. An underutilized facility may also be difficult to supervise and secure, and it may not be possible to provide a full support staff or the full range of educational offerings for a small student population. By contrast, a school facility that is significantly over-crowded can impair the learning ability of students through classes that are too large, excessive schedule stress placed on core functions and specials (e.g. the cafeteria, music, physical education), difficulty in maintaining an orderly environment, and a sense of anonymity among students.

State Rated Capacity

State Rated Capacity (SRC) is defined by the IAC as “the number of students that the IAC or its designee determines that an individual school has the physical capacity to enroll.”⁵¹ SRC reflects how the spaces within a school facility are actually used at the time that the enrollments are counted. SRC is determined by the Maryland Department of Planning based on formulas found in the IAC *Administrative Procedures Guide* (APG).⁵² The SRC of a school is found by summing the capacities of individual instructional spaces, with the capacity of each space determined by its type – regular classroom, special education classroom, gymnasium, etc. – and the grade level it houses. In the case of secondary schools, a utilization factor is used to reflect the fact that not all spaces are used continually throughout the school day.

SRC is utilized for a number of purposes:

- The IAC uses it to determine the eligibility of a project for State construction funding. Enrollment eligibility is evaluated by comparing the SRC to the projected enrollment in the seventh year from the date of submission of the request. For all major projects, the 7th-year enrollment of the subject school and of adjacent schools is taken into account in most cases; for systemic renovation projects, the 7th year enrollment of only the subject school is used to determine eligibility.
 - To be eligible for State funds for a replacement or new school, a major project must show that it will be at least 50% utilized when it opens, with utilization increasing over the following years. Under unique circumstances, a renovation project may be eligible that has a projected utilization of less than 50%, but State funding will be based on the square footage developed from the projected utilization, not on the existing or proposed square footage.

⁵⁰ IAC, “Maintenance of Maryland's Public School Buildings Fiscal Year 2023 Annual Report”

⁵¹ COMAR 14.39.02.04.A

⁵² See www.pscp.state.md.us, *Administrative Procedures Guide*, Appendix 102 A – State Rated Capacity.

- For a systemic renovation project such as a roof or boiler replacement to be eligible, the projected utilization should be 60% or more, except under unique circumstances. This criterion also applies to projects in the Aging School Program (ASP) and the former Qualified Zone Academy Bond (QZAB) program.

The purpose of the enrollment analysis, in combination with other eligibility factors, is to ensure that scarce State and local capital resources are not directed to a facility that will be significantly under-utilized and should perhaps be considered for closure. Such decisions affect not only the capital budget, but also the long-term operational budget of the school system, a portion of which will be directed at the heating, cooling, maintenance, and other operational costs of the under-utilized facility.

- SRC is used in facility utilization calculations that guide long-range planning to determine the best location and timing of projects that will provide relief for projected over-capacity schools, to determine when facilities should be considered for consolidation or closure, and to guide decisions on redistricting to reduce overcrowding in schools by taking advantage of the enrollment capacity in adjacent school buildings.
- State Rated Capacity is used by a number of local governments in Maryland to determine when residential development can proceed under Adequate Public Facility Ordinance (APFO) rules. School capacity is considered, along with the capacity of other public services, in determining whether the proposed housing development will impose a burden on public services and impair the quality of life of the jurisdiction.

Facility Utilization Based on SRC

The State of Maryland has established uniform measures to compare the utilization of schools across the state. Facility utilization is determined by dividing the current and projected Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) enrollment by the current State Rated Capacity (SRC), and is described as a percentage of capacity. Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) enrollment, as explained in Section IV, is determined as the sum of all students in grades K through 12, plus one-half of the students who are in half-day programs, for example Prekindergarten that has a morning and afternoon session.⁵³ FTE is distinguished from head count, which includes all students who attend the school, whether full-day or part-day. FTE is used to calculate the number of staff members that are needed to instruct the study body and the number of instructional spaces required to support these staff members.

