

# News Release: PGCPs Receives \$3 Million to Open Two New High Schools

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July 15, 2014

For Immediate Release

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UPPER MARLBORO, MD –Prince George's County Public Schools (PGCPS) was recently awarded a \$3 million grant to open two new public high schools for underserved and at-risk students in the county.

The Carnegie Corporation of New York will fund the development of the schools, through an existing partnership between PGCPS, Internationals Network for Public Schools, and CASA de Maryland.

"We have a wonderful partnership with these organizations and securing this grant allows us to work collectively to provide our students with a valuable education," said Dr. Kevin M. Maxwell, Chief Executive Officer of Prince George's County Public Schools. "We serve a very diverse student population where academic support and language services must be integrated for our students' success. These schools will enable us to do that more effectively."

The two PGCPS CASA-Internationals Community Schools are designed to improve achievement rates amongst English Language Learners (ELL) and will be the first of their kind in the county. The schools will provide immigrant students, as well as those who are economically disadvantaged and prospective first generation college attendees, with an innovative opportunity to complete their high school diploma. Students will develop a commitment to learning, a capacity for critical thinking, an understanding of their future role as community leaders, and gain the academic skills necessary to achieve future success. Additionally, the schools will serve as a community resource for students and their families to ensure that their adjustment needs are met.

In the county, 12% of the students receive ELL services. The 2012-2013 four-year cohort graduation rate for ELL students who entered ninth grade during the 2009-2010 school year was 63.03%, below the county's overall graduation rate of 74.12%. Additionally, about 47% of the district's graduates enroll in college, while only 32% of ELL graduates enroll in college.

"The development of these schools is an important step in addressing the serious challenges facing Prince George's County, especially the Langley Park community," said Gustavo Torres, Executive Director of CASA de Maryland.

Each year, the schools will add a cohort of approximately 100 students per grade until serving at least 400 students in grades nine through twelve. One school will be within the Langley Park area, optional for all students in Langley Park, and the other school will be for new English language learners as a school-within-a-school in another part of the county. The schools are expected to open at the start of the 2015-2016 school year.