

# CLIMATE CHANGE ACTION PLAN

MID-YEAR UPDATES | JULY 2024 – DECEMBER 2024

*PGCPS CLIMATE CHANGE INITIATIVES*



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Climate Change Action Plan (CCAP) Operational Committee Members

Background Summary

CCAP Task Force Recommendations and Action Plan

**Priority 1:** Support Environmental Justice Through Climate Curriculum,  
Training, and Partnerships

**Priority 2:** Reduce Carbon Footprint from PGCPs Buildings

**Priority 3:** Commit to Renewable Energy Sources for a Net Zero Emissions Future

**Priority 4:** Commit to Low Carbon School Transportation

**Priority 5:** Reduce Food Waste and Grow Climate-Friendly Food

**Priority 6:** Commit to Sustainable Materials Management and Procurement

**Priority 7:** Commit to Climate Resilient Land Management

**Priority 8:** Lead by Example to Support Transformational Change

# Climate Change Action Plan

## Operational Committee Members

- **Jamee Alston**, Management Analyst, Division of Supporting Services, Department of Sustainability and Resiliency
- **Kristi Murphy Baldwin**, Chief Human Resources Officer
- **Donald Belle**, Environmental Outreach Educator, Department of Environmental Education, William S. Schmidt Outdoor Education Center
- **Quincy Boyd**, Chief of Staff
- **Jean-Paul Cadet**, Director, Career and Technical Education
- **Jeffery Carpenter**, Director, Employee and Labor Relations
- **Charoscar Coleman**, Chief Operating Officer
- **Sylvester Conyers**, Instructional Supervisor, William S. Schmidt Outdoor Education Center
- **Vincent Curl**, Safety Office Manager
- **Garth Deitzer**, Maintenance Planner, Department of Building Services
- **Mark Dreszer**, Supervisor of Garage Operations, Transportation/ Central Garage Department
- **Sara Gillespie**, Recycling Technician, Department of Sustainability and Resiliency
- **Lisa Howell**, Chief Financial Officer (former)
- **David Hill**, Transportation Operations Supervisor, Transportation Department
- **Dawn Holton**, Senior Mechanical Engineer, Department of Capital Programs
- **Millard House II**, Superintendent of Schools
- **Sheila Jackson**, Director, Family and School Partnerships
- **Shayla Jackson**, Director, Department of Capital Programs
- **Shawn Matlock**, Office of Alternative Infrastructure Planning and Development
- **Lynn McCawley**, Senior Public Information Specialist, Office of Communications
- **George McClure**, Supervisor of Athletics
- **John McDaniels**, Program Coordinator, Department of Career and Technical Education/ JROTC, Public Safety and Homeland Security
- **Dorothy Morrison**, Director, Department of Sustainability and Resiliency
- **Max Pugh**, Web Services Supervisor, Office of Communications
- **David Rease**, Director, Office of Equity and Excellence
- **Keba Baldwin**, Director of Transportation
- **Mastan Shaik**, Data Warehouse Supervisor, Division of Information Technology
- **Mary Kirkland**, Director, Food and Nutrition Services
- **Ronald Skyles**, Architectural Project Manager, Department of Capital Programs
- **William Smith**, Project Management Supervisor, Department of Capital Programs
- **Sam Stefanelli**, Director, Building Services
- **Sheila Stevens**, Program Manager, Sustainability & Resiliency
- **Jason Walker**, Energy Management/Building Automation Technician, Department of Building Services
- **Jason Washington**, Associate Superintendent, Supporting Service
- **Amber Wilson**, Executive Assistant, Office of the Superintendent
- **Melissa Wilson**, Supervisor, School Leadership Programs, Office of Professional Learning and Leadership

### Prince George's County Board of Education

- **Lolita E. Walker**, MBA, PCC, Chair, District 9
- **Kenneth F. Harris II**, Eng.D., Vice Chair, District 7
- **Vacant**, District 1
- **Jonathan Briggs**, District 2
- **Pamela Boozer-Strother**, MBA, CAE, District 3
- **Shayla Adams-Stafford**, MAT, District 4
- **Zipporah Miller**, Ed.D., District 5
- **Brannndon D. Jackson**, District 6
- **Madeline LaSalle Frazier**, LCSW, Ed.S., District 8
- **Jamal J. Jongo**, Student Board Member
- **Millard House II**, Superintendent of Schools



# BACKGROUND SUMMARY

On March 1, 2021, the Prince George's County Board of Education established the Climate Change Action Plan (CCAP) Focus Work Group to develop a plan for creating and meeting climate action goals. Prince George's County Public Schools (PGCPS) will work to meet UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) emission reduction targets by 2030 or 2040, depending on the target.

To begin implementing the 58 Climate Change Action Plan items, the Chief Executive Officer created a Climate Change Action Plan Operational Committee composed of 38 PGCPS staff members who meet monthly to review each action item, share progress for each priority area and discuss plans to continue moving the work forward. Additionally, eight priority area implementation workgroups with technical expertise have been established and meet as often as required to execute tangible project tasks, which are reported on during the larger monthly Operational Committee meetings.