The utilization rate of a school is therefore a function of both enrollments and how instructional spaces are used in a facility. When a school is less crowded, more options are available for how each teaching space may be used. Standard elementary classrooms may then be occupied by instructional uses that are not rated in the calculation of SRC, such as art, music and computer skills, or by community uses such as before-and-after school programs or senior center activities. Standard classrooms may also be used for programs that have a lower capacity rating, such as special education. If enrollments later increase, it is typical for these spaces to be converted back to standard elementary classrooms, which can then increase the SRC of the school when it is re-calculated. By the same token, a new school in which all spaces are used as originally intended may later find that some non-rated spaces need to be converted to classrooms, which will increase the SRC. A school that is operated somewhat below 100% of its SRC offers a good deal of flexibility for the principal and staff to make adjustments in space utilization to meet special conditions, or to absorb the kind of short-term increases in the student body that can happen in any school system.

These scheduling and use changes will increase or reduce the school's SRC even while the physical structure of the building remains unchanged. Changes made to accommodate a transitory shift in enrollments or

⁵³ If a school system has full-day Prekindergarten, or has implemented PreK for only a morning or an afternoon session, but not both, the head count for these students is the same as FTE.

academic program are not usually recorded as a change of SRC; the change must be more permanent to warrant a re-examination of the SRC by the Maryland Department of Planning, and the changed SRC is not recorded until approved by MDP. Once the new SRC is approved, the utilization of the school and the school system is also recalculated. As a result of recommendations of the 21st Century School Commission, a body established by the General Assembly that met for two years to review the processes and standards of school construction in Maryland, the SRC of all schools in Maryland was recalculated in the spring of 2019.

If a school is or is projected to be severely under-utilized, the school system has a number of options. These options include:

- Consolidate classes and/or grade levels to achieve better class sizes;
- Utilize regular elementary classrooms for non-rated uses, such as art or music;
- “Mothball” excess space in order to reduce fixed costs of maintenance and operations (however, the spatial arrangement of many schools and the layout of their mechanical and electrical systems generally prevent the complete isolation of under-utilized spaces);
- Temporarily “mothball” the entire facility;
- Allow community partners or other governmental entities to use under-utilized space (with consideration for the appropriate separation of adult and student populations, and for factors such as acoustics and maintaining emergency egress);
- Lease the facility to a private school or another governmental entity, with provisions for return of use to the school system under defined conditions or after a specified term;
- Permanently close the facility and consolidate the student population into one or more other facilities. School closure must follow the procedures outlined in COMAR 14.39.02.23, .24, and .25, and COMAR 13A.02.09.01.
- If the facility is warranted for replacement, build the new facility at a reduced size that corresponds to the projected enrollment.

However, if a school has or is projected to have a utilization rate that is greater than 100 percent, the school system also has a range of options. These options include:

- Increase class size;
- Increase the teacher-to-student ratio (e.g. by placing teaching assistants in the classroom);
- Redistrict the attendance areas of the subject and adjacent schools in order to utilize the available capacity at other schools;
- Reorganize the grade structure to use available capacity in nearby schools;
- Utilize one or more relocatable classrooms (pending a more permanent facilities solution);
- Utilize one or more non-instructional spaces, e.g. larger storage rooms, for some instructional activities;
- Construct one or more additions (sometimes in conjunction with renovation of the existing facility); or
- Construct a new school or replace the existing school with a facility of increased capacity.

The last option is typically only exercised if the new or replacement school will provide relief to several schools, and is also warranted by the condition of the existing facility. In the case of a single over-crowded school, an addition may be the most cost-effective option, if site conditions allow for it. With an addition, consideration should be given to the renovation or expansion of core spaces, particularly the cafeteria, in order to avoid

congestion and overuse of these critical functions. Additions can also be built to provide programmatic space, such as a high school auditorium. If an existing school that is currently or is projected to be over-crowded also shows substantial deficiencies in building performance or is educationally unsuitable, then consideration should be given to replacement with an increase of capacity, on the same site or on another site.

