MINUTES OF MECKLENBURG COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Due to the State of North Carolina’s Declaration of Emergency in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and per NCGS § 166A-19.24, the Mecklenburg County Board of Commissioners conducted a remote meeting using the WebEx application.

The Board of Commissioners of Mecklenburg County, North Carolina, met in Special Session with the CMS Board of Education at the Valerie Woodard Conference Room, located at 3205 Freedom Drive, Charlotte, North Carolina and remotely at 2:30 p.m. on Monday, June 7, 2021.

ATTENDANCE

Present: Chair George Dunlap and Commissioners
Leigh Altman, Patricia “Pat” Cotham,
Mark Jerrell, Vilma D. Leake, Laura J. Meier,
Elaine Powell, Susan Rodriguez- McDowell, and
Ella B. Scarborough
County Manager Dena R. Diorio
County Attorney Tyrone C. Wade
Clerk to the