



September 25, 2018

To: Board of Commissioners

From: George Wood, Interim County Manager *GW*

Re: Request to School Capital Fund Commission

You recall the Sheriff's Office recently received a grant of \$500,000 to install bi-directional antennas (BDAs) and distributed antenna systems (DASs) in eight of our schools to boost the public safety radio system's signals. The County provided the \$125,000 grant match, for a total of \$625,000. The preliminary study done for that grant application indicated that we had other schools as well that needed this improvement. Staff estimated that we could engineer and install BDAs and DASs in 5 high schools and 3 middle schools with this funding.

In reviewing the entire situation, it is clear that we need to proceed as soon as possible with engineering and installation of apparatus in any public schools that an engineering study determines are necessary. In working with the IT Department, which will manage the project, they have two quotes for the engineering study, with the lowest being \$87,000. Attached is a copy of that proposal. We believe we should study all 42 Buncombe County Schools, all 10 Asheville City Schools, and 8 Charter Schools, for a total of 60. Charter Schools are public schools, but do not share in the capital outlay money, only operating money.

Using numbers from Union County, the IT Department estimates that on average the installations should cost about \$80,000 per school. They do not believe that all the schools will need the antennas, as they have reported no problems in some schools in either radio signal transmission or reception. Consequently, we believe potentially about 32 BCSS and ACSS schools may need this solution. The current grant and match will provide \$625,000 of the cost.

I am requesting that you authorize me to make a proposal for the following funding in October to the School Capital Fund Commission, which allocates the 1/2 of the Article 39 Sales Tax reserved for school capital projects:

\$ 75,400	Engineering Study of 52 schools (Charter Schools not included)
<u>\$2,560,000</u>	Installation of BDAs and DASs in 32 schools
\$2,635,400	Total Cost (not counting any Charter Schools which would have to be funded by General Fund monies)
<u>(\$ 625,000)</u>	Grant and Match already received
\$2,010,400	TOTAL FUNDING REQUEST

Without adequate radio transmission and reception inside these buildings, we put our first responders, students, faculty, and staff in jeopardy should we have a public safety incident. Please call me if you have any questions or comments on this matter.