Limitations of Utilization Based on SRC

It is important to note that low utilization does not necessarily mean there is a great number of unused spaces in these facilities. Utilization provides a general numeric measure of how efficiently a facility is used, but the actual usage is based on the educational program, the educational needs of the students, and the design of the facility. The instructional and support spaces in similarly sized facilities with similar student enrollments may be used very differently: a school in an affluent area may use support spaces such as resource rooms for project-based learning, while a school in an area with a large FARMS population may use those same spaces for small-group or individual instruction. A school may have a low utilization and yet all the instructional spaces may be fully utilized, as well as additional spaces not originally intended for instruction, such as storage closets. There are multiple reasons why this can occur:

- Grade configuration. If low enrollment is spread across all grade levels, this does not necessarily mean classrooms have been vacated. It is more likely, particularly at the secondary level, that each content grade level classroom has less than the optimal number of students as specified in the PSCP *Administrative Procedure Guide*. Separate grade level content classrooms generally cannot be combined to improve classroom utilization because of the differences in the educational curriculum, e.g. 7th grade math cannot be combined with 8th grade math. In these circumstances, every classroom is still needed in spite of the low overall utilization. Likewise, science classrooms will still be used separately by each grade level, even if the classroom occupancy is low, because the instructional programs are different for the different grade levels.
- Special needs students. While the State uses a figure of ten students per designated special education space, in reality the classroom population of these spaces is generally less than ten. These lower occupancy levels result from the additional instructional and support staff these students require, the equipment that may be needed for training in occupational skills or for medically fragile children, or the isolation needed to provide programming for emotionally fragile special education students. The same is true for behavior intervention: when a disruptive student needs to be isolated during an emotional episode so as to avoid harming other students or themselves, the only spaces available may be classrooms or resource rooms designed for a far larger occupancy.
- Specialized instructional programs for high school students. A high school may find that it has only a small number of students interested in a particular instructional or CTE program. If this program is deemed valuable and the resources exist to support a teacher, then the occupancy of the instructional space may well be less than the enrollments specified in the APG. Therefore, these instructional spaces will be in use and will still be needed to deliver programming for students.

A low utilization number might also imply that a school should not be burdened with operational challenges such as circulation congestion, overcrowding in some areas, or instructional space shortages, but these conditions can result from the design of the school itself. Based on the SRC, the former Easton Dobson facility was at 99.8% utilization for the 2019-2020 school year, and the Easton Moton facility was at 85.6% utilization. These figures would suggest that the Dobson building was sufficiently utilized but that the Moton building was somewhat under-utilized, with ample space available. A tour of the former Moton building revealed a different picture, with every available space being utilized for instruction, whether that was the original design intent or not.

Talbot County Public Schools Facilities

[Table V-1](#) below shows the utilization for each school in Talbot County based on the approved SRC and the projected enrollment based on the FTE enrollment from September 30, 2023. The projected P3/PK-12 FTE enrollments are for the fifth year of the projection period (2028 and 2033). The SRC for each public school in Talbot County was reviewed in March 2019 and a revised SRC for each school was approved by the Maryland Department of Planning in April 2019; the SRC for the new Easton Elementary School was received on April 8, 2020.

Changes in enrollments in the future or changes in the usage of spaces within the school facilities may impact the utilization of individual schools and may also impact the level of State funding for capacity or renovation projects submitted for planning approval and/or construction funding. Because the schools in Talbot County tend to be small, even slight changes in annual enrollments have a large impact on the projected utilization. Therefore, the figures shown below should be considered as general indications of future utilization rather than as precise future predictions.

Summary of Facility Utilization

[Table V-1](#) indicates that countywide utilization of the facilities in Talbot County will remain level. The percentage utilization will decrease slightly from 84.9% in September 2023 to 84.3% in 2028 and then increase to 86.9% in 2033. Seven out of the eight facilities will show an increase:.

- The FTE enrollment of Easton Elementary school will increase from 1,057 in 2023 to 1,068 in 2033. This increase is accommodated within the larger replacement facility capacity of 1,310.
- Tilghman Elementary will continue to be underutilized in the 57.3% to 64.3% range during the decade. The current policy of allowing out-of-boundary transfers may continue.
- The utilization of White Marsh Elementary will increase significantly due to new development in Trappe, rising from 76.6% in September 2023 to 92.3% in 2028 and 91.5% in 2033.
- The Easton High utilization will decrease from 93.4% in September 2023 to 79.1% in 2028 and 82.2% in 2033. Having available capacity will allow Easton HS to absorb any growth from the three developments described in Section II.
- The utilization of Easton Middle School will remain constant over the decade. With utilization in the range of 81.7% to 85.4%, the school will have available capacity to absorb any growth from the three developments described in Section II.
- The St. Michaels MS/HS complex will increase in utilization from 72.2% in 2023 to 89.8% in 2033.

