

KNOX COUNTY SCHOOLS

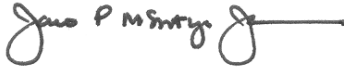
ANDREW JOHNSON BUILDING

Dr. James P. McIntyre Jr., Superintendent



MEMORANDUM

TO: Chair and Members
Knox County Board of Education

FROM: Dr. James P. McIntyre, Jr.
Superintendent 

DATE: March 23, 2016

RE: Fiscal Year 2017 Preliminary Capital Budget

Attached please find the preliminary capital improvement plan for Fiscal Years 2017 (FY17) and 2108 (FY18) that reflects the priorities established by the Board of Education in 2012, and the principles identified in the Intergovernmental Memorandum of Understanding approved by the School Board at its called meeting on July 1, 2015.

In 2009, the School Board embraced a facilities planning strategy where a specific set of capital priorities was identified, and then we worked as a school system to address those priorities over multiple fiscal years as capital budget resources allowed. We have been successful in addressing our capital needs in this manner. We continue to make progress on the priorities identified by the Board in 2012.

Before I provide you with my recommendations for a Fiscal Year 2017 Capital budget, I thought it might be useful to provide a status report on our progress toward addressing the 2012 capital priorities.

Status of 2012 Capital Priorities

In February, 2012 the Board of Education approved five specific capital priorities that were to be addressed as capital revenue streams became available. These recommended priorities were:

1. Shannondale Elementary School (addition/renovation)
2. High School Facilities Improvements: Farragut and Powell High Schools
3. Magnet School Facilities (current and future)
4. Central-West Elementary Solution
5. North-Central Elementary Solution

Shannondale, High Schools, and Magnet Facilities

As has been previously reported to the School Board, we have completed the Shannondale Elementary School addition/renovation as well as a \$1.8 million upgrade to facilities at Farragut High School, and we are planning improvements at Powell High School in FY 2017 that are detailed below. We also completed significant work on our magnet facilities over the last several years to include establishing the Career Magnet Academy at Pellissippi State Community College on their Strawberry Plains Campus. The drive at the L&N STEM Academy has been extended and we have completed replacement of the clerestory windows and structural upgrades to the elevated walkways around the station building. About \$150,000 in enhancements were made to Vine Middle Magnet School to support the expansion of the Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics (STEAM) magnet concept and to address some smaller facility needs.

Central-West Elementary Solution

An area of anticipated enrollment growth is in the Central-West region of the county, including the areas served by Norwood, Inskip and Pond Gap elementary schools. An extensive addition and renovation project at Pond Gap Elementary School will build some enrollment capacity, provide future flexibility, and allow the design to support the Community Schools concept that is showing significant promise at the school.

This project was previously approved by the School Board, and was funded in the fall of 2012 with a \$7 million fund balance appropriation. However, fiscal constraints forced us to move this project into the capital budget, and the initial bid on the project came in over our established budget. We worked to value engineer this project into the approved budget, but the geologic challenges on the site were too great. In October, 2015 the Board approved adjustments to the capital plan to increase the budget for this project to \$10,090,000. The conceptual design for this project has been completed and approved by the Board of Education, and development of architectural and construction documents has been completed. At this point, we have published a request for proposals and barring any unforeseen circumstances, we plan to award a contract and begin construction this summer.

North-Central Elementary Solution

The adopted capital priorities identified an expectation of continued modest enrollment growth over the next few years in the North-Central corridor of Knox County. With most elementary schools in the region at or close to physical capacity, we have looked carefully at a variety of options. Over the past few years, we have proposed a new elementary school in the region. At one point, an addition / renovation project at Adrian Burnett Elementary School was suggested to help ensure that we serve students in an appropriate educational facility for many years to come. More recently, we analyzed the potential impact of a major renovation and addition at Inskip Elementary School, which could accommodate more students from the Norwood Elementary School zone, allowing some of the student population at Powell Elementary School to be rezoned to Norwood. None of these individual options is ideal, and there does not appear to be a clear consensus on the School Board as to how to address this particular challenge. At this time, the North-Central Elementary Solution remains the only capital priority on the School Board's 2012 priority list that has not yet been addressed and is not included in this capital budget. As this is an important facilities need, it is hoped that a clear consensus solution will emerge in the coming years, after additional discussion and analysis.

