



ASHEVILLE CITY SCHOOLS

Learn. Discover. Thrive.

2024-2025 Operational Budget Request Proposal

May 9, 2024

New School Board Members Elected November 2022



George Sieburg



Amy Ray



Rebecca Strimer



James Carter



Jesse Warren



Liza Kelly



Sarah Thornburg



New Superintendent July 2023





ashevilleschools.net

Our promise to the Asheville City Schools students, families, and community

Belonging

We will partner with our students, families, and community to honor the equal worth, inherent dignity, and lived experiences of each person.

We will promote and sustain a sense of belonging that affirms the gifts, talents, and backgrounds of each member of our community.

Challenging and Relevant

We will engage each student in challenging, meaningful, and culturally relevant learning that is on or above grade level.

We will plan all learning to build upon a solid instructional core, where student engagement, teacher skill, and grade-level content result in our students being the leaders of their own learning.

Make Every Second Count

We will make every second count because our time with students is finite.

We will provide each student a welcoming learning environment with clear and consistent procedures to maximize learning time.

**you
belong
here**

#YouBelongInACS



#ChallengingAndRelevantInACS



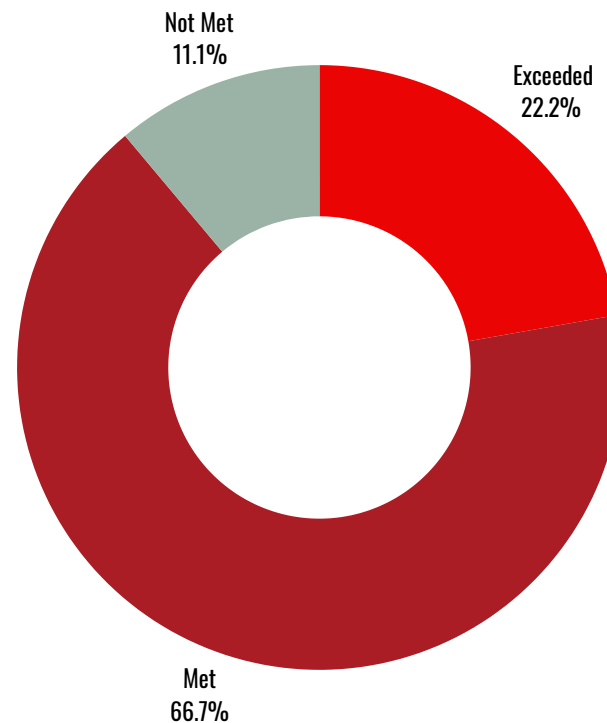
#EverySecondCountsInACS

Achievements in Cougar Country!

School Performance Data: 2022-2023

8 out of 9 schools met or exceeded overall growth; MNSA moved from a letter grade of a C to a B.

Both Asheville High and SILSA exceeded overall growth in the 2022-2023 School Performance grades.



Source: Department of Public Instruction - NC School Report Cards

Exceptional Early Childhood Education Department

Student data shows **20% growth within all developmental domains** from BOY to MOY.

Strong Kindergarten readiness goals that include utilizing the same literacy curriculum as Kindergarten in order to give children exposure before entering Kindergarten.

Staff is highly qualified to serve the Early Childhood Community:

- All teachers are certified in Birth - Kindergarten
- 70% of Instructional Assistants hold at least an Associates Degree in Early Childhood Development
- 30% of Instructional Assistants are enrolled in higher education courses



Achievements in Cougar Country!

Highly successful record of grant funding and stewardship

DPI recently conducted a site-visit to evaluate our PRC 189 Grant. We received a very positive report from that visit; **DPI particularly noted the use of standards-specific math data** for individual students to drive tutoring approaches as a strength of ACS.

ACS will be receiving \$68,341.67 in a recently awarded **STEM grant**. Only 20 out of 69 applications were selected for funding. These funds will be used for curriculum development for middle school science teachers to integrate STEM career exploration via hands-on science lessons.

ACS was recently awarded a **\$300,000 school safety grant** that will be used for safety equipment, training, and services for students in crisis.



Achievements in Cougar Country!

Cultivating student engagement in STEM

The **DPI Robotics grant** is funding after-school robotics at Hall Fletcher and at Asheville High and SILSA. This year, our high school team, Glitch 2.0, has won several FIRST robotics competitions across the state and has qualified for the first World Competition!

The **MNSA Science Olympiad team** represented ACS at the state tournament at NC State University. Students competed against the top 40 middle school teams in the state. This year, they exceeded their own record at earning top 10 medals in 3 different events. The team earned 10th for Can't Judge a Powder, 6th for Experimental Design, and 5th for Ecology.



Research Highlight: Costa Rica

During spring break, 16 AHS and SILSA students spent their week working with researchers at the Pacuare Reserve as part of their international sea turtle monitoring program on the east coast of Costa Rica!

