

# 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: April 4, 2013

SUBJECT: Preliminary FY2014 Capital Budget

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "James P. McIntyre Jr." with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Attached please find the preliminary capital improvement plan for Fiscal Year 2014 (FY14) that reflects and builds upon the capital priorities established by the Board of Education. At this time, I am recommending the Board adopt a three year capital improvement plan, which would include a FY14 capital budget of \$13.95 million.

This proposal represents a decrease of over \$1 million from the School Board's FY13 capital budget, and is well under the traditional \$15 million budget for school capital improvements. The School Board's authorization of several significant capital projects using fund balance last fall has, to some extent, mitigated our need to borrow funds for capital projects in this budget cycle. I am pleased to present the Board of Education with a capital budget that will meet the needs of our students and our schools, while simultaneously assisting with the County's effort to reduce bonded indebtedness.

In 2009, the Board of Education formally established several capital priorities that by last spring had been addressed or were in progress. Therefore, in February 2012, the Board of Education established five new capital priorities to address through our capital planning process. These priorities included:

- A North-Central elementary facilities solution
- A Central-West elementary facilities solution
- Shannondale Elementary School
- Magnet school facilities
- High school facilities improvement

In September 2012, the Board approved and the County Commission appropriated approximately \$13.8 million from excess revenue collected in FY12 to fund a number of capital projects that were identified in the newly established capital priorities. The funded projects, listed below, significantly address the School Board’s current capital priorities, without having to borrow money to fund the projects.

**FY13 Fund Balance Designations for Capital Priorities**

Project	Priority	FY13 Amount
Pond Gap Elementary - Renovation/ Addition	Central-West solution	\$7,000,000
Shannondale Elementary - Renovation/ Addition	Shannondale	\$4,000,000
Farragut High School - Facility Enhancements	HS Facilities improvement	\$1,750,000
Science Laboratory Upgrades	HS Facilities improvement	\$ 800,000
Technology/Technology Assessment		\$ 230,000

**School Security**

In addition to these important priorities, I believe that a significant investment in additional school safety and security strategies is warranted. The tragic violence that occurred at Sandy Hook Elementary School in December profoundly affected how all of us view the safety of our students and the security of our schools. As we collectively respond to the heightened expectations that have grown out of this shocking school shooting incident in Connecticut, the proposed capital improvement plan includes a number of security related enhancements that are needed across the school system.

As I have reiterated many times, student safety and school security are our highest priorities in the Knox County Schools every single day. After listening to feedback from parents, teachers, and other stakeholders, I have publicly called for us to implement a foundational level of school security resources at every school, including:

1. A current-generation video camera system,
2. A school access control strategy (camera/buzzer system, secure entry vestibule, and/or keyless entry system), and
3. An armed, uniformed School Resource Officer or School Security Officer at each of our schools.

I believe these resources are critical to our on-going efforts to keep our children safe in our schools. Therefore, I am integrating these proposals into my Knox County Schools FY14 operating and capital budget recommendations. Additional School Security Officers represent an on-going operating cost and have been integrated into the FY14 general fund operating budget recommendation, but the other two strategies - current generation video systems and school access control - are addressed in the capital improvement plan. I am proposing that we commit \$3.90 million in the FY14 capital budget to begin to implement these important school security enhancements, plus an additional \$3.88 million in FY15.

Our first step will be to analyze each school campus and establish a sound access control strategy for every school. Therefore, we would initially ensure that each of our schools have a camera/buzzer entrance system, a keyless entry card reader system, and/or a secure entry vestibule. Proper fencing will also be an important component of the access control strategy at some of our schools, and we have included this in our funding estimates. With access control strategies in place, we would subsequently move to upgrade all of our video systems to a current generation system meeting a specific system-wide standard that the School Board has requested be developed in conjunction with local technical, education, and security experts. The details of the school security aspects of the capital improvement proposal are identified in the attached documents.