FY2017 - 18 Capital Recommendations

Attached, please find my recommended FY2017-2018 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). For the near term, the Knox County Schools FY17 Capital Budget recommendation has been developed around an expenditure target of approximately \$71.25 million. The recommended FY17 budget will include smaller repair and maintenance projects known as Physical Plant Upgrades (\$2.5 million - attached) as well as critical roof projects and needed Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning (HVAC) maintenance and replacement (\$2.5 million - attached). In the FY17 Capital Budget, we also have the largest increment of funding for the new Gibbs and Hardin Valley Middle Schools (\$58 Million).

The cost of the addition and renovations to Pond Gap Elementary School are also reflected in the FY17 portion of the CIP as well as contingency funding for the purchase of modular classrooms, foundation stabilization, and school accessibility needs as may be identified during the year.

Powell High School Improvements

The need to expand cafeteria seating capacity at Powell High School has been identified as an important consideration. The undersized cafeteria has caused challenges with scheduling that impact the instructional life of the school. This issue will be addressed by building a new administrative office area between the existing auditorium and band room. Such a design would allow for the demolition of the existing administrative office space creating a “commons” area that can be used as a cafeteria seating area similar to that at many of our high school facilities (Central High, Karns High, Hardin Valley Academy, etc.) The existing kitchen/server/cafeteria can be renovated as needed to best serve the student population. As stipulated in the Intergovernmental Memorandum of Understanding, we are recommending \$3 million in the FY17 CIP to address these facility needs at Powell High School. This project was budgeted several years ago, and while we believe this level of funding remains adequate, we may have to adjust the project budget if market forces have driven the costs higher.

Security

In each of the last three fiscal years, the School Board approved capital resources that have allowed us to make significant progress toward providing all of our schools with current generation video surveillance systems, and addressing the facility needs associated with implementing a well-designed access control strategy at each school. To date, we have ensured that all of our schools have a functional video surveillance system and 50 systems have been upgraded to meet the state-of-the-art video monitoring standards we adopted two years ago. The number of cameras required to properly monitor our larger campuses is significant, and the cost for our high school campuses has been running between \$150,000 and \$250,000 per site. While this is a significant investment, it adds an important layer of security to our campuses, the value of which is impossible to estimate.

All of our schools have been equipped with camera and buzzer systems on the entrances and proximity cards to better control access, and we have completed fencing upgrades at 33 schools. Over the winter break, we completed work on a new security vestibule at one of our elementary schools and we have four other projects in various stages of design and construction review by state code officials.

This effort is critical to the safety of our students and staff, and the security of our school buildings, and therefore I am recommending that we continue this crucial investment and commit \$2.5 million in our FY17 Capital Budget to continue this important work across our school system.

Additions and Renovations to Pond Gap Elementary School

The project is as previously described. We moved this project to the capital budget last year, and we are moving forward with the bid process in order to be in a position to start work this summer. The renovation and 57,750 square foot addition will include 12 additional classrooms, a Secure Vestibule/Front Entrance facing Papermill Road, Administration Suite, Guidance Suite, Gymnasium, Art Room, Music Room, Media Center, Cafeteria, Kitchen, a new bus drive with drop off/pick up at new front entrance and a new car drive with drop off/pick up at side entrance.

Conclusion

I believe it is imperative to always recognize and remember that we are addressing the capital needs of our schools in order to support the effective education of our children. Our capital priorities must align to and reflect our rigorous educational goals and expectations. Everything we do in the realm of capital improvements is ultimately to enable and support the work of high quality instruction in the classroom.

This Fiscal Year 2017 Capital Budget and FY17-18 Capital Improvement Plan, is designed to addresses our most pressing facility needs and help us to ensure a safe, comfortable and inviting learning environment for all our students. Therefore, I respectfully request that the Board of Education approve this FY17 Capital Budget and Capital Improvement Plan.