# INTRODUCTION

An annual report is published in July each year as well as a mid-year progress update to keep all stakeholders informed of our progress and ways they can support our continued work to reduce our carbon footprint. The report focuses on how a changing climate affects K-12 education and the actions needed to move toward a carbon-neutral future. PGCPS believes taking urgent action to combat climate change is critical to the future of our students and our community. The CCAP empowers our students, staff and administration to work as partners with our county and state to bring about transformational changes and help create a future where we all share the benefits of healthy air, clean water, job opportunities, and safe places to live, work, and play. In the fall of 2023, PGCPS created the Department of Sustainability and Resilience (DSR) to oversee the implementation of the CCAP and drive sustainability ethics in the school district. DSR is collaborating with the Board of Education, members of the eight Priority Commitment work groups, and community partners throughout the implementation process. Making additional hires and reorganizing existing in-house talent will bolster DSR's capacity in this effort. Though not all-inclusive, the 2025 Mid-Year Update highlights some key accomplishments toward the CCAP implementation for the period of July 2024 through December 2024. For a full accounting of CCAP implementation progress and achievements to date, prior CCAP reports can be accessed [HERE](#).





## **PRIORITY RECOMMENDATION #1**

Support Environmental Justice Through Climate Curriculum.  
Training and Partnerships

- The Division of Academics is taking significant steps to integrate climate change and environmental justice education into its curriculum and programs. The division has started the process of augmenting curriculum and programs with Climate Change and Environmental Justice education.
- In the fall, professional development opportunities focused on addressing Climate Change and Environmental Justice were offered to employees across the district.
- The dates for the Student Environmental Alliance Summit have been selected:
- Day 1– Bladensburg Waterfront Park on April 9, 2025 and Day 2–Bowie State University on April 24, 2025.
- To further support teachers and students in exploring the crucial connection between climate change and air quality, a professional learning community has been created. Teachers and students are actively engaging in real-world data to analyse their air quality.



## **PRIORITY RECOMMENDATION #2**

### **Reduce Carbon Footprint from PGCPS Buildings**

- A significant milestone was achieved with the grand opening of the newly constructed Ellen Ochoa Middle School, a state-of-the-art net-zero energy building that welcomed staff and students for the 2024-2025 academic year.
- A newly implemented strategy: "Reduce Carbon Footprint in Buildings," was added to the T-26 Strategic Plan, further solidifying PGCP's dedication to minimizing environmental impact. This addition reflects the district's proactive approach to energy efficiency in our buildings.
- Substantial progress has been made on Action Item #4, which focuses on consolidating administrative offices to only one or two centrally located buildings. This move will significantly reduce energy consumption and hence lower the district's utility bills incurred from the current use of multiple, old, and energy inefficient buildings and modular structures as central offices.
- In partnership with Washington Gas and their energy efficiency program funded through EmPOWER Maryland, PGCP's will embark on a two-year pilot program at four high schools: Charles H. Flowers, Dr. Henry A. Wise Jr., Friendly and Surrattsville. This program will provide advanced energy monitoring capabilities, empowering the district to better understand energy usage and patterns and implement targeted strategies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.



### **PRIORITY RECOMMENDATION #3**

#### **Commit to Renewable Energy Sources for a Net-Zero Emissions Future**

- A major step forward on the signing of a Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) for the rooftop solar installation at the six new Phase 1 P3 schools. These installations are slated for completion in the summer of 2025 with the targeted commercial operation date of December 2025.
- Ellen Ochoa Middle School and the new William Wirt Middle School were designed and delivered with rooftop solar installations. The commercial operation date is yet to be determined.
- PGCPs is embracing cutting-edge energy solutions with the Mullikin School Bus Lot Microgrid project that will represent a significant investment in sustainable and resilient infrastructure. The project will incorporate canopy solar and vehicle-to-grid technology.
- New Cool Spring Elementary School will have a combination green/solar roof.
- The Phase 2 P3 schools will be delivered with rooftop solar. Discussions are in process for a request for proposal (RFP).
- PGCPs continues to explore solar opportunities for facilities that need new roofs.
- PGCPs continues discussions on aggregate new metering opportunities for ground solar.

