MINUTES OF THE SCHOOL CAPITAL FUND
COMMISSION FOR BUNCOMBE COUNTY
SPECIAL MEETING HELD, ON TUESDAY, DECEMBER 16, 2025 AT 12:00PM

BE IT REMEMBERED: That the School Capital Fund Commission met for a special meeting on December 16, 2025, in the County Administration Building, 200 College Street, 1st Floor Conference Room in downtown Asheville, North Carolina at 12:00 p.m. where and when the following business was transacted:

The Commission meeting was called to order with the following Members present:

Terri Wells, Commission Chair
George Sieburg, Commission Vice-Chair
Matt Kern, Commission Member
Kimberly (Kim) Plemmons, Commission Member

County Staff Present: Matt Evans, Financial Planning & Analysis Manager; Keri Clark, Financial Analyst; Ronald Lunsford, General Services Facilities/Project Manager; Amy Broughton, Senior Attorney II; Angelica Tyler, Information and Communication Specialist II; Melissa Moore, Finance Director

Approval of Agenda as Presented
Commission Member Kim Plemmons moved that the Commission adopt the agenda as presented. The motion was seconded by Matt Kern and passed unanimously.

Public Comment
Commission Chair Terri Wells opened the floor for public comment. There was no public comment.

GO Bond Project Discussion
It was acknowledged that the School Capital Fund Commission does not have direct authority over decisions related to a General Obligation (GO) Bond; however, the discussion was brought forward to provide transparency regarding the process, project needs, and potential impacts for both school systems. The following topics were identified for discussion: project selection, the amount of potential GO Bond requests, the decision-making process, eligibility for GO Bond funding, and implications should a referendum not pass.

Buncombe County Schools
Buncombe County Schools Superintendent Dr. Rob Jackson began the discussion by explaining that certain capital projects are better suited for potential GO Bond funding, as Article 39 sales tax revenues are insufficient for their completion. Of the more than $500 million in identified capital needs, the following projects were presented as candidates for a potential $150 million GO Bond:

- Glen Arden Elementary School – New Construction (approx. $45.5M)
- W.D. Williams Elementary School – Renovation Completion (approx. $31.5M)
- North Buncombe High School – Mechanical System Upgrade Completion (approx. $30.0M)
- Front Office Security Reconfigurations (approx. $30.0M)
- William W. Estes Elementary School – Major Renovations (approx. $22.0M)
- Countywide Transportation Department Renovations (approx. $2.0M)

Regarding the construction timeline, staff noted that once funding is received, projects would be ready to proceed, with an estimated completion timeframe of two to three years. W.D. Williams Elementary is fully designed, with Phase I already completed. The transportation department renovations are designed, and a contractor has been selected. All remaining projects are anticipated to be ready to advance.

Buncombe County Schools is currently undergoing a capacity study with an external consultant, with results expected in May. It was noted that the identified priorities are not anticipated to change based on the study.

Project selection was based on demonstrated need and informed by multiple analyses, including repair-versus-replacement studies, consolidation considerations, and Article 39 priorities.
If the GO Bond is not approved by the Board of County Commissioners or does not pass a voter referendum, Buncombe County Schools intends to continue seeking alternative funding sources and proceed within available Article 39 revenues. An NC Department of Commerce grant opportunity is currently being explored for the Glen Arden Elementary project, with an application anticipated in the fall, which could offset a portion of project costs if awarded.

Asheville City Schools
Asheville City Schools Chief of Operations April Dockery and Superintendent Dr. Maggie Fehrman shared that a facilities feasibility study is currently underway with an external consultant. Preliminary findings have already resulted in shifting project priorities. Due to the ongoing nature of the study, Asheville City Schools does not yet have a defined list of projects to present for potential GO Bond funding; however, a need for future funding is anticipated upon completion of the study in April or May.
Preliminary areas of focus identified through the study include perimeter control and security concerns, operational inefficiencies, consolidation of central services, teacher housing considerations, afterschool and pre-kindergarten offerings, and the development of future-ready classrooms.

GO Bond Timeline

Staff outlined the anticipated timeline associated with a potential GO Bond referendum. It was noted that preliminary project scopes and cost estimates would be required by June 2026 to align with Local Government Commission (LGC) application requirements. Coordination with the County's annual budget process, including public hearings and Board of Commissioners work sessions, will be necessary. If approved and passed, continued collaboration among county staff and both school systems will be required to determine the timing and issuance of the bonds.

It was also emphasized that GO Bonds represent a separate funding source not specifically designated like Article 39 revenues and that these funds would compete with other county priorities, including emergency response and public safety needs.

The discussion concluded with emphasis on the role of school facilities as critical community assets, particularly during emergency response and disaster recovery efforts.

Adjournment
Commission Member Kim Plemmons moved to adjourn the meeting at 1:00 p.m. The motion was seconded by George Sieburg and passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 1:00 p.m.

SCHOOL CAPITAL FUND COMMISSION FOR BUNCOMBE COUNTY

By Terri Wells
Terri Wells,
Commission Chair

ATTEST

M Moore
Melissa Moore,
County Finance Officer