Pacuare Reserve recently released conservation impacts related specifically to our students' trip which included: 4 nests monitored, 5 turtles worked, and 4 taxonomic groups researched.



Achievements in Cougar Country!

Cultivating student talent through the arts

ACS is committed to providing opportunities for all students to experience the rich and engaging benefits of arts education. From Pre-K through Grade 12, ACS has robust visual and performing arts opportunities for our students, including ceramics, dance, theatre, band and jazz band, and multi-media arts courses.

The strength of our arts program is evident not only in the talent of our current students, but can also be witnessed in the accomplishments of our graduates:

- **Ambrose Murray, *Class of 2014*:** Selected as a 2024 Forbes 30 Under 30
- **Jake Lenderman, *Class of 2017*:** March 2024 Performance on The Late Show with Stephen Colbert



Arts Highlight: ACS Band Program

All 4 ACS concert bands that went to the state music performance assessment last month (Asheville MS, Montford, and both AHS) received all superior ratings from every judge.

ACS also had 14 students make the All State Honor Bands. The AHS/SILSA Band performed at the National Band and Orchestra Festival at Carnegie Hall in New York City and received the highest marks from the panel of judges.



Achievements in Cougar Country!

Exceptional Career and Technical Education

Students completed **246 Career and Technical Education (CTE) credentials** and **163 concentrations** in 2022.

Building a CTE leadership continuum:

- Started a student mentoring program at Montford North Star called *CTE: Pathway to Your Purpose Mentoring Program*
- Began the CTE Student Ambassador Program at AHS/SILSA.

Robust Foods, Culinary, and Hospitality opportunities

- **Groundhog Cafe** (student-driven)

Business classes have partnered with Goodwill to participate in the **CareerQuest** program- the first school district in the western region to participate



CTE Highlight: Culinary and Management Teams

Both teams placed 1st at the NC State competition and competed in the ProStart Culinary Nationals in Baltimore, Maryland where they placed 11th in the nation out of 48 teams!

Culinary arts and hospitality teacher Sara Monson was recognized among 445 educators from across the globe as a 2024 Morehead-Cain Impact Educator.

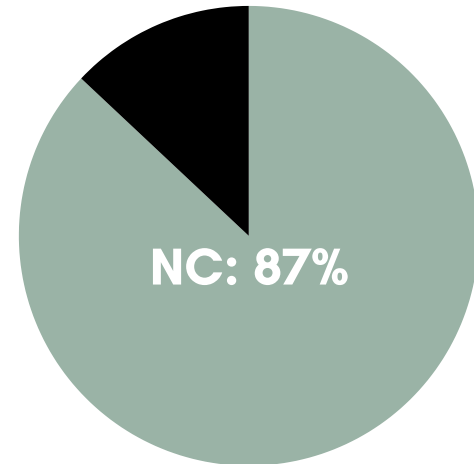
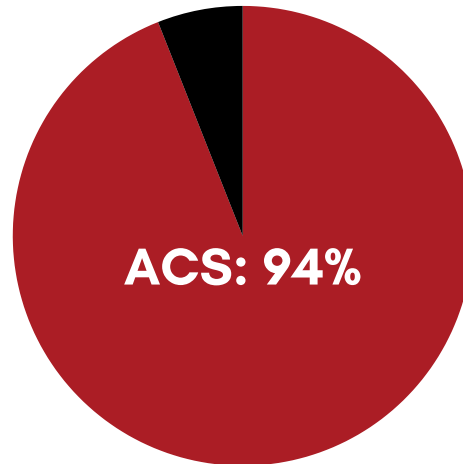


Achievements in Cougar Country!

Exceptional Graduation Rates

Asheville High & SILSA's combined graduation rate: **94%**

- Asheville High School: 89%
- SILSA: 98.9



Asheville High and SILSA 2024 outstanding scholarships:

- 2 Morehead Cain Scholarships
- A QuestBridge Ivy League Scholar
- 6 Governor's School Awardees
- ROTC 4 year Scholar

Source: Department of Public Instruction Cohort Graduation Rates 2023

Achievements in Cougar Country!