### **FY14 Capital Budget**

The attached capital improvement plan budget proposal for FY14 addresses the on-going physical plant maintenance, minor renovation and facility upgrade needs of the Knox County Schools as identified by our professionals in each of the building crafts. The attached documents provide the supporting details of this capital improvement plan and FY14 capital budget, and include:

- A three-year capital improvement plan (CIP) summary
- Narrative descriptions of each of the CIP major line items
- Security enhancements cost estimate
- Listings of the proposed Physical Plant Upgrades (PPUs) and Roof/HVAC projects

The FY14 capital budget includes resources for roof maintenance and building foundation stabilization, as well as our heating, ventilation and air-conditioning (HVAC) needs. In addition, the FY14 capital proposal includes necessary physical plant upgrades (PPUs) at schools throughout the school district. Investment in these areas is critical to preserving our facilities infrastructure and reducing our deferred maintenance projects. These are not glamorous projects, and there is not likely to be a ribbon-cutting or ground breaking for any of them, but these are also critical maintenance projects that will allow us to continue to offer a safe, healthy, inviting learning environment to all of our students.

There are also some larger projects imbedded in this capital improvement plan, including:

***L&N STEM Academy Site Work***

We have allocated \$250,000 for some site work at the L&N STEM Academy. As this successful and sought-after high school continues to expand to its full enrollment capacity, this funding will address some needed site renovations to enhance traffic flow and bus drop-off on the campus. This will allow for a more controlled process of arrival and dismissal and provide a more secure campus in this regard.

***Austin-East Stadium Replacement***

Replacement of the Austin-East Magnet High School Football Stadium has been recommended by our structural engineer. This effort is a continuation of the systematic upgrade and replacement of high school football stadiums that we began several years ago. We estimate this work will cost about \$1.5 million. This resource level should allow us to maintain the same facility features that exist in the current stadium.

***Expansion of Paul Kelley Volunteer Academy/ Adult Education***

We have recommended \$200,000 to expand the Paul L. Kelley Volunteer Academy into adjacent space that is available at the Knoxville Center Mall as well as to build out space to accommodate the transfer of our adult education and GED testing functions to adjacent space at the mall. These funds would provide for configuring the space to meet educational occupancy requirements. Since the Kelley Academy opened, it has proven to be an extremely successful and popular alternative to the traditional high school setting for many students. The demand for the Kelley Academy is high and this expansion would allow the Academy to serve more students while enhancing the educational environment for all of its students.

For many years the Knox County Schools has maintained a vigorous and well respected adult education program. With the disposition of the Historic Knoxville High School facility it is necessary that we relocate this program. Recent changes in the state funding model for adult education will allow our Adult Education Program to use some of its funding to pay for lease or space costs. This makes using vacant mall space adjacent to the Kelley Volunteer Academy a very attractive option for the location of this program. The mall is centrally located to the bulk of the Adult Education population, offers easy access by car or bus, and is accessible for any students with disabilities.

***Vine Middle School Magnet Enhancements***

Pending a needs assessment, we have budgeted \$200,000 for enhancements to the physical plant at Vine Middle Magnet School to support the enhanced “STEAM” magnet theme. Bolstering the Arts, and adding rigorous academic opportunities in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics may require some minor renovations or upgrades, to laboratories or studios, for example.

***Technology Infrastructure Upgrades***

We are allocating significant resources in each of the next three years to address our technology infrastructure needs: \$750,000 in FY14, \$2 million in FY15 and \$500,000 in FY16. This investment is critical as we move to an environment where our state assessments will be administered online. This level of funding will augment the work we are doing with the technology related E-Rate funds we receive from the federal government. This work will be phased over several years and generally will be targeted for those schools that do not qualify for E-Rate funding. These funds will provide for enhanced wired and wireless infrastructure to support instructional technology.

***School Accessibility***

We have added a line in our capital improvement plan to address school accessibility. For many years we have worked with the Knox County Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Committee to address accessibility issues in our schools and to prioritize facility upgrades to enhance accessibility. I believe we need to increase our efforts in this area and the \$1.35 million we have allocated over the next three years will help us better serve our public with improved access to many of our older facilities.

## **Conclusion**

I believe this capital improvement plan, and more specifically this proposal for a FY14 capital budget, will allow us to continue to address our most important capital needs and priorities, while also significantly enhancing the security of our schools. These necessary and important capital and facilities improvements will help us to ensure a safe, healthy, inviting learning environment for all our students.

## **Attachments**

cc: R. Thomas  
R. Oaks  
D. Dillingham  
J. French  
C. Caldwell