Table V-1: School Facility Utilization, Current and Projected

School	SRC (revised 4/3/19)	Actual P3/PK-12 Enroll- ment 2023 (FTE)	Percent Utilization 2023	Projected P3/PK-12 Enroll- ment 2028 (FTE)	Percent Utilization 2028	Projected P3/PK-12 Enroll- ment 2033 (FTE)	Percent Utilization 2033
Chapel District ES	431	355	82.4%	368	85.4%	382	88.6%
Easton ES	1,310	1,057	80.7%	1,048	80.0%	1,068	81.5%
St. Michaels ES	383	335	87.5%	348	90.9%	354	92.4%
Tilghman ES	157	90	57.3%	101	64.3%	92	58.6%
White Marsh ES	363	278	76.6%	335	92.3%	332	91.5%
Easton MS	870	711	81.7%	710	81.6%	743	85.4%
Easton HS	1,295	1,210	93.4%	1,024	79.1%	1,064	82.2%
St. Michaels MS/HS	627	453	72.2%	523	83.4%	563	89.8%
Totals	5,436	4,489	82.6%	4,457	82.0%	4,598	84.6%

In summary, the Talbot County Public School system has adequate capacity on a countywide basis to accommodate projected enrollments during the next 10 years. The 2009-2010 redistricting, with the reassignment of sixth graders from Tilghman Elementary and St. Michaels Elementary to St. Michaels Middle/High, the reassignment of some Prekindergarten students from St. Michaels Elementary to Tilghman Elementary in 2014, and the assignment of some White Marsh Elementary students to Easton Elementary in the 2020-2021 school year, redistributed the student enrollment to better utilize capacity throughout the system. A few other schools, identified above, should be monitored during the coming years to discern if the projected enrollments actually materialize and then, if necessary, the options cited above should be considered.

Age of Facility

Another factor that is considered in capital planning is the age of the school building, based upon the initial date of construction and/or the date of the last major renovation. To be eligible for State funding for a major renovation or a systemic renovation project, the school and/or building system must have been in use for at least 15 years. [Table V-2](#) below shows the most recent date of renovation/new construction of the school facilities in Talbot County, as well as the fiscal year and date that the school would be eligible for a State funded capital improvement project, including major renovation, systemic renovation, and/or Aging School Program projects.

Based upon this information, the Dobson and Moton buildings at Easton Elementary School became eligible for funding in the FY 2019 CIP. Since the school opened in the 2020-2021 school year, it will not be eligible for future work until FY 2037. Five of the remaining seven school facilities in Talbot County are eligible to be submitted for State funding at this time, and St. Michaels Elementary and St. Michaels Middle/High will become eligible for submission in October 2024 and October 2025, respectively.

Table V-2: Facility Age and Potential State Submission Date

Name of School	Last Renovation Date (date placed in service)	Fiscal Year of Potential Submission	Date of Potential Submission
Chapel District ES	1994	FY 2012	October 2010
Easton ES (combined Dobson and Moton)	2020	FY 2037	October 2035
St. Michaels ES	2008	FY 2026	October 2024
Tilghman ES	2003	FY 2021	October 2019
White Marsh ES	1997	FY 2015	October 2013
Easton MS	2003	FY 2021	October 2019
St. Michaels MS/HS	2009	FY 2027	October 2025
Easton HS	1997	FY 2015	October 2013

Actions for Consideration

Adjustment of Attendance Areas, School Consolidation

Although the age of a school facility is certainly a significant factor in making determinations of future capital improvements, in the case of Talbot County Public Schools utilization has historically been the more significant factor. The systematic TCPS program of facility renovations begun in 1991, combined with a thorough and well-managed maintenance program, has resulted in facilities that are well-taken care of and (with the opening of the new Easton Elementary School facility in 2020) can be expected to support their educational mission for many years.

