

# Hogan Announces “Innovation Schools” Accountability Initiative, Largest School Construction Plan in State History

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**Annapolis, MD** - December 6, 2019 - Governor Larry Hogan announced yesterday an education package that includes a bold accountability initiative to turn around persistently underperforming schools, as well as the largest school construction plan in state history.

“We are here today to launch the next chapter of education reform in Maryland, which will provide increased investment for our schools, more accountability for Maryland parents, teachers, and taxpayers, and most importantly, help to achieve better results for our children,” said Governor Hogan. “Education has been, and will continue to be, our administration’s highest priority, because I believe very strongly that every single child in Maryland deserves a world-class education, regardless of what neighborhood they happen to grow up in.”

Since taking office, Governor Hogan has invested a record \$32 billion in K-12 education, well above the current funding levels required by legislatively mandated formulas. No governor in the history of the state has invested more.

## **Community and Local Accountability for Struggling Schools (CLASS) Act**

*Innovation Schools—Based on Massachusetts Model—Will Empower Local Communities, Create Greater Autonomy and Flexibility*

At the start of the 2020 legislative session, Governor Hogan will introduce the **Community and Local Accountability for Struggling Schools (CLASS) Act** to help quickly and effectively turn around persistently underperforming schools. Modeled after a program developed by former Democratic Massachusetts Governor Deval Patrick, the legislation will designate “Innovation Schools” that operate with greater local autonomy and flexibility while keeping school funding within districts.

“Currently, there is no accountability mechanism for the state, or for parents, teachers, or the local community to intervene or take actions in order to bring about improvements in failing schools,” said Governor Hogan. “Local communities will be able to take charge of failing schools and be empowered to enact critical changes and put a turnaround plan in place.”

The CLASS Act will define any school that receives a one-star rating for two consecutive years as an Innovation School. The local school board will establish a committee to develop a turnaround plan, which will cover a wide range of areas, including curriculum, budget, schedule, staffing, and professional development. The committee, which will hold a public hearing on its five-year plan, will be comprised of local residents with relevant experience in education, youth development, management, and finance.

Innovation Schools will continue to receive full funding while being held accountable for meeting benchmarks in such areas as graduation rates, student performance, and closing achievement gaps.

## **Building Opportunity Act**

*Largest Investment in School Construction in Maryland History*

Governor Hogan will also re-introduce the **Building Opportunity Act**, which provides a record \$3.8 billion for school construction funding over five years.

“This is the largest investment in school construction ever in Maryland history,” said Governor Hogan. “Last year, we introduced record funding for school construction legislation, but the legislature failed to support it. We are pleased that they now seem to agree with us on the need to provide local school systems, and most importantly our students, with the healthy, efficient, heated, air-conditioned, and modern school buildings that they deserve.”

New funding for this initiative will come from a share of casino revenues in the education lockbox, which Governor Hogan pushed for and enacted to ensure that an additional \$4.4 billion in funding would go toward K-12 education.

The Building Opportunity Act provides funding to cover all of the projects currently requested by local school systems. The Interagency Commission on School Construction (IAC) is conducting a statewide school facilities assessment to better evaluate local requests.

The legislation will give the Maryland Stadium Authority oversight of these additional school construction funds and includes accountability measures. The initiative is closely modeled after the highly successful 21st Century School Buildings Program currently underway in Baltimore City.

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