ASHEVILLE CITY BOARD OF EDUCATION

Work and Closed Session Agenda

Administrative Offices - Board Room

85 Mountain Street, Asheville, North Carolina

Monday, October 5, 2026, 5:00 PM

Board of Education Members:
Sarah Thornburg, Board Chair
Rebecca Strimer, Vice-Chair
Pepi Acebo, Member
Liza Kelly, Member
Amy Ray, Member
George Sieburg, Member
Jesse Warren, Member
Superintendent: Dr. Maggie Fehrman

The Vision of Asheville City Schools is to Empower and Engage every child to Learn, Discover, Thrive.

Work and Closed Session Agenda

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

Page

1. MEETING OPENING

1.1 CALL TO ORDER - Board Chair, Sarah Thornburg
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

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

2.1 Student Releases to Buncombe County - Tanya Presha, Special Assistant to the Superintendent
Consent

2.2 Budget Resolution and Initial Budget and Expenditure Report - Heidi Kerns, Chief Finance Officer 5
Consent

2026-2027 Budget Resolution and Initial Budget and Expenditure Report 10_5_26.pdf

2.3 Contracts and MOUs - Dr. Kim Dechant, Chief of Staff
Carolina Thomas

Trafera

2.4 Second Read Policies - Dr. Kim Dechant, Chief of Staff 7
Consent

Policies and Procedures October 2026 Board Meeting.pdf

Policies for 2nd Read

Policy Code 2118: Censure of Board Members

Policy Code 4130: Discretionary Admission

Policy Code 7325: Video and Audio Recordings by Employees

Policy Code 7400: Job Descriptions

Information Only

Procedure Code: 1750/7220-P Formal Employee Grievance Form

Procedure Code: 5030-P Community Use of Facilities

Procedure Code: 3420-P Student Promotion and Accountability

Procedure Code: 3320-P School Trip Nutrition Form

2.5 Resolution Declaring Right -of-Way and Easement Interests at 441 Haywood Rd Surplus - Dr. Jeremy Gibbs, Chief of Operations 10
BOE-Summary-HaywoodRd-Declaration-5Oct2026.pdf

3. DISCUSSION ITEMS

3.1 Alternative Learning Program - Dr. Jeremy Gibbs, Chief of Operations, and Sybil Jefferson, Director, William Randolph 12
BOE-Summary-WRC Update-5Oct2026.pdf

3.2 Chartwells Update: tasting and preview of goals for the year - Heidi Kerns, Chief Finance Officer 14
Executive Summary School Nutrition Presentation 10-26.pdf

3.3 Reform Policy Discussion - Dr. Maggie Fehrman, Superintendent 16
Reform Policy Recommendation BOARD AGENDA EXECUTIVE SUMMARY 2026.pdf

3.4 Update/Report Feasibility Study - Dr. Jeremy Gibbs, Chief of Operations 18
BOE-Summary-FNA Update-5Oct2026.pdf

4. 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

4.1 Personnel Report October

4.2 Attorney-Client Matters
Superintendent Evaluation & Contract Extension

5. FUTURE MEETINGS/ANNOUNCEMENTS -

Board Chair, Sarah Thornburg

Work Session Meeting

Monday, November 2, 2026

Administrative Offices - Board Room

Optional Workday - Mid-Term Election Day

November 3, 2026

NCSBA Annual Conference

November 9-11, 2026

Greensboro, NC

Holiday

No School for Students or Staff

November, 11, 2026

Regular Meeting

Monday, November 16, 2026

Administrative Offices - Board Room

2026-2027 ACS Board of Education Meeting Schedule

6. ADJOURNMENT - Board Chair, Sarah Thornburg

6.1 Adjourn Meeting

Motion to adjourn the meeting.

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Kimberly Jones, *Executive Assistant to the Superintendent*

Budget Resolution and Initial Budget and Expenditure Report Cover Sheet

Board Meeting Date: _____10/5//26_____

Budget Amendment Number: _____N/A_____

Resolution Total: $____92,787,320_____

ATTACHMENTS: 2026-2027 Budget Resolution
2026-2027 Budget and Expenditure Report

Reason for Resolution: As required by law, please find our 2026-2027 initial budget resolution for your consideration. Also included is the initial budget and expenditure report.

Section 1 - State Public School Fund: Allotments to date. Future amendments will reflect changes as received. This is currently about a $2.5m increase over last year.

Section 2 - Local Current Expense Fund: This local current expense fund currently reflects an increase of approximately $2.1m in revenue and expenditures over last year. This is a result of the new local funding formula and reset of the repurposed capital commission funds. $2m in fund balance continues to be budgeted in order to balance the budget. These totals are subject to change once the ADM is received from both LEA units and the charter schools so the local current expense appropriation and charter school funding per pupil and in total can be finalized.