## **PRIORITY RECOMMENDATION #4**

### **Commit to Low Carbon School Transportation**

- PGCPs is accelerating its transition to a cleaner, greener transportation future, thanks to a significant investment in electric school buses and a strong commitment to community engagement. We have secured \$5.2 million in funding through the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Clean School Bus Rebate Program, which will directly support the electrification of our school bus fleet.
- PGCPs has actively engaged with the community to showcase its electric school buses and raise awareness about its broader sustainability initiative. We have proudly participated in several key events including:
  - The Power of Presence Conference at Dr. Henry A. Wise Jr. High School, where we highlighted the connection between clean transportation and environmental responsibility.
  - Driving Green Action at Ellen Ochoa Middle School, an event focused on PGCPs green actions and sustainable practices.
  - The Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc. Annual College Fair, held on November 9, 2024.
- To ensure a smooth transition and gather valuable data, PGCPs launched a pilot program with four electric school buses serving the Greenbelt area. This pilot will allow us to carefully evaluate the feasibility and operational efficiency of electric buses in real-world conditions.
- Our commitment to sustainability extends beyond transportation. PGCPs is proud to partner with Berwyn Heights Elementary School in their pursuit of Green Ribbon Schools Distinction.
- Looking ahead, PGCPs is actively pursuing additional funding opportunities to further accelerate its bus electrification efforts. In addition to the EPA School Bus Rebate Program funding, we were also awarded funding from the EPA Clean Heavy Duty Grant. We are exploring future funding opportunities through the fourth round of the EPA School Bus Rebate Program and the Maryland Energy Administration (MEA) Electric School Bus Grant. These efforts demonstrate our proactive approach to securing the resources necessary to build a sustainable transportation system for our students.





## **PRIORITY RECOMMENDATION #5**

### **Reduce Food Waste and Grow Climate-Friendly Food**

#### **Local Food for Schools Grant**

- The Local Food for Schools grant aims to expand local markets, with a particular focus on sourcing from historically underserved producers. As we move into the next phase of this initiative, we are excited to announce a new partnership with Moon Valley Farm, a Maryland-based producer. Through this collaboration, we will be sourcing a variety of fresh produce, including pears, broccoli, carrots, romaine lettuce and three varieties of apples. This partnership offers multiple benefits. First, it reduces the carbon footprint associated with transporting produce from across the country. Second, it strengthens our commitment to supporting local, small and socially disadvantaged farmers. We look forward to continuing our work with Moon Valley Farm and to further expanding our efforts to create a more sustainable and equitable food system.

#### **Composting in Schools**

- To minimize waste from our cafeterias, Food and Nutrition Services (FNS) continues to utilize compostable paper goods, which significantly reduce the environmental impact of our operations. In addition, FNS collaborated with the Sustainability Department to offer professional development opportunities for our cafeteria staff. These training sessions will be designed to expand their knowledge of composting practices, with the goal of further reducing food waste in our kitchens. By focusing on both compostable materials and food waste reduction strategies, we are working to create a more sustainable and eco-friendly food service operation.
- The composting pilot program expanded to include four additional schools: C.E. Rieg Regional, Judge Sylvania W. Woods Elementary School, Templeton Elementary School and Sonia Sotomayor Middle School, for a total of 34 pilot schools. Our target is to have at least 45 schools with composting programs by the school year 2026.

## **PRIORITY RECOMMENDATION #6**

### **Commit to Sustainable Materials Management and Procurement**

- A Waste Diversion professional development session for teachers was held on September 24, 2024, focusing on reducing, reusing, recycling and composting actions to reduce waste.
- Waste reduction lessons for grades K-5 were incorporated into the science curriculum during the third week of school.
- On November 18, 2024, the Department of Sustainability and Resilience and the William S. Schmidt Center hosted a professional development session for school teachers and custodians new to the composting program.
- Schools were encouraged to participate in America Recycles Day and utilize the Teacher Toolkit, which includes activities and lessons for students.
- Four new schools are joining the composting program: C. Elizabeth Rieg Regional School, Judge Sylvania W. Woods Elementary School, Templeton Elementary School and Sonia Sotomayor Middle School.
- A purchasing administrative procedure is being updated to guide the procurement of sustainable, environmentally preferable goods and services.

## **PRIORITY RECOMMENDATION #7**

### **Climate Resilient Land Management**

- PGCPs is committed to responsible stormwater management and continues its strong partnership with the Clean Water Partnership. This collaboration protects and preserves our local waterways. This partnership also aids in the streamlined permitting process for all new construction sites that ensures compliance with environmental standards while adhering to best management practices for stormwater management.
- The newly constructed Ellen Ochoa Middle School showcases PGCPs's dedication to advance stormwater management. The school features expanded underground tunnels designed to effectively capture, filter and manage runoff, protecting local waterways and minimizing impact of stormwater runoffs.
- PGCPs is integrating green infrastructure into the design of all current new construction projects. This forward-thinking approach ensures that sustainable water management practices are incorporated from the beginning of all construction processes.



## **PRIORITY RECOMMENDATION #8**

### **Lead by Example to Support Transformational Change**

- The Department of Sustainability and Resilience will add staff capacity in the new year with one additional Program Manager to help drive the implementation of the Climate Change Action Plan (CCAP) priorities.
- PGCPs leadership proposed a modest increase in its FY 2026 budget to secure tools and contractual support for moving the CCAP commitment forward. The gesture, despite an overall State and local budget shortfall, demonstrates PGCPs's commitment to sustainability and resilience within the school district.