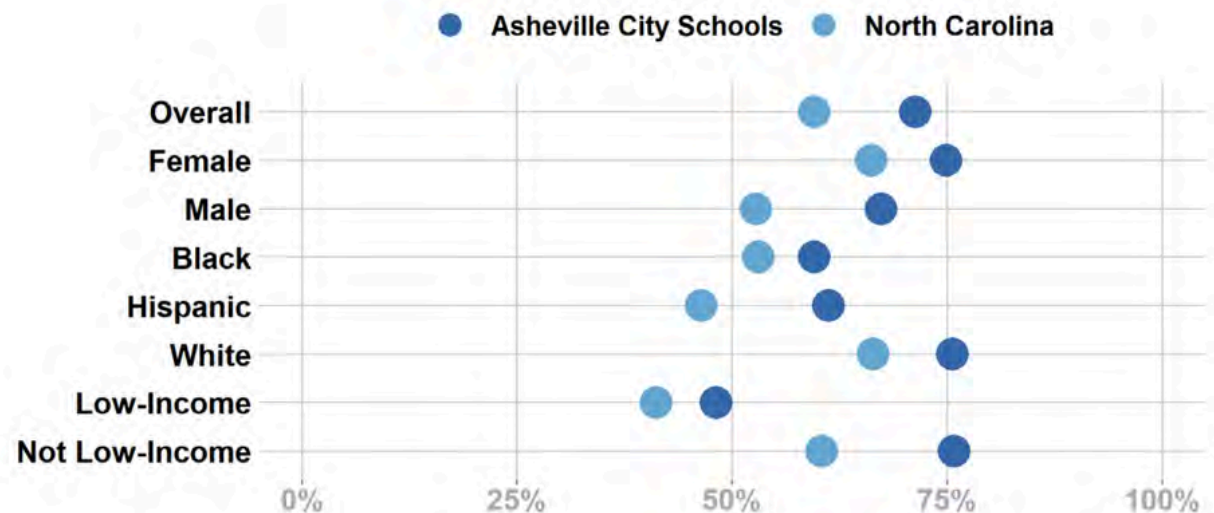
College and Career Access

71% of seniors completed a FAFSA in 2023, compared to the statewide rate of 62%

69% of graduates enrolled in a postsecondary institution within 12 months; **ACS has higher enrollment rates across all demographics compared to state averages**

86% of college students continued on to their second year

Postsecondary Enrollment Rates (within 12 months) for Select Groups



Source: myFutureNC District School Profile 2022-2023

Thank you, County Commissioners!

Completed Capital Commission Projects:

- **Asheville High:**
 - New roofs, tuck pointing the entire building, new windows, and plumbing upgrades
 - Upgrades to the track and Building G
- **Montford North Star:**
 - New roof, new elevator, restroom remodels, new windows and HVAC; Wall at Parking lot
- **Ira B. Jones Elementary:**
 - New roofs, windows, plumbing, kitchen floor, HVAC and store fronts





Challenges Facing ACS

- Expansion of the Opportunity Scholarship
- Cost of living in Asheville v. salaries
- Staff Turnover in schools and in leadership positions (Superintendent and CFO)
- Decreasing Enrollment and Growth of Charter Schools
- Consolidation Study
- Aging Facilities and Rising Maintenance costs
- Minimal growth in local revenue



Staff Recruitment & Retention

- Increased local supplement by 2%
- Athletic Coaching Stipends Increased
- Additional Life Insurance Benefit at no cost to employee
- Principal and Assistant Principal Stipend Increase
- Piloting retention bonuses for hard to fill positions
- Listening to our staff and engaging staff in identifying solutions



FY 25 Budget Request

FY 25 Budget Calendar

Next Steps

April 9th - Board Work Session

Initial Budget Presentation

April 15th - Regular Board Meeting

Review DRAFT Budget Presentation

April 17th - Special Called Budget Meeting

Final Budget Presentation and Approval of Budget Request

April 22nd

Meeting with County to review Budget Requests

May 6th

ACS Board Work Session - Vote on FY 25 Budget Request

May 9th

County Commissioner Budget Work Session and Budget Presentation



FY 25 Budget Planning

Revenue Loss

\$938,000 - decrease
in enrollment
\$1 Million - ESSER
Cliff
\$500,000 - Charter

\$2.4

Million

\$1.3 Million Local
Supplement

\$1.428 Million Salary,
FICA, Retirement

\$360,000 - Insurance

\$135,000 - est. increased
utility cost

\$72,000 - est. increase to
property insurance

\$3.3 Million

Increase Expenses

Total Shortfall

\$5.7 Million

FY 25 Budget Planning

Budget Enhancement Requests to Buncombe County Board of Commissioners

Highest Needs: Student Mental Health and Addressing Student Behaviors

Requests	Cost
ESSER Cliff+	\$1.25 Million
Additional social workers (+2)	\$175,000
Mental Health Professionals (+2)	\$250,000
School Counselors (+2)	\$175,000
Behavior Interventionists (+2)	\$250,000
Total	\$2.1 Million



FY 25 Budget Planning

Budget Enhancement Requests to Buncombe County Board of Commissioners

Highest Needs: Student Mental Health and Addressing Student Behaviors

Mental Health Needs continue to put a strain on our educators.

Educator Input was gathered through:

- In-person listening sessions at each school
- Staff Survey

When teachers were asked, **“What factors inside and outside of their classrooms are interfering with their ability to provide students with the best instruction possible?”** Addressing student mental health and behavior was top on the teacher’s list.