New housing developments of the kind described in Section II can, however, dramatically change rates of utilization in a short period of time. Since crowding can impact operational efficiency and educational equity, it should be avoided. Schools in the Easton and Trappe areas, however, may be impacted by major housing developments described in Section II. If the student enrollments increase as predicted, TCPS may consider attendance area adjustments as an alternative to building additional capacity. Given the extremely long period of time that is required to plan for, acquire approval for, design, and build even modest projects like classrooms for capacity, it is important for TCPS to monitor the status of major housing projects. The research for this report included checking for any changes in the number and type of units being offered, the likely timing for occupancy, and the likely household composition of the new occupants. All these factors will have a bearing on whether and how TCPS addresses the potential enrollment increase that may result from the new developments. The EFMP accordingly includes two recommendations that will affect capacity:

- Continue to monitor the status of the three housing developments described in Section II to determine the number and type of units being offered, the likely timing for occupancy, and the likely household composition of the new occupants.
- Annually evaluate the estimated enrollment increase and update strategies for how growth from new housing will be accommodated.

Although the utilization of Tilghman Elementary was 56.7% of capacity in the 2021-2022 school year it is forecast to increase by about 10% over the next decade. Small size can limit educational opportunities for students, and concurrently results in elevated per-student instructional and operational costs. These factors must be taken into account in determining the future of the Tilghman Elementary School. Given this complex situation, the best path is for the Board of Education to monitor Tilghman Elementary School to determine if the utilization improves over time.

Facility Improvements

Section IV identified the enrollment trends for the Talbot County Public Schools. The review of the housing developments will determine whether there will be a need for additions for capacity to existing schools, either within the ten year window or and when the schools are renovated in the future. Changes in the occupancy of existing housing could also lead to an increase of the student-age population. There may also be a need for additions for programmatic purposes, based on the educational program of the school.

Chapel District Elementary School

Chapel District Elementary School, last renovated in 1994 with a day care and kindergarten addition constructed in 2000 and 2001 respectively, is in need of partial or complete renewal. Talbot County Public Schools initiated educational specifications and a feasibility study to determine the scope of the renovation work. The project was approved for planning by the IAC in May 2023 and construction funding was requested in FY 2025 and will be requested in FY 2026 (subject as always to the availability of State capital funding). TCPS discussions with the Maryland Stadium Authority (MSA) have resulted in a Memorandum of Understanding regarding supplemental Built to Learn Act (BTL) funding for \$3,878,801 of the \$6.2 million requested. The IAC has indicated that the full request of \$6.2 million will be approved in FY 2025.

Existing Facility Plans

In developing future facility improvement project recommendations, it is prudent to examine other facility-related plans of the Talbot County Public School system.

- a. *Asbestos Plans.* Copies of the asbestos plans as required by AHERA are located at each school building in the Building Manager's office, including copies of the six month re-inspection and the three year asbestos survey report. Copies of these same documents and reports are maintained at the central office in the Plant Operations Department. Based upon the information in these reports, there is no required work necessary at this time related to asbestos containing materials in the Talbot County Public Schools.
- b. *Water Quality and Sewage.* Two schools in Talbot County, Chapel District Elementary and Tilghman Elementary, do not have municipal water supply or sewerage service. Both schools have water treatment equipment which is maintained by the school system's maintenance staff. The water supply and sewerage systems and the associated equipment are inspected monthly by a certified water treatment manager. No corrective action is required at this time.
- c. *Security Systems and Plans.* The school system developed plans to provide cameras, entrance controls, and security systems at each of the nine public school buildings and the central office. Aging School Program (ASP) funding was provided for these improvements, which have been completed with all systems operational. Since the central office building was not eligible for State funding, County funds were provided for the improvements at this facility. Safe School Grant Program (SSGP) funds were approved to replace door hardware at Easton High School and Easton Middle School in the summer of 2019.
- d. *Comprehensive Maintenance Plan (CMP).* Talbot County Public Schools submits the Comprehensive Maintenance Plan to the State Public School Construction Program annually, as required by the PSCP and as a condition for receiving State funds for capital improvements. The Plan provides information on the condition of the major components and systems in each school, which are rated individually and are compiled into a score for the entire school. The CMP includes detailed results of the LEA and State maintenance surveys that are described in Section III. These overall ratings are also shown on IAC/PSCP Form 101.1 for each school of this EFMP. The implementation of the TCPS Comprehensive Maintenance Plan is reflected in the multiple Superior and Good ratings awarded by the IAC/PSCP in

their Maintenance Inspections under the previous assessment methodology, and the Adequate ratings that have been received under the new IAC rating system.

