

cedures for the program. On 25 May 1971 Lt. Gov. Blair Lee presented his committee's report to the board, and it was immediately attacked by a contingent from Montgomery County.¹⁹ Although that county had opposed the program of total state funding from the beginning, the bone of contention in terms of the proposed rules was the creation of an Interagency Committee (IAC) consisting of the state superintendent of schools and the secretaries of state planning and general services to screen the projects proposed by the counties. Under the 1967 law that function was discharged by the state superintendent alone, and the county had apparently worked out a satisfactory *modus vivendi* with him.

In all, the board set aside the better part of three long meetings for consideration of the rules and regulations. On 14 June 1971 it heard from fifteen people and considered a large number of letters and other written material concerning the proposed rules. On 29 June the board finally adopted the rules, more or less in the form as originally proposed.²⁰ In addition to the IAC, the rules prescribed the kinds of costs that would, and would not, be eligible for state payment, the kinds of plans, specifications, designs, and construction documents that would be required, and the procedures for disbursing the state funds.

The storm over the rules was only the beginning. Each year, as the IAC made its recommendations for the projects to be funded in the next fiscal year, representatives from the subdivisions whose projects had been rejected or deferred would descend upon the board seeking their restoration. This began in July 1971 with respect to the projects for fiscal year 1972 and continued each year thereafter.²¹ Each February the board set aside one daylong meeting for consideration of the IAC recommendations and the critical comments from the various subdivisions, normally led by Montgomery County and Baltimore City.

The decisions made by the board at these special February meetings had a dual impact. They not only determined the fate of individual school projects in the various subdivisions, thus influencing a broader spectrum of decision making by local school boards and county governments, but they also established the aggregate size of the annual school construction bond bill presented to the legislature by the governor. That in turn influenced many other capital proposals, which found themselves in competition with school construction for funding dollars.

The new program turned out to be unexpectedly immense, as the subdivisions, some of which had long neglected necessary construction or renovation because of fiscal constraints, dipped into the new state pocketbook.²² In the first five years—up to June 1976—393 school projects had been either completed or were under construction, of which 177 involved new construction and 200 entailed additions or modernization. The remaining 16 were for auditoriums. By June 1977 nearly \$1.1 billion in state school construction bonds had been authorized, of which over \$722 million had been sold.²³

19. BPW Minutes, 25 May 1971, p. 65, MdHR 40281-216-2.

20. *Ibid.*, 14 June 1971, p. 18, MdHR 40281-217-1; 29 June 1971, p. 4, MdHR 40281-218-1.

21. *Ibid.*, 13 July 1971, pp. 1-68, MdHR 40281-220-1/2; 17 February 1972, pp. 3-32 MdHR 40281-229; 20 February 1973, pp. 2-21, MdHR 40281-244; 21 February 1974, pp. 1-8, MdHR 40281-257; 26 February 1975, pp. 1-4, MdHR 40281-274; 25 February 1976, pp. 1-6, MdHR 40281-297; 22 February 1977, pp. 1-4, MdHR 40281-327. See also transcripts for 25 February 1976, pp. 1-296, MdHR 40328-38-1/8; 22 February 1977, pp. 1-128, MdHR 40328-68-1/7.

22. In an attempt to be equitable to those subdivisions that had committed local funds to school construction in the recent past, the General Assembly also provided for state payment of the debt service obligations on local school construction bonds sold to finance projects begun in and after 1967. That aspect of the program, though expensive, did not involve the board in any significant way.

23. *Maryland School Capital Program*, pp. 6,7. It is interesting to note that Montgomery County, which protested the program most vociferously, ended up having nearly twice as many projects approved as any other subdivision. In terms of dollar value the principal beneficiaries were Anne Arundel County (\$153 million), Baltimore County (\$150 million), and Montgomery County (\$106 million).