When asked during listening sessions, **“What issues should be top on my to-do list?”** Staff overwhelmingly reported that student mental and behavior were significant problems that needed immediate solutions.

2022-2023: 131 Referrals for School Based Therapy were made

2023-2024: 266 Referrals for School Based Therapy were made

41 Suicide Screeners

13 Threat Assessments were completed so far this year

FY 25 Budget Planning

Budget Enhancement Requests to Buncombe County Board of Commissioners

Highest Needs: Student Mental Health and Addressing Student Behaviors

A total of **1,914 Office Referrals** have been submitted so far this year.

Half (50%) of those referrals are from **less than 1%** of our students.



FY 25 Budget Planning

Budget Enhancement Requests to Buncombe County Board of Commissioners

Highest Needs: Student Mental Health and Addressing Student Behaviors

Student Support Specialists Data

Across all schools, our Student Support Specialists respond to between **5 to 10 incidents** for support each day.

They spend approximately between **15 - 20 minutes** on each individual case.

De-escalation is the most frequent support needed across the district.

On a scale of 1 - 10, students self-report an improved feeling of well-being ranging from **2.3 points - 3.1 points** at the end of their session.

FY 25 Budget Planning

Budget Enhancement Requests to Buncombe County Board of Commissioners

Highest Needs: Student Mental Health and Addressing Student Behaviors

ESSER Cliff+ \$1.25 M

ESSER Funds used to pay Student Support Specialists and Learning Loss Recovery Programs

- 10 Student Support Specialists
 - Paid on Classified salary scale
 - Need for enhanced credentials and or training to appropriately support the mental and behavioral challenges in our classrooms
- Funds will be used to pay for salary, benefits, training, and enhanced credentials for new hires



FY 25 Budget Planning

Budget Enhancement Requests to Buncombe County Board of Commissioners

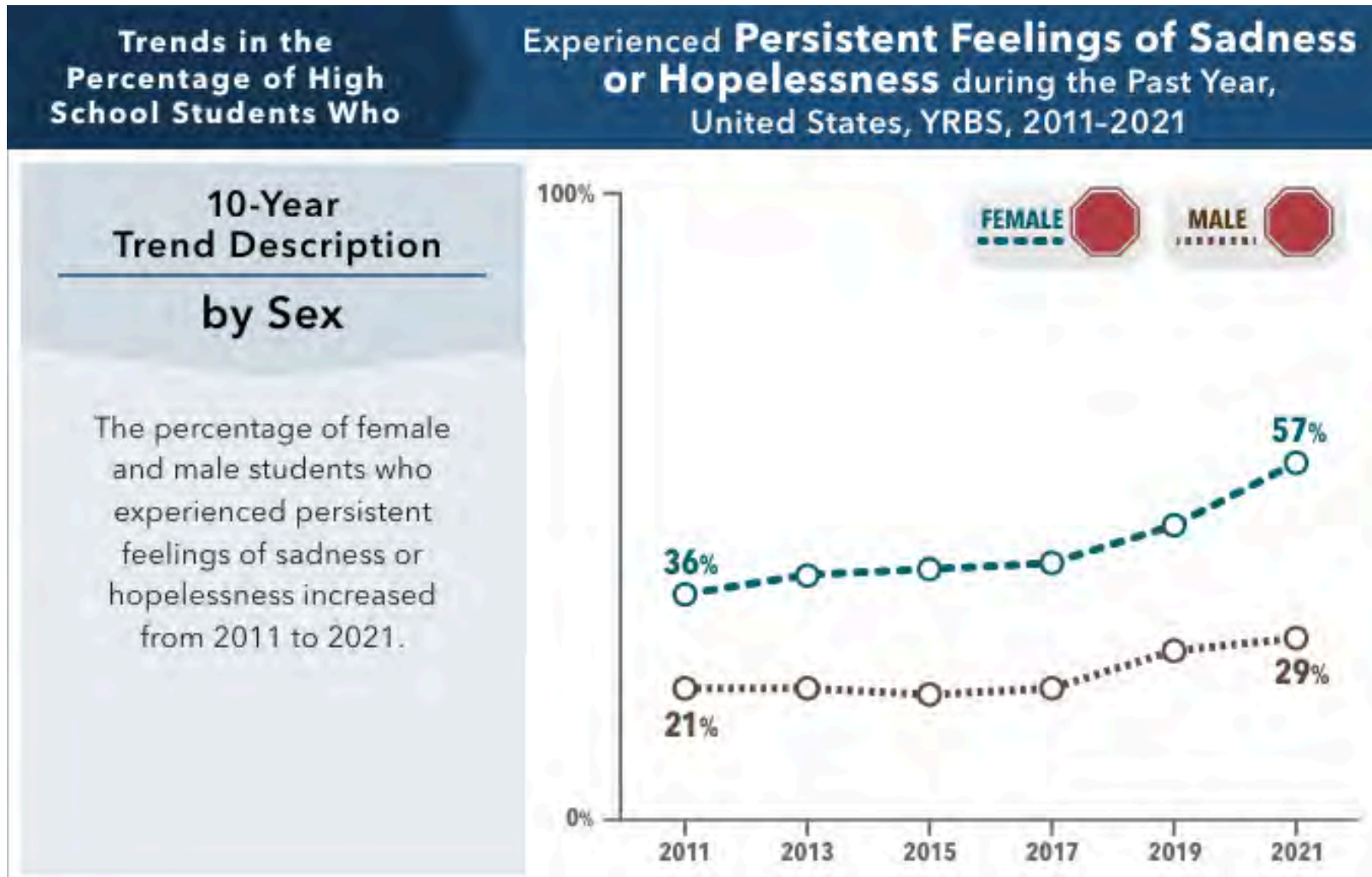
Highest Needs: Student Mental Health and Addressing Student Behaviors