Examination of the need for the replacement of specific building systems and/or components is an on-going activity for all school systems. This activity may identify the need for specific capital improvement projects that will, if implemented, extend the useful life of the school buildings in Talbot County. Such expenditures will defer the necessity for major renovations or replacement of these same school buildings.

Facility Needs Summary (Form 101.3)

The purpose of this Educational Facilities Master Plan is to address major facility needs and capital improvements. These projects will be identified for funding through the annual Capital Improvement Program (CIP) submitted to the State, the Aging Schools Program (ASP), or the Safe Schools Grant Program (SSGP). CIP projects that are eligible for State funds will require County matching funds; no matching funds are required for ASP or SSGP projects. County funds alone will be needed for aspects of projects or for entire projects which are not eligible for State funding. These include repair and maintenance projects that are not eligible under any of the State funding programs, as well as projects that belong to categories that are currently ineligible for State funding due to their age, but that must be addressed to maintain the safety or performance of the school facility.

IAC/PSCP Form 101.3 Facility Needs Summary is found on the following page. Specific projects have been identified which are eligible for State funding, and an anticipated date is given for the request for funding for each project. This information is based upon the FY 2023 Capital Improvement Program previously approved by the Talbot County Board of Education (September 2021).

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FACILITY NEEDS SUMMARY

IAC/PSCP FORM 101.3

LEA: **TALBOT COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

DATE: - May-2023

EXISTING AND/OR PROPOSED SCHOOL	TYPE OF PROJECT	GRADES	SRC	ENROLLMENTS		JUSTIFICATION FOR PROJECT	PLANNING REQUEST YEAR
				Actual 2023	5th Year Proj. 2028		
Chapel District Elementary	Renovation	PK-5	431	355	368	Last renovated in 1994, the school is in need of renovation and expansion. The project is in design and construction will begin in calendar 2024.	FY 24

VI. APPENDICES

Non-Discrimination Statement

Talbot County Department of Planning and Zoning Letter of Consistency

Letter from Talbot County Public Schools accepting the Maryland Department of Planning enrollment projections

Letter from MDP acknowledging that Talbot County Public Schools will utilize the MDP enrollment projections for the 2024 EFMP



Talbot County Department of Planning and Zoning
215 Bay Street, Suite 2
Easton, Maryland 21601

Phone: 410-770-8030
btarleton@talbotcountymd.gov

FAX: 410-770-8043
TTY: 410-822-8735

June 4, 2024

Kevin Shafer, Director of Operations
Talbot County Public Schools
12 Magnolia Street
Easton, Maryland 21601

RE: *2024 Talbot County Public Schools (TCPS) Educational Facilities Master Plan (EFMP)*

Dear Mr. Shafer:

The Talbot County Department of Planning and Zoning has reviewed the proposed *2024 EFMP*.

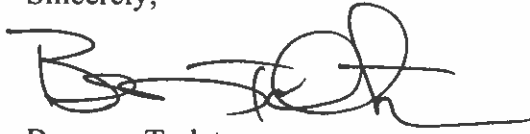
The demographic information contained within this plan has been extrapolated from public data and projections provided by the Maryland Department of Planning (MDP). Which utilized data from the 2020 Census and the American Community Survey. Residential development has been constrained by a range of factors that has limited new residential growth in the County outside of the towns' jurisdictions, where most new residential development will occur. The development constraints within the County include low-density zoning, environmental conditions, Critical Area land designation and density requirements as well as the designation of roughly 80% of the County land area as Septic Tier IV, which limits development capacity and the creation of new residential lots and/or subdivisions on septic systems.

Furthermore, the population growth models provided by MDP project the County population to increase by 10% to 41,440 by 2045; with 50% of the projected growth attributed to individuals ages 45 and older. MDP also projects the household size to decrease from 2.26 in 2020 to 2.23 in 2045; below the statewide projected household size of 2.60 in 2045. The projected household size in Talbot County would be the second lowest of counties on the Eastern Shore and in Maryland.

