ASHEVILLE CITY BOARD OF EDUCATION SPECIAL CALLED SESSION

Administrative Offices

Thursday, April 2, 2026 at 5:00 PM

BE IT REMEMBERED: The Asheville City Board of Education met in a special called session on Thursday, April 2, 2026, at 5:00 PM at the Administrative Offices at 85 Mountain Street, Asheville, North Carolina, where and when the following business was transacted.

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1. MEETING OPENING

The meeting will be available for viewing via the Asheville City Schools YouTube page.

1.1 CALL TO ORDER - Board Chair, Sarah Thornburg

5:01 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

1.3 APPROVAL OF AGENDA - Board Chair, Sarah Thornburg

Motion to Approve the Agenda

Moved by: Amy Ray; seconded by: Rebecca Strimer

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

The motion passed 7-0

2. AGENDA

2.1 Supplemental Tax Rate - Board Chair, Sarah Thornburg 5

Action

Dr. Maggie Fehrman, Superintendent, shared the following information: ACS Supplemental Tax Presentation April 2026.pdf

Supplemental Tax Rate Proposal and Approval

Superintendent Dr. Fehrman presented the historical context of the supplemental tax, noting its original passage in 1935 to ensure a higher standard of education through salary supplements and program enhancements.

While the revenue-neutral rate was identified as 8.14 cents, the Board deliberated on various proposals ranging from 8.14 to 12 cents. The discussion balanced the need to fund critical district requirements, including Exceptional Children (EC) services, School Resource Officers (SROs), after-school programming, enhancement teachers, and arts programs. The Board also took into consideration supplemental budget enhancement requests submitted by district principals and the Asheville City Association of Educators (ACAE).

District Recommendation: The District Administration recommended a tax rate of 9 cents, designed to balance essential district needs. This proposed rate was projected to generate an additional $1.3 million in revenue.

Board Action: Following deliberation, the Board approved a formal request for a supplemental property tax rate of 10 cents.

Motion on Action Item

Moved by: Rebecca Strimer; seconded by: Amy Ray

Aye: George Sieburg, Amy Ray, Sarah Thornburg, Rebecca Strimer, and Jesse Warren

Nay: Liza Kelly and Pepi Acebo

The motion passed 5-2

2.2 2026-2027 School District Calendar Update - Dr. Maggie Fehrman, Superintendent

Action

2026-2027 Calendar Update Presentation

2026-2027 ACS Traditional Elementary School Calendar

2026-2027 ACS Traditional 6-12 School Calendar

The board reviewed recommended amendments to the 2026-2027 school calendar. The proposed changes included:

- Aligning spring break with Buncombe County Schools.
- Implementing a monthly late start for secondary schools (middle and high school) to allow for professional development and data dives.

Motion on Action Item

Moved by: Amy Ray; seconded by: George Sieburg

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

The motion passed 7-0

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

Work Session

Monday, April 13, 2026

Administrative Office - Board Room

Regular Meeting

Monday, April 20, 2026

Administrative Office - Board Room

Work Session

Monday, May 4, 2026

Administrative Office - Board Room

Regular Meeting

Monday, May 11, 2026

Administrative Office - Board Room

Early Dismissal for Students

Friday, May 22, 2026

12:00 Noon K-5

1:00 PM 6-12

Holiday- Memorial Day - No School for Students and Staff

Monday, May 25, 2026

2025-2026 ACS Board of Education Meeting Schedule

4. ADJOURNMENT - Board Chair, Sarah Thornburg
6:29 PM

4.1 Adjourn Meeting

Motion to Adjourn

Moved by: Liza Kelly; 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

Dr. Maggie Fehrman

Dr. Maggie Fehrman,
Superintendent

Sarah Thornburg

Board Chair, or Designee

ASHEVILLE CITY SCHOOLS

ACS
Supplemental Tax

Thursday, April 2, 2026

DISCUSSION POINTS

1. History of ACS's Supplemental Tax
2. Revenue Neutral Rate (8.14 cents)
3. Current Rate (11.0 cents)
4. District Recommendation
5. Discussion



History of ACS Supplemental Tax

ACS Supplemental Tax was established in August 1935 to fund a “higher standard” of education than what is provided by state and county allotments, including but not limited to:

- Salary supplements to attract and keep high-quality teachers and staff
- Fund locally paid positions
- Enhance programming: art, music, and technology
- Educational materials
- Class Size Reduction

Rate has been as high as 20 cents per $100 of assessed property values.



Revenue Neutral

- County Finance Team is recommending a revenue-neutral tax rate for the ACS Supplemental Tax
- This would take the tax rate down from 11 cents to 8.14 cents
- Revenue Neutral rate of 8.14 cents is projected to increase revenue by approximately $200,000

Current Rate

- Community, Staff, and Board advocacy to restore the tax rate back to 12.00 cents last year which resulted in an increase of our supplemental tax rate from 10.62 to 11.00 cents.
- This increase resulted in an approximate increase of $425,000 in revenue for FY 26
- Maintaining 11.00 cents for FY 27 would result in an additional $4.4 million











District Needs

Continued funding is needed for:

- **Exceptional Children (EC) Funding:**
  - State caps funding for EC at 13% of our enrolled students
  - ACS has 140 EC students above 13% (BCS is 25 students above 13%)
  - Initial estimation is approx **$783,000** local funds to cover EC
- **Summer school, After-School, and Saturday School Programs:**
  - Project SERV Grant Funds expire in July
  - Funding needed to cover programs is approximately **$1.4 million**
- **School Resource Officers:**
  - FY 27 Contract is estimated to increase from $457,000 to **$660,000**



District Needs

- **Enhancement Teachers and Arts Programs:**
  - Elementary
    - Commitment to provide full-time enhancement teachers at all elementary schools (4 @ HFE, LSH, IDES, IBJ & 5 @ CLX)
    - State funds 9 positions = $767,000
    - ACS has 21 Enhancement Teachers = $1.7 Million total (**$933,000** Locally paid)
  - MS/HS
    - Stated funds zero positions
    - 27 locally funded Enhancement Teachers = **$2.2 million**
- **Additional Budget Enhancement Requests**
  - Principal requests
  - ACAE requests



District Recommendation

- Looking for the right balance between district needs and increasing the tax burden on our community
- Recommendation from District Administration
  - Tax Rate of 9.00 cents
  - Generates an additional $1.3 million in revenue



DISCUSSION

Presentation to
Buncombe County Commissioners
on Thursday, April 16th @ 9:00 AM