ASHEVILLE CITY BOARD OF EDUCATION WORK SESSION

Administrative Offices - Board Room
Monday, March 2, 2026, at 5:00 PM

BE IT REMEMBERED: The Asheville City Board of Education met in a regularly called session on Monday, March 2, 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

5:06 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

Jesse Warren

George Sieburg - absent

1.3 APPROVAL OF AGENDA - Board Chair, Sarah Thornburg

Motion to Approve the Amended Agenda to change the order of the following agenda items:

1. 2.2 Danish Exchange Program to 2.1
2. 2.3 Contracts/MOUs to 2.2
3. 2.1 CCAR Six Agreements to 2.3

Moved by: Amy Ray; seconded by: Liza Kelly

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

The motion passed 6-0

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

2.1 Danish Exchange Program - Derek Edwards, Asheville High Principal

Consent

Asheville High School Principal Derek Edwards, presented a proposal for an international, overnight travel request for the 2026-2027 school year.

- **Participants:** 8–14 Juniors and Seniors currently enrolled in World History.
- **Destination:** Denmark (International/Danish Exchange).
- **Academic Alignment:** The trip is designed to meet Standard Course of Study Objective WH.B.2.3, focusing on the impact of global interactions on national and ethnic identities.
- **Learning Objectives:**
  - Development of cross-cultural research skills and on-site cultural analysis.
  - Enhancement of global communication skills and navigation of diverse cultural norms.
  - Immersion in Scandinavian history, governance, art, and societal structures.
  - Post-trip presentations to share experiential learning with the broader school community.

The Board reviewed the request as it exceeds the 300-mile round-trip and out-of-country travel thresholds.

2.2 **Contracts/MOUs** - Dr. Kim Dechant, Chief of Staff

Consent

Capital Chevrolet - Purchase of three vehicles

James R Vannoy and Sons Construction - Renovations at Hall Fletcher

Trafera - Purchase of Student Chromebooks

2.3 CCAR Six Agreements - Dr. Maggie Fehrman, Superintendent

3. DISCUSSION ITEMS

3.1 Preliminary Budget Presentation - Dr. Maggie Fehrman, Superintendent, and Heidi Kerns, Chief Finance Officer

2026-2027 Preliminary Budget Information Presentation

Dr. Fehrman and Ms. Kerns presented the following 26-27 Preliminary Budget Information:

- A new chapter in the budget process - a joint local current expense funding agreement between the Buncombe County Board of Commissioners, Buncombe County Schools, and Asheville City Schools.

- Summary of 2024-2025 Budget
- ADM ACS, BCS, and Charters
- State Allotment Estimate
- Revenue Projections
- Importance of Continued Advocacy
- Summary of Potential New Revenue
- Fund Balance
- Potential Cost of a 5 or 10% Raise
- Potential Budget Shortfall
- FY 27 ACS Tentative Budget Calendar

3.2 Policies First Read - Dr. Maggie Fehrman, Superintendent

Policy Code: 3000 Goals and Objectives of the Educational Program
Policy 3000 Memo

The Board discussed proposed revisions to Policy 3000. Superintendent Dr. Maggie Fehrman provided a memo reviewing the feedback process, including specific data on community disagreements. Board members requested several refinements before the policy moves to a second read:

- **Terminology Clarification:** A request was made to change "disciplinary ideas" to "multi-disciplinary" or "across disciplines" to avoid confusion with student discipline.
- **Structural Adjustments:** Members suggested reordering bullet points to prioritize school culture and belonging.
- **Language & Parallelism:** The Board recommended "tightening" the language to ensure parallel sentence structure, specifically regarding the "opportunity to" infinitive phrases.
- **Portrait of a Scholar:** It was confirmed that "Portrait of a Scholar" is the official terminology, aligning with the NCDPI "Portrait of a Graduate" framework.
- **Next Steps:** Dr. Fehrman will provide two versions (markup and clean) for further feedback this week, aiming for a first read on Monday.

4. BOARD CHAIR REMARKS - Board Chair, Sarah Thornburg

Board Member Attendance at MCC (Meet, Confer, and Collaborate) Meetings. Chair Sarah Thornburg led a discussion regarding Board presence at MCC meetings:

- **Consistency Model:** To ensure continuity and better pattern recognition, Board Member Liza Kelly volunteered to attend every MCC meeting as the consistent Board representative. Two additional rotating spots are still available for other members.
- **Reporting Structure:** Member Kelly will maintain a running, board-facing document to collate "glows and grows" and summary notes. This feedback will be shared with Superintendent Fehrman following each session to support the evaluation process.
- **Board Discussion on Roles:** Some members expressed concerns regarding potential "micro-management" or the "muddying of roles" between the Board and Administration. However, the consensus was that during this "fledgling" state of the MCC, consistent observation is necessary to support the Superintendent and ensure the process is successfully institutionalized.

5. CLOSED SESSION - Board Chair, Sarah Thornburg

The Chair will entertain a motion for the Board of Education to enter into a closed session pursuant to G.S. 143-318.11 for the following purposes:

- **Under subsection (a)(1) to prevent the disclosure of privileged and confidential personnel information pursuant to G.S. 115C-319-321;**
- **Under subsection (a) (3) to discuss matters protected by the attorney-client privilege.**

AGENDA ITEMS

5.1 Personnel Report - March
Consent

5.2 Attorney Client Matters
Consideration of an Episode of Violence (see notes)

6. FUTURE MEETINGS/ANNOUNCEMENTS -
Board Chair, Sarah Thornburg

Regular Meeting

Monday, March 9, 2026

Administrative Office - Board Room

1/2 Day Board Retreat

Thursday, March 19, 2026, from 8:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.

Wrong Way River Lodge & Cabins

9 Midnight Drive, Asheville, NC 28806

Spring Break

April 6th - 10th, 2026

Work Session

Monday, April 13, 2026

Administrative Office - Board Room

Regular Meeting

Monday, April 20th, 2026

Administrative Office - Board Room

2025-2026 ACS Board of Education Meeting Schedule

7. ADJOURNMENT - Board Chair, Sarah Thornburg

7:47

7.1 Adjourn Meeting

Motion to adjourn the meeting.

Moved by: Amy Ray; seconded by: Liza Kelly

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

Asheville City Schools WORK SESSION, 02 Mar 2026