The Percentage of High School Students Who:*	2011 Total	2013 Total	2015 Total	2017 Total	2019 Total	2021 Total	Trend
Experienced persistent feelings of sadness or hopelessness	28	30	30	31	37	42	
Experienced poor mental health†	–	–	–	–	–	29	–
Seriously considered attempting suicide	16	17	18	17	19	22	
Made a suicide plan	13	14	15	14	16	18	
Attempted suicide	8	8	9	7	9	10	
Were injured in a suicide attempt that had to be treated by a doctor or nurse	2	3	3	2	3	3	

FY 25 Budget Planning

Budget Enhancement Requests to Buncombe County Board of Commissioners

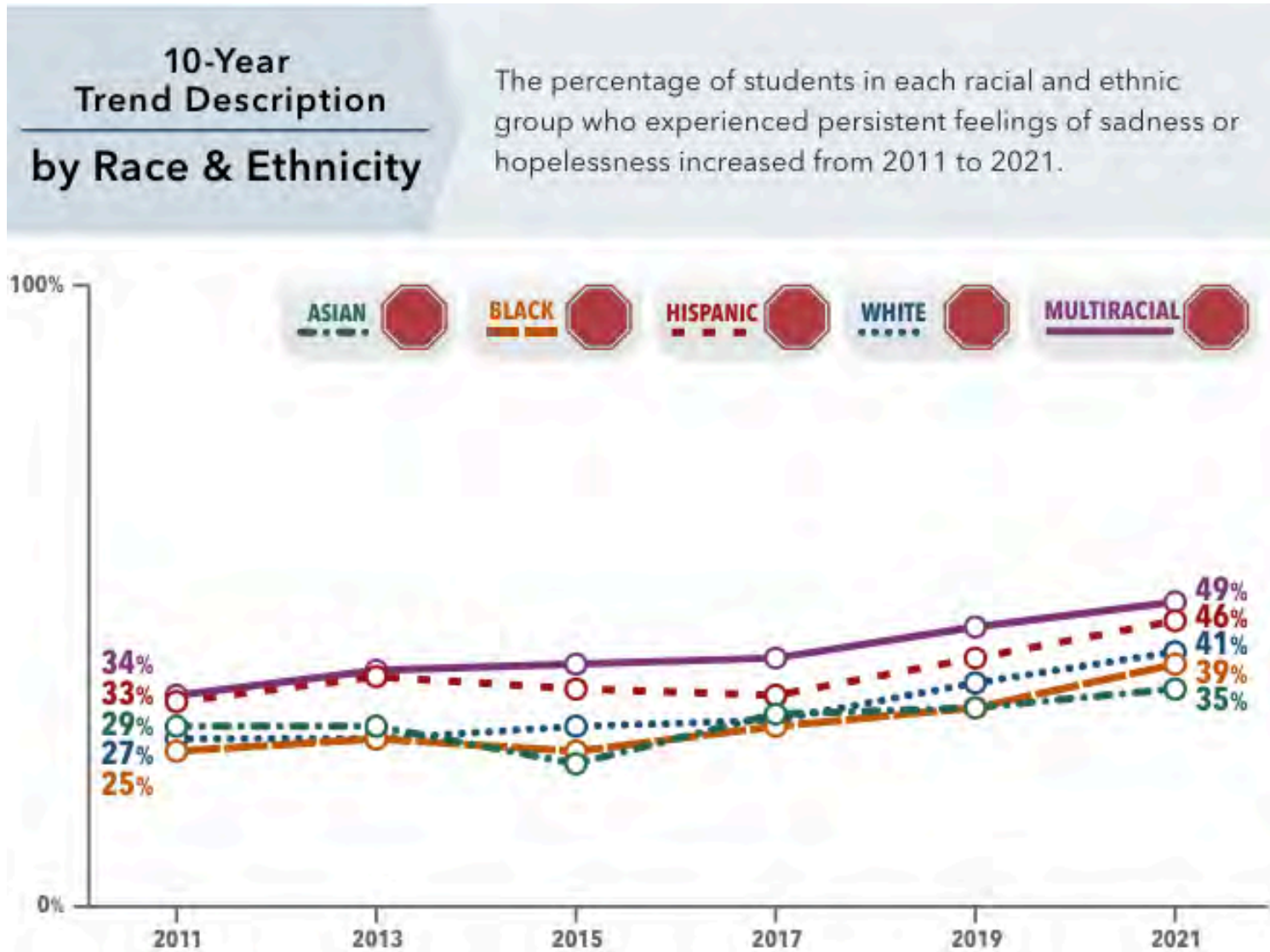
Highest Needs: Student Mental Health and Addressing Student Behaviors



