ASHEVILLE CITY BOARD OF EDUCATION WORK SESSION

Administrative Offices - Board Room
Monday, January 5, 2026 at 5:00 PM

BE IT REMEMBERED: The Asheville City Board of Education met in a regularly called session on Monday, January 5, 2026, at 5:00 PM at the Administrative Offices - Board Room at 85 Mountain Street, Asheville, North Carolina, where and when the following business was transacted.

Page

1. MEETING OPENING

1.1 CALL TO ORDER - Board Chair, Sarah Thornburg

5:00 PM

Equity Statement:*In Asheville City Schools we are committed to equity and anti-racist policies for all students and staff to learn and thrive. We recognize that our positions come with power, responsibility, and public service for the entire ACS community. We will model our commitment to equity through our practices and decisions. During this meeting, we invite a pause if harm has taken place, a moment to name the harm, and space to practice repair.*

1.2 QUORUM DETERMINATION - Board Chair, Sarah Thornburg

Sarah Thornburg
Rebecca Strimer
Pepi Acebo
Liza Kelly
Amy Ray
George Sieburg
Jesse Warren

1.3 APPROVAL OF AGENDA - Board Chair, Sarah Thornburg

Motion to Approve the Agenda as Amended. Remove from the agenda 2.2 FY 27 Budget Discussion and Closed Session.

Moved by: George Sieburg
Seconded by: Amy Ray

Aye George Sieburg, Amy Ray, Sarah Thornburg, Rebecca Strimer, Jesse Warren, Liza Kelly, and Pepi Acebo

The motion passed 7-0

Please note the following changes to the Board of Education meeting agenda:

- **Item 2.2 (FY 27 Budget Discussion):** This item has been moved to next week's meeting. This adjustment allows the three parties involved, Asheville City Schools (ACS), Buncombe County Schools, and Buncombe County Government, additional time to clarify specific language and ensure a more concrete draft is available for review. Please note that no formal vote on the budget funding formula is scheduled until February.

- **Closed Session:** The Closed Session originally scheduled for this evening has been removed.

2. POSSIBLE ACTION/CONSENT ITEMS FOR THE NEXT REGULAR BOARD MEETING

2.1 Identifying ACS BOE Core Values- Kathleen Osta, Vital Clarity

To identify core Board values and the corresponding behaviors that define them. This session aims to move our values beyond theory and into practice, creating living touchstones that ensure the Board remains aligned, effective, and on track.

Through the collective work, the Board has identified three core values that serve as the foundation for their leadership: Integrity, Collaboration, and Inclusivity. These are not merely words on a page; they are the standards by which they will

measure their actions. By leading with honesty (Integrity), working as a unified team (Collaboration), and ensuring equity for all (Inclusivity), while remaining focused on the primary mission: the success of every student.

George Sieburg left the meeting at 7:00 PM

Moment of Silence

Board Chair Sarah Thornburg shared condolences on behalf of Asheville City Schools and requested a moment of silence for a student who recently passed in the district.

2.2 Student Releases to Buncombe County Schools - Tanya Presha, Special Assistant to the Superintendent

Consent

Ms. Presha will provide 2026-2027 school year releases during each Board meeting starting in February, as they become available.

2.3 BOE DRAFT 2026 - 2027 Board Calendar - Dr. Maggie Fehrman, Superintendent 10

Consent

BOE 2026-2027 ACS Calendar - Google Sheets.pdf

Discussion Summary: The Board discussed the alignment of the Board calendar with the academic year, specifically addressing the heavy workload required in September for the Superintendent’s annual evaluation and contract review.

The Board noted that because contract extensions cannot be approved between Election Day and the seating of new members, the evaluation process must be finalized by October. Vice Chair, Rebecca Strimer, and Chair Sarah Thornburg emphasized the need for a "cadence" that allows for student achievement data to be reviewed during the retreat before moving to consensus scoring in a closed session.

To avoid back-to-back meetings and respect the Labor Day holiday, the Board reached a consensus to utilize the fifth Monday in August for the September Work Session and shifted the retreat to later in the month to ensure data availability.

Key Calendar Adjustments (Consensus Reached):

- **August 31:** September Work Session (Moved to the 5th Monday of August).
- **September 7–11:** No meetings (Labor Day week).
- **September 14:** Regular Board Meeting.
- **September 22 (Tuesday):** Half-day Board Retreat (Scheduled for 12:00 PM – 4:00 PM).
- **September 24 (Thursday):** Tentative Executive Session (5:00 PM) for Superintendent evaluation consensus scoring.

Action Items:

- **Dr. Fehrman:** Will update the formal calendar reflecting these changes and place it on the Consent Agenda for the next meeting.
- **Superintendent Evaluation:** Evaluation materials/process will be sent to the Board in writing for review prior to the September meetings.