In general, TCPS enrollment by Election District has varied by roughly 1% in every Decennial Census from 1930 through 2010. Enrollment projections continue to indicate an overall modest, but fluctuating registration rate over the coming decade. However, trends for Easton may eventually show capacity constraints in area schools due to housing development in the pipeline.

We find the conclusions and recommendations I the plan are consistent with current figures and demographic information since the release of the 2020 Census data.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brennan Tarleton". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "B" and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Brennan Tarleton
Talbot County Planning Director

April 22, 2024

Ms. Rebecca L. Flora, AICP, Secretary of Planning
Maryland Department of Planning
301 West Preston Street, Suite 1101
Baltimore, Maryland 21201-2305

Dear Ms. Flora:

This is in response to your transmittal of the latest Maryland Department of Planning (MDP) public school enrollment projections for Talbot County Public School System (TCPS) for the years 2019–2028. We have compared MDP projections with projections we will use in our Educational Facilities Master Plan (EFMP) in the table below. None of the projections differ by more than five percent.

Comparison of MDP and TCPS Forecasts for Talbot County Public Schools (excluding Pre-K)

	2023(Actual)	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028
MDP Projection	4230	4230	4280	4240	4190	4200
TCPS Projection	4230	4305	4275	4216	4172	4182
<i>Difference</i>		1.8%	0.1%	0.6%	0.4%	0.4%
		2029	2030	2031	2032	2033
MDP Projection		4230	4260	4310	4320	4360
TCPS Projection		4203	4213	4253	4259	4323
<i>Difference</i>		0.6%	1.1%	1.3%	1.4%	0.9%

We appreciate the diligent efforts of MDP staff in developing this school projection for comparison.

Sincerely,



Sharon Pepukayi, Ed.D.

Sharon M. Pepukayi, Ed.D.
Superintendent of School

Emily L. Jackson
President, Board of Education

Candace N. Henry
Vice President, Board of Education

Deborah L. Bridges

Amy R. Dodson

Anna E. Howie

Mary E. Wheeler

Wes Moore, Governor
Aruna Miller, Lt. Governor



Rebecca L. Flora, AICP, LEED ND / BD+C, Secretary
Kristin R. Fleckenstein, Deputy Secretary

Maryland
DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING

5/6/2024

Dr. Sharon Pepukayi
Superintendent
Talbot County Public Schools
12 Magnolia Street
Easton, MD 21601

Dear Dr. Pepukayi:

Thank you for submitting the Talbot County Public Schools enrollment projections for 2024-2033, in accordance with the regulations of the Interagency Commission on School Construction (IAC).

The Maryland Department of Planning reviewed your submission and compared your data to the school enrollment projections generated by the State Data Center (see attached) and have found the difference to be less than five percent for the years 2024-2033. Therefore, your projections can be used to prepare your 2024 Educational Facilities Master Plan (EFMP) and 2025 Capital Improvement Program submissions.

When preparing your EFMP submission, please ensure the 2023 actual enrollment on your calculation worksheet is consistent with the official enrollment figure generated by the Maryland State Department of Education. The Maryland Department of Planning recognizes the Maryland State Department of Education's K-12 enrollment figure as the official enrollment for the 2023/2024 school year.

We look forward to receiving your EFMP in July. A copy of this letter and its attachment should be included in the plan. If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to contact me at chuck.boyd@maryland.gov or (410) 767-1401.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Charles W. Boyd'. The signature is fluid and cursive, written over a white background.

Charles W. Boyd, AICP
Assistant Secretary of Planning Services

cc: Alex Donahue, Executive Director, Interagency Commission on School Construction
Alfred Sundara, AICP, Manager, Projections and State Data Center

Comparison of School Enrollment Projections												
Jurisdiction	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	
Talbot	4,232	4,315	4,242	4,197	4,178	4,224	4,219	4,241	4,228	4,264	4,345	
MDP	4,232	4,260	4,180	4,180	4,160	4,150	4,170	4,230	4,230	4,290	4,330	
Diff	0	55	62	17	18	74	49	11	-2	-26	15	
% Diff	0.00%	1.29%	1.48%	0.41%	0.43%	1.78%	1.18%	0.26%	-0.05%	-0.61%	0.35%	