FY 25 Budget Planning

Budget Enhancement Requests to Buncombe County Board of Commissioners

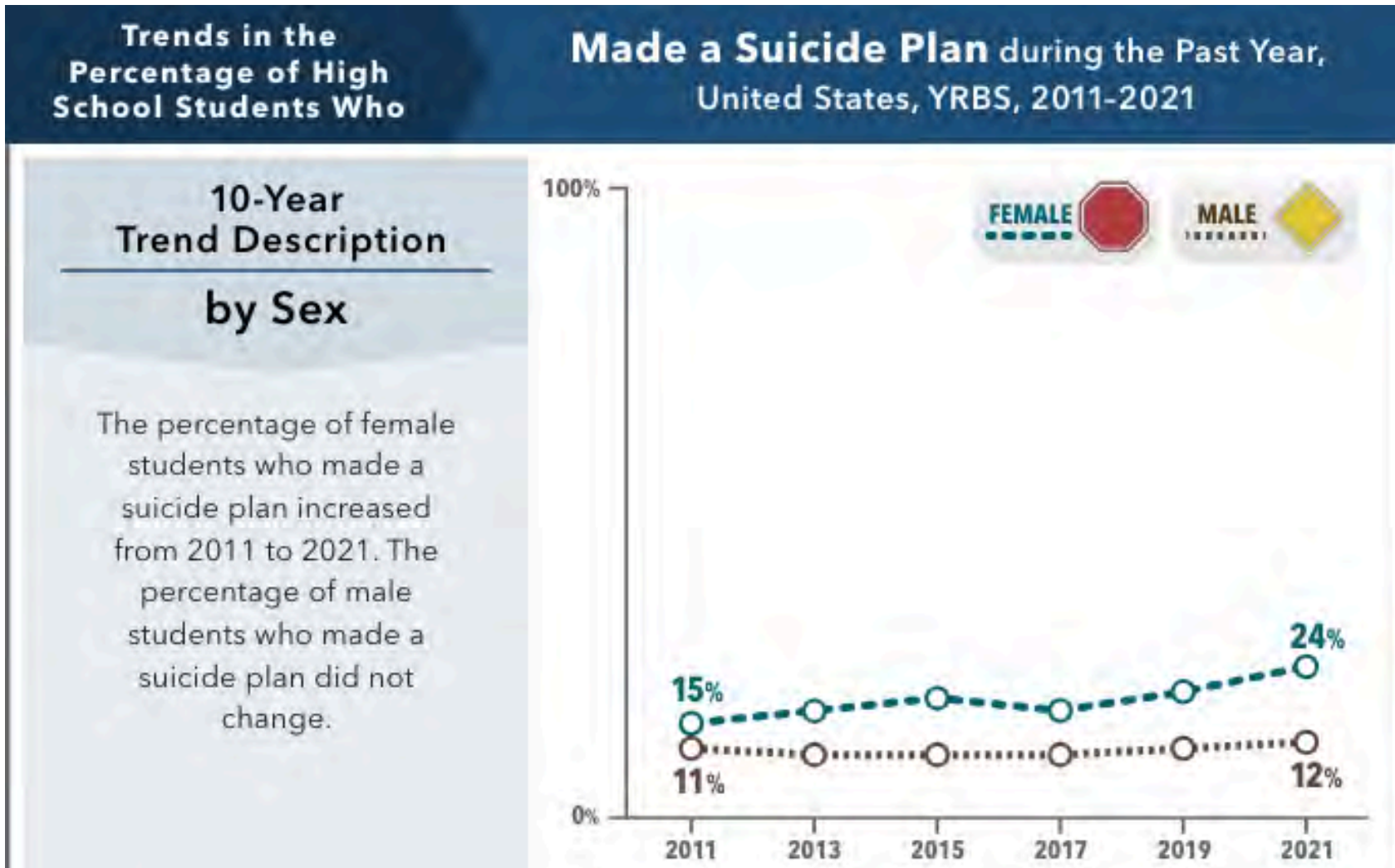
Highest Needs: Student Mental Health and Addressing Student Behaviors