Section 3 - Federal Grant Fund (NCDPI-administered): Most major allotments are reflected here, but some are still pending. No major changes to note at this time.

Section 4 - Capital Outlay Fund: This budget reflects a mix of carryover projects and new projects.

Section 5 - School Nutrition Fund: Initial budget based on last year's actual and the participation and costs anticipated for this school year.

Section 6 - Other Special Revenue Fund: Carryover grants, Medicaid, preschool, local transportation and other small budgets that cannot be included in Fund 2.

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BOARD AGENDA EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

MEETING DATE: Monday, October 5, 2026

AGENDA ITEM TITLE: Policies and Procedures for October Board Meeting

PRESENTER/CONTACT: Dr. Kimberly Dechant

BOARD ACTION REQUESTED:

Select one:

- ☑ Action / Approval Requested
- ☑ Information Only

ATTACHMENTS:

- ☐ Presentation
- ☐ Report
- ☐ Other
- ☑ N/A

EFFECTIVE DATE/RANGE: 2nd reads from Spring 2026 update and updated procedures

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The policy updates presented for Board consideration originate with the North Carolina School Boards Association (NCSBA) and reflect the Association's Spring 2026 policy update. NCSBA updates its model policies primarily in response to legislation enacted by the North Carolina General Assembly and other changes in state law.

Following release by NCSBA, the recommended revisions are reviewed and vetted by Campbell Shatley, with additional legal feedback incorporated through the spring, summer, and fall update process. This review helps ensure that proposed Board policies remain aligned with current North Carolina legal requirements and applicable guidance.

STRATEGIC PLAN FOCUS AREA:

- ☑ Student Outcomes
- ☑ Culture and Climate
- ☑ Recruitment and Retention
- ☑ Operations and Finance

OVERVIEW:

Policies for 2nd Read

- Policy Code 2118: Censure of Board Members--Provided by the ACS School Board
- Policy Code 4130: Discretionary Admission--updated to be in alignment with the NC School Board Association policy
- Policy Code 7325: Video and Audio Recordings by Employees
- Policy Code 7400: Job Descriptions--updated to be in alignment with the NC School Board Association policy

Information Only

- Procedure Code: 1750/7220-P Formal Employee Grievance Form
- Procedure Code: 5030-P Community Use of Facilities
- Procedure Code: 3420-P Student Promotion and Accountability
- Procedure Code: 3320-P School Trip Nutrition Form

FISCAL/BUDGET IMPACT: NA

RECOMMENDATION / NEXT STEPS:

You are receiving the policy updates for first reading in order to seek appropriate input and then bring policies back for final adoption.

Work Session October 5, 2026

Policies for 2nd Read

Policy Code 2118: Censure of Board Members
Policy Code 4130: Discretionary Admission
Policy Code 7325: Video and Audio Recordings by Employees
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BOARD AGENDA EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

MEETING DATE: October 5/12, 2026

AGENDA ITEM TITLE: Resolution Declaring Right-of-Way and Easement Interests at 441 Haywood Road Surplus

PRESENTER/CONTACT: Dr. Jeremy Gibbs, Chief Operating Officer

BOARD ACTION REQUESTED:

- ☑ Action / Approval Requested
- ☐ Information Only

ATTACHMENTS:

- ☐ Presentation
- ☐ Report
- ☑ Other: Resolution and Deed for Highway Right of Way
- ☐ N/A

EFFECTIVE DATE/RANGE: Upon Board Adoption

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

North Carolina General Statute § 115C-518 requires local boards of education to declare real property surplus before disposition and to offer the surplus property to the Board of County Commissioners prior to conveyance. This resolution declares the designated right-of-way and easement areas at 441 Haywood Road (0.089 acres fee right-of-way, 0.156 acres permanent easements, and 0.069 acres temporary easement) surplus for NCDOT's I-26 widening project. Board approval fulfills the statutory requirement, allowing staff to offer to Buncombe County and, upon their waiver or response, execute the negotiated $185,000 conveyance with NCDOT.

STRATEGIC PLAN FOCUS AREA:

- ☐ Student Outcomes
- ☐ Culture and Climate
- ☐ Recruitment and Retention
- ☑ Operations and Finance

OVERVIEW:

- Statutory Requirement: N.C.G.S. § 115C-518 requires the Board to formally declare real property surplus and offer it to the Board of County Commissioners prior to conveyance to NCDOT.
- Scope & Impact: This resolution applies strictly to the right-of-way and easement areas required for the I-26 project at 441 Haywood Road (Parcel 049).
- Purpose: Adoption fulfills NC legal prerequisites, initiates the mandatory county notice, and allows administration to finalize the negotiated $185,000 settlement with NCDOT.