2.4 Amended 2026-2027 School Calendar - Dr. Maggie Fehrman, Superintendent 11

Consent

Recommended changes to accommodate schools serving as polling places

Proposed Voting Poll Change_ 2026-2027 ACS Calendar - 2026-2027 ACS Calendar DRAFT.pdf

Dr. Fehrman presented a proposed amendment to the school calendar on behalf of Dr. Dechant. To accommodate the use of additional district facilities as polling locations, the administration recommended that students not be in the building on Election Day to ensure safety and logistics are

managed effectively.

To achieve this without adding instructional hours or make-up days, the district proposed shifting an Optional Workday from October 26th to November 3rd (Election Day). While this slightly adjusts grading timelines, it was identified as the least disruptive option.

Key Decisions:

- **Calendar Alignment:** The Board reached a consensus to approve the shift for the Presidential Election Day.
- **Primaries:** It was noted that no changes are currently required for primary election dates.
- **Calendar Design:** The Board briefly discussed including Board meeting dates on the annual school calendar but noted this may lead to unnecessary visual "clutter" for parents.

Action Items:

- **Consent Agenda:** Both the **Board of Education Calendar** and the amended **School Calendar** will be placed on the **Consent Agenda** for a formal vote at next week's meeting.

2.5 **Contracts and MOUs** - Dr. Maggie Fehrman, Superintendent

Consent

Maxim Healthcare Services - EC Staffing

Republic Services of NC - Waste and Recycling Collection

Discussion Summary: The Board reviewed several vendor contracts, focusing on specific clauses regarding staffing, waste management, and beverage exclusivity. Key concerns were raised regarding financial impacts and the scope of compliance.

Key Contract Reviews:

- **Emergis Healthcare Staffing:** Mr. Acebo identified a concern in "Attachment C" regarding the Sunburst MSP opt-in. It was noted that activating this dashboard via email could inadvertently subordinate all other district staffing contracts to Emergis. It was requested for a

review to potentially strike Attachment C to avoid unintended financial and operational impacts.

- **Republic Services (Waste & Recycling):** It was noted that Republic Services was the sole responsive bidder. Clarification was requested regarding the pricing structure for containers to ensure rates are aligned with market standards.
- **Pepsi-Cola Bottling Co. (Concessions):** * **Scope Concern:** A handwritten note on page 13 suggests the contract includes Asheville Middle School (AMS) concessions, though the agreement was primarily intended for Asheville High.
    - **Compliance:** The contract includes a $15,000 payment for scoreboard maintenance over five years but requires strict exclusivity, including PTOs and auxiliary organizations.
    - **Risk:** The Board discussed the "clawback" clause, noting that failure to enforce exclusivity across all mentioned sites could result in a loss of funds.

Action Items:

- **Administration (Dr. Fehrman):** Will investigate the necessity of Attachment C in the Emergis contract and clarify whether Asheville Middle School was intentionally included in the Pepsi exclusivity agreement.
- **Follow-up:** Administration will provide clarification on Republic Services' pricing before finalization.

2.6 Policies Second Read - Dr. Maggie Fehrman, Superintendent

Consent

Policy Code: 1740/4010 Student and Parent Grievance Procedure

Policy Code: 1750/7220 Grievance Procedure for Employees

Policy Code: 2125/7315 Confidential Information

Policy Code: 2310 Public Participation at Board Meetings

Policy Code: 3101 Dual Enrollment

Policy Code: 3220 Technology in the Educational Program

Policy Code: 3225/4312/7320 Technology Responsible Use

Policy Code: 3226/4205 Internet Safety

Policy Code: 3227/7322 Web Page Development

Policy Code: 3400 Evaluation of Student Progress

Policy Code: 3460 Graduation Requirements

Policy Code: 4050 Children of Military Families

Policy Code: 4120 Domicile or Residence Requirements

Policy Code: 4240/7312 Child Abuse and Related Threats to Child Safety

Policy Code: 4270/6145 Concussion and Head Injury

Policy Code: 5150 Reporting to External Agencies

Policy Code: 6310 Organization of Student Transportation Services

Policy Code: 7555 Disaster Relief and Emergency Compensation

Policy Code: 7910 Retirement

Discussion Summary: The Board reviewed several policy updates with the following key clarifications:

- **Policy 3400 (Grading Scale K-2):** Adopted a 4-point scale based on teacher feedback. Assessment is strictly standards-based (not effort-based). For students with 504s/IEPs, grading occurs after accommodations are applied to ensure equity.
- **Attendance & Grading:** The Superintendent confirmed that students cannot fail for attendance alone.
- **Policy 4120 (Enrollment):** Staff will consult with the NCSBA to update or verify the necessity of historical references to the 2006-07 school year.
- **Policy 3227/7322 (Webpages):** A request was made to list the full district URL in the text for printed clarity.

All policies were approved for the Consent Agenda, with the ask to make technical corrections to the URL text and historical dates.