FY 25 Budget Planning

Budget Enhancement Requests to Buncombe County Board of Commissioners

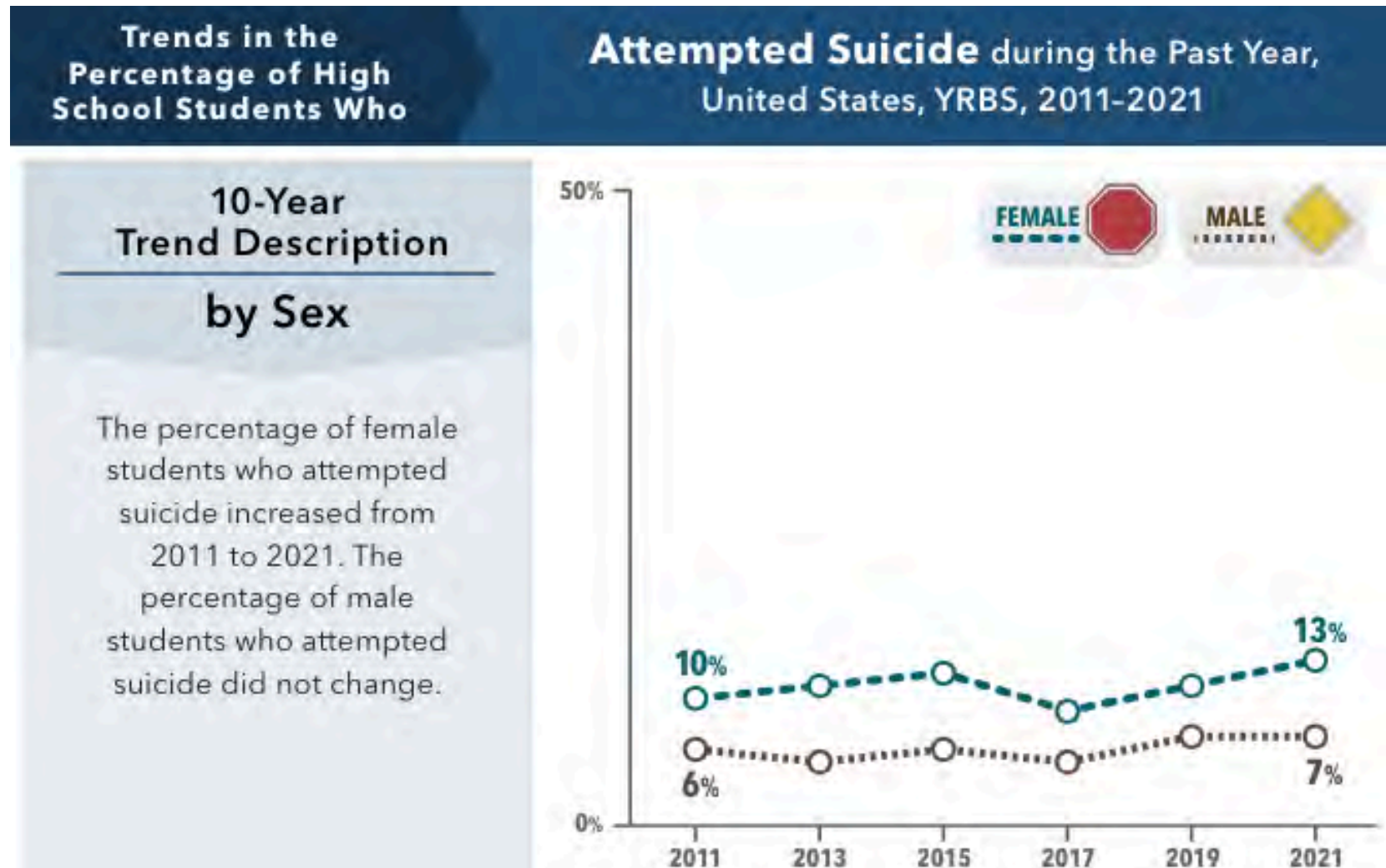
Highest Needs: Student Mental Health and Addressing Student Behaviors



FY 25 Budget Planning

Budget Enhancement Requests to Buncombe County Board of Commissioners

Highest Needs: Student Mental Health and Addressing Student Behaviors



FY 25 Budget Planning

Budget Enhancement Requests to Buncombe County Board of Commissioners

Highest Needs: Student Mental Health and Addressing Student Behaviors

**2 Full-Time Mental Health Professionals and
2 Full-Time Behavior Interventionists -
\$500,000**

Support classroom teachers :

1. Providing direct services to students
2. Training and coaching staff



FY 25 Budget Planning

Budget Enhancement Requests to Buncombe County Board of Commissioners

Highest Needs: Student Mental Health and Addressing Student Behaviors

2 Additional Social Workers - \$175,000

Currently, we have 5 full-time social workers

Current Ratio in ACS 1 social worker for every 780 students

National Association of Social Workers recommends a ratio social worker to student ratio of 1:250 and as low as 150:1 in areas with intensive needs