FISCAL/BUDGET IMPACT:

No direct cost to the general fund. Adoption enables compliance with statutory disposition procedures to secure $185,000 in revenue from NCDOT upon completion of the county notice process and final closing.

RECOMMENDATION / NEXT STEPS:

Administration recommends adoption of the Resolution Declaring Right-of-Way and Easement Interests at 441 Haywood Road Surplus to District Needs. Following adoption, staff and legal counsel will formally notify the Buncombe County Board of Commissioners as required by N.C.G.S. § 115C-518; upon the County's waiver or action, staff will execute final conveyance documents with NCDOT.

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BOARD AGENDA EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

MEETING DATE: October 5/12, 2026

AGENDA ITEM TITLE: Alternative Learning Program Update: Cougar Academy & Education and Career Academy (ECA)

PRESENTER/CONTACT: Sybil Jefferson, Program Administrator
Dr. Jeremy Gibbs, Chief Operating Officer

BOARD ACTION REQUESTED:

- ☐ Action / Approval Requested
- ☑ Information Only

ATTACHMENTS:

- ☑ Presentation: Alternative Program Update October 2026
- ☐ Report
- ☐ Other
- ☐ N/A

EFFECTIVE DATE/RANGE: 2026-2027 School Year

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

This item provides a progress update and program overview of Asheville City Schools' alternative learning initiatives hosted at the William Randolph Campus, including Cougar Academy (grades 6–8) and the Education and Career Academy (grades 9–12). The presentation details current student enrollment, credit recovery outcomes, social-emotional support structures, and individualized graduation pathways for non-traditional learners.

STRATEGIC PLAN FOCUS AREA:

- ☑ Student Outcomes
- ☐ Culture and Climate
- ☐ Recruitment and Retention
- ☐ Operations and Finance

OVERVIEW:

Per Board Policy 3470/4305, the Board is reviewing this presentation to evaluate the district's alternative learning framework at the William Randolph Campus, which serves students needing specialized academic support, credit recovery, or non-traditional learning environments. This update provides a snapshot of current staffing and student enrollment data, highlights key elements of the school work plan and shares a high-level overview of the programming and support in place for students. It also outlines strategic next steps and possible future programming considerations. Continuously refining programs and approaches for the alternative learning program ensures non-traditional learners receive the targeted academic, social-emotional, and career-readiness supports needed for high school graduation and future success beyond high school graduation.

FISCAL/BUDGET IMPACT:

Alternative learning programming is supported through a blend of state and local funding sources. No additional budget allocation or fiscal modification is requested at this time.

RECOMMENDATION / NEXT STEPS:

Presented for Board review and information only; no formal action required.

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BOARD AGENDA EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

MEETING DATE: 10/05/2026

AGENDA ITEM TITLE: School Nutrition Presentation

PRESENTER/CONTACT: Kristen Tekell and Heidi Kerns

BOARD ACTION REQUESTED:

Select one:

- ☐ Action / Approval Requested
- ☑ Information Only

ATTACHMENTS: School Nutrition Presentation 10-26

- ☑ Presentation
- ☐ Report
- ☐ Other
- ☐ N/A

EFFECTIVE DATE/RANGE: 2025-2026 results, 2026-2027 updates

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: Requested board update on the School Nutrition program

STRATEGIC PLAN FOCUS AREA:

- ☑ Student Outcomes
- ☑ Culture and Climate
- ☐ Recruitment and Retention
- ☑ Operations and Finance

OVERVIEW: Updates as to the current operation and financial position of the ACS School Nutrition (SN) program and first year of operations under CEP (the Community Eligibility Provision.

FISCAL/BUDGET IMPACT: The School Nutrition program provides a free, nutritious breakfast and lunch to all ACS students. Currently the program is working on increasing participation to lessen the financial impact to district operations.

RECOMMENDATION / NEXT STEPS: If the board would like to hear about any specific components of the SN program for the next presentation, please let me know.