3. INFORMATION ITEMS

3.1 First Read Policies - Dr. Kim Dechant, Chief of Staff

Policy Code: 7503 Teleworking

Policy Code: 3620 Extracurricular Activities and Student Organizations

Information Only

Policy Code: 4130 Discretionary Admission (local changes corrected from November)

Policy Code: 4150 School Assignment(local changes corrected from November)

4. FUTURE MEETINGS/ANNOUNCEMENTS -

Board Chair, Sarah Thornburg

Regluar Meeting

Monday, January 12, 2026

Administrative Office - Board Room

Early Dismissal

Friday, January 16, 2026

12:00 Noon K-5

1:00 PM 6-12

Holiday - Martin Luther King Jr. Day

Monday, January 19, 2026

No school for students and staff

Work Session

Monday, February 2, 2026

Administrative Office - Board Room

Regular Meeting

Monday, February 9, 2026

Administrative Office - Board Room

2025-2026 ACS Board of Education Meeting Schedule

5. ADJOURNMENT - Board Chair, Sarah Thornburg

5.1 Adjourn Meeting

Motion to adjourn the meeting.

Moved by: Liza Kelly
Seconded by: Amy Ray

Aye Amy Ray, Sarah Thornburg, Rebecca Strimer, Jesse Warren, Liza Kelly, and Pepi Acebo

The motion passed 6-0

Dr. Maggie Fehrman

Dr. Maggie Fehrman,
Superintendent

Sarah Thornburg

Board Chair, or Designee

2026-2027 Calendar

Elementary School Day:
8:00 AM—2:35 PM
Secondary School Day:
8:30 AM - 3:30 PM

JULY
3 Holiday

AUGUST
13, 14 Optional Teacher Workday
17-21 Required Teacher Workday
18 District Convocation
19 District Required PD, 8am-12pm
24 First Day of School

SEPTEMBER
7 Holiday
21 Optional Teacher Workday

OCTOBER
5 Required Teacher Workday, District PD
6 Parent Teacher Conference Day
23 End of Q1
26 Optional Workday

NOVEMBER
11 Holiday
25 Annual Leave
26, 27 Holiday

DECEMBER
18 Early Release
21 Optional Teacher Work Day
22-24 Annual Leave
24,25, 28,29 Holiday
30,31 Annual Leave

JANUARY
1 Holiday
11-15 High School Semester 1 Exams
15 End of Q2, End of Semester 1
18 Holiday
19 Required Teacher Workday, District PD 8am-12pm

FEBRUARY
12 Early Release
15 Spring Parent Teacher Conference Day

MARCH
1 Required Teacher Workday, District PD
26 End of Q3
March 29-April 2 Spring Break, Annual Leave

April
5 Optional Teacher Workday

MAY
May 7 Early Release
May 28-June 4 EOG/EOC Testing
28 Early Release
31 Holiday

JUNE
4 Last Day of School, Early Release, End of Q4, Graduation
7, 8 Required Teacher Workday
9 Optional Teacher Workday

First/Last Day for Students | Parent-Teacher Conference Day
Holiday | Optional Teacher Workday | Annual Leave
Early Dismissal (12:00 NOON (K-5), 1:00 PM (6-12)) | Required Workday

** Students should NOT report to school on Parent-Teacher Conference Days, Workdays, Annual Leave Days or Holidays**

215 Day Calendar 175 School Days 1,051 Hours (Elem)
12 Holidays 10 Annual Leave 11 RWD 6 OWD 2 PTC 5 Early Dismissal

INCLEMENT WEATHER MAKE-UP DAYS:
January 19, 2027 February 15, 2027
March 1, 2027 March 26, 2027 June 7, 2027

JULY 2026

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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AUGUST 2026

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SEPTEMBER 2026

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OCTOBER 2026

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25	26 OW	27 42	28 43	29 44	30 45	31

NOVEMBER 2026

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22	23 60	24 61	25 AL	26 H	27 H	28
29	30 62					

DECEMBER 2026

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13	14 72	15 73	16 74	17 75	18 76	19
20	21 OW	22 AL	23 AL	24 H	25 H	26
27	28 H	29 H	30 AL	31 AL		

JANUARY 2027

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31						

FEBRUARY 2027

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21	22 109	23 110	24 111	25 112	26 113	27
28						

MARCH 2027

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14	15 123	16 124	17 125	18 126	19 127	20
21	22 128	23 129	24 130	25 131	26 132	27
28	29 AL	30 AL	31 AL			

APRIL 2027

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MAY 2027

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JUNE 2027

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2026-2027 Calendar w. Proposed Change

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SEPTEMBER 2026

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OCTOBER 2026

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NOVEMBER 2026

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DECEMBER 2026

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27	28 H	29 H	30 AL	31 AL		

JANUARY 2027

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MARCH 2027

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21	22 128	23 129	24 130	25 131	26 132	27
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APRIL 2027

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MAY 2027

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JUNE 2027

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