



JOINT BOCC/BOE 5 on 5 Committee

Wednesday, April 8, 2026
10:00 am
Chowan County Public Safety Center
2nd Floor Training Room
305 West Freemason St.
Edenton, NC 27932
MINUTES

Attendees:

Chair Bob Kirby
Commissioner Larry McLaughlin
Kevin Howard, County Manager
Cathy Smith, Finance Officer
Susanne Stallings, Board Clerk

Chairman George Lewis
Tammi Ward, Superintendent
Sandy Pittman, Finance Officer

Hillary Robertson, Community & School Board
Engagement Specialist

Shelia Evans was absent.

Welcome

Chair Bob Kirby, County Board of Commissioners

Chairman George Lewis, Edenton-Chowan Board of
Education

- **Budget Updates**

Ms. Ward provided a PowerPoint with a copy of the presentation that is in the meeting file labeled April 8, 2026.

Ms. Ward highlighted the following items in her presentation:

- Status update of current capital outlay projects
- Recommendations for 2026-27 Capital Outlay projects for the High School, Chowan Middle School, DF Walker Elementary School and White Oak Elementary School.
- Review of Staff intent survey. Noting 222 responded, 208 indicated they planned to return for 2026-27, 11 unsure and 3 are retiring.
- Review of state budget allocation for ADM (Average Daily Membership) noting a decrease of 227 over a 5-year period.
- Review of charter school enrollment noting 93 are projected to be enrolled in charter schools for the current school year.

- Ms. Pittman reviewed slides showing the FY 2025-26 initial allotments and the 2026-27 planning allotments. She stated she is planning to meet with the state to understand the decrease in low wealth supplement funding.
- Ms. Ward noted that areas to be considered is a potential need for an EC Intensive Teacher K-5, K-2 enrollment capacity, curriculum adoption (screen time reduction), child nutrition, Hope Academy, Supplements, High School increased operating costs and coaching supplements.
- Ms. Ward discussed a proposal to tie annual supplements to school performance.
- Ms. Ward noted the following potential budget requests:
 - Projected Cost Increases (additional \$381,000)
 - Addition of Instruction Assistants (IA) to supplement (additional \$63,000)
 - Supplement of 2nd tier 5% (B&C schools) (additional \$194,000)
 - Hope Academy Restructuring (additional \$89,000)

Mr. Howard discussed his concern over the County's funding in comparison to neighboring counties. He noted that Chowan ranks 2nd in local funding for education as a percentage of the general fund (out of 26 counties with populations under 30,000) and Chowan ranks 8th in total public-school allocation of the 26 counties.

- **2026-27 School Calendar**

Ms. Ward provided the committee with a copy of the 2026-27 school calendar.

- **JAH Update**

Ms. Ward noted that the high school project is expected to be completed by the end of June. She will be forwarding an invite to the Commissioners for a community open house and tour of the building.

She noted that with regards to the budget the project is anticipated to use all of the funds given and the owners contingency. She stated that she is waiting for quotes for additional security cameras and door security for full coverage surveillance. She noted they were waiting for additional landscaping. There are some recommendations to replicate the Broad Street side of the campus at the Armory. She noted the school's contingency was used to pay for the generator switch. Mr. Howard asked if the student parking lot on Broad Street would be upgraded, Ms. Ward stated she believed it was included but would check.

- **Proposed Memorandum of Agreement for Unassigned Fund Balance (MOA)**

Mr. Howard stated the County Attorney has reviewed the draft MOA provided by the schools. He stated that the attorney has provided a draft copy of a new MOA. Both copies of the original as the newly proposed MOA are in the meeting file labeled April 8, 2026. Mr. Howard noted that this MOA acknowledges that the schools may maintain a fund balance but does not put the responsibility on the County for funding the schools fund balance. He noted a concern was that the original MOA binds future Boards of

Commissioners. He stated the County cannot agree to ensure the schools have \$1.5 million in fund balance. He noted that if the schools request additional funding from the County, the County has ensured that the schools maintained adequate funding. Mr. Howard noted that the County also maintains a fund balance which includes the amount of funding for the schools to cover any unanticipated costs.

Chair Kirby stated he feels the relationship between the Board of Education and the County has been the best it's been over the past 8 years. He stated he appreciated the work of the two committees to communicate the anticipated funding requests for next fiscal year.

Chair Lewis agreed that the work of the committee is progress.

Chair Kirby stated that he feels that Ms. Ward is doing a great job as superintendent.

It was noted that the Board of Education will review the proposed draft MOA and provide a recommendation if they wish to consider moving forward with the draft MOA.

- **Adjourn**

Being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Bob Kirby, Chairman

Susanne Stallings, Clerk