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BOARD AGENDA EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

MEETING DATE: October 5, 2026

AGENDA ITEM TITLE: Accountability Policy

PRESENTER/CONTACT: Dr. Maggie Fehrman, Superintendent

BOARD ACTION REQUESTED:

Select one:

- ☐ Action / Approval Requested
- ☑ Information Only

ATTACHMENTS:

- ☐ Presentation
- ☐ Report
- ☐ Other
- ☑ N/A

EFFECTIVE DATE/RANGE: Potential Implementation for 2027-2028 SY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Since 2024, the Board has been engaged in creating reform policies. Reform policies are policies that create substantial change in the school system to create long-term positive outcomes for students. The Board has previously approved the following reform policies: grading, promotion, theory of action. The Board engaged in a half-day retreat on September 22, 2026, to review student achievement data, updates on the strategic plan, and discuss characteristics of school boards that support high student achievement. One area the Board identified as an area of work for this Board was the area of accountability.

STRATEGIC PLAN FOCUS AREA:

- ☑ Student Outcomes
- ☑ Culture and Climate
- ☑ Recruitment and Retention
- ☑ Operations and Finance

OVERVIEW:

I. Research studies have found that the most effective school boards are accountability-driven and develop rigorous and sustainable systems of accountability for all stakeholders. Rigorous accountability systems have consistently applied accountability rules, a clearly understood process, agreed-upon metrics, and a linking of the accountability process to district objectives and goals.

II. During the Board Retreat on September 22, 2026, the Board recognized that ACS does not have a documented accountability system and expressed interest in the development of an accountability policy for ACS.

III. After review of board policies across the nation, I identified several high quality school systems with written and adopted policies for accountability. These examples are linked below.

IV. Gwinnett County Schools (GA)

V. Cherokee County Schools (GA)

VI. Henry County Schools (GA)

VII. High Line Public Schools (WA)

VIII. As ACS continues to make progress in closing the achievement gap and to eliminate disproportionate disciplinary consequences, the development and adoption of a rigorous accountability system would ensure all staff and stakeholders have a clear understanding of the Board's goals, expectations, and how ACS will hold all staff accountable when expectations are not met. The newly formed Cross-Functional Action Team (CFAT) would be a natural place to start the drafting of this policy. The Meet, Confer, Collaborate (MCC) team will also be engaged in review of the policy draft.

FISCAL/BUDGET IMPACT: N/A

RECOMMENDATION / NEXT STEPS:

It is the recommendation of the superintendent that the Board move forward with the development and approval of an accountability policy.

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BOARD AGENDA EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

MEETING DATE: October 5/12, 2026

AGENDA ITEM TITLE: Facility Needs Assessment Update

PRESENTER/CONTACT: Dr. Jeremy Gibbs, Chief Operating Officer

BOARD ACTION REQUESTED:

- ☐ Action / Approval Requested
- ☑ Information Only

ATTACHMENTS:

- ☑ Presentation: Facility Needs Assessment Update 5Oct2026
- ☑ Report: MPS Facility Data Overview
- ☐ Other
- ☐ N/A

EFFECTIVE DATE/RANGE: FY 2027

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

This item provides a refresher and progress update on the Asheville City Schools Comprehensive Facility Study conducted in collaboration with McMillan Pazdan Smith Architecture. The study presents facility condition assessments, educational adequacy ratings, and 10-year enrollment projections across all district properties. It outlines preliminary Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) options and facility optimization strategies to guide upcoming master planning and budget prioritization for FY 2027 and beyond.

STRATEGIC PLAN FOCUS AREA:

- ☐ Student Outcomes
- ☐ Culture and Climate
- ☐ Recruitment and Retention
- ☑ Operations and Finance

OVERVIEW:

Following June's facility needs town hall engagement sessions and a break for the remainder of summer to focus on school start-up, this presentation re-engages the Board with key findings from the district's Comprehensive Facility Study to support upcoming FY 2027 capital planning decisions. The assessment highlights two main operational drivers across district properties: addressing aging infrastructure/facility deficiencies and managing shifting enrollment trends, which show overall district decline alongside localized elementary overcrowding. Aligning our facilities with projected enrollment and modern learning environments will maximize capital efficiency, while creative property utilization offers strategic opportunities to support employee retention and more efficient district support functions.

FISCAL/BUDGET IMPACT:

The facility condition assessment identifies an estimated $44.4M in deferred maintenance and physical repair costs across school sites, alongside estimated construction costs of $4.0M at 85 Mountain St and $13.6M at 441 Haywood Rd for administrative options. Capital expenditure requirements will depend on the specific CIP options, phasing schedule, and funding sources selected by the Board for FY 2027 and subsequent fiscal years. No direct budget allocation is requested at this meeting.

RECOMMENDATION / NEXT STEPS:

Presented for Board review and information only; no formal action required. Administration continues efforts to seek feedback from stakeholders and guidance from the Board regarding preferred facility options and community engagement next steps to prepare formal long-term CIP recommendations.