Adding two social workers would decrease our ratio to 1:557 students



FY 25 Budget Planning

Budget Enhancement Requests to Buncombe County Board of Commissioners

Highest Needs: Student Mental Health and Addressing Student Behaviors

2 Additional Full-Time School Counselors - \$175,000

American Association of School Counselors

recommends a student to school counselor ratio of 250:1

Current ratio in ACS is 300:1

The addition of 2 Counselors will reduce our ration to 260:1



FY 25 Budget Planning

Expenditure Reductions for FY 25

1. Staffing Allocation Formula built to adjust with enrollment changes – potential savings of **\$500,000 FY 25**
2. Reduce Supplies, Materials, and Equipment Budget by 5% approx **\$350,000**
3. Reduce CO Staffing by 5% – approx **\$475,000**
4. MS Consolidation Potential Savings **\$1.8M**
– **\$2.3M**



FY 25 Budget Planning

Fund Balance Allocation

Maintaining 2 Months of Operating Expenditures is the **gold standard** as recommended by: GFOA and a key indicator to earn an "A" rating with Moody's



FY 24 Fund Balance Appropriated = **\$3 Million**

Anticipate being able to allocate up to **\$3 Million** of **FY 25 fund balance**



FY 25 Budget Planning

ACAIE Requests

#1 Fund Meaningful Raises

- \$3.088 Million added to FY 25 Budget for salary and benefits

#2 Prioritizing Staff Time

- Addition of a stellar sub at each building

#3 Funding Mental Health and Student Support Services

- continue student support specialists
- addition of school counselors, social workers, behavior specialists, and mental health professionals



FY 25 Budget Planning

Budget Enhancement Requests to Buncombe County Board of Commissioners

- Asheville City Schools Request:
Increase in local funding by **\$3.8 Million**
- Request to restore Asheville City School tax to pre-pandemic level of 12 cents for every \$100 assessed
 - generates an increase of **\$1.57 million** in revenue



FY 25 Budget Planning

Budget Enhancement Requests to Buncombe County Board of Commissioners

Historical Funding & Current Request

	2024-2025	2024-2025	2024-2025	2023-2024	2023-2024	2022-2023
	Percent Increase	Increase	Budgeted Appropriation	Increase	Budgeted Appropriation	Actual
Fund 2						
Appropriation	20%	\$3,500,000	\$ 21,204,730	\$2,449,926	\$ 17,704,730	\$ 15,254,804
Supplemental (10.62)	3%	\$ 300,000	\$ 11,940,014	\$ 232,910	\$ 11,640,014	\$ 11,407,104
Total	13%	\$3,800,000	\$ 33,144,744	\$2,682,836	\$ 29,344,744	\$ 26,661,908
Fund 8						
Supplemental Sales Tax*	-8%	\$ (393,870)	\$ 4,500,000	\$ 414,506	\$ 4,893,870	\$ 4,479,364
Total Increase	5%	\$3,406,130	\$ 37,644,744	\$3,097,342	\$ 34,238,614	\$ 31,141,272

*Per Buncombe County projections, growth in sales taxes appear to be leveling off so caution is warranted in making future projections for use of these funds.

FY 25 Budget Planning

Budget Enhancement Requests to Buncombe County Board of Commissioners

NC LEA Fringe Benefits History

		Retirement Rate	Health Insurance		
2009-10	ARRA Funding	8.75%	\$ 4,527		
2010-11	ARRA Funding	10.51%	\$ 4,929		
2011-12	ARRA Funding	13.12%	\$ 4,931		
2012-13		14.23%	\$ 5,192		
2013-14		14.69%	\$ 5,285		
2014-15		15.21%	\$ 5,378		
2015-16		15.32%	\$ 5,564		
2016-17		16.54%	\$ 5,754		
2017-18		17.13%	\$ 5,869		
2018-19		18.86%	\$ 6,104		
2019-20	Pandemic Funding	19.70%	\$ 6,306		
2020-21	Pandemic Funding	21.68%	\$ 6,326		
2021-22	Pandemic Funding	22.89%	\$ 7,019		
2022-23	Pandemic Funding	24.50%	\$ 7,397		
2023-24	Pandemic Funding	25.02%	\$ 7,557		
Percent Increase from 2009-2010		185.94%	66.93%		
Percent Increase from 2019-2020		27.01%	19.84%		
2024-25	Current Biennium Budget Estimate	24.04%	\$ 8,095	-0.98%	\$ 538
Percent Increase from 2009-2010		174.74%	78.82%		
Percent Increase from 2019-2020		22.03%	28.37%		
Projected Increase from 2023-2024		-3.92%	7.12%		

FY 25 Budget Planning

Questions & Discussion





ASHEVILLE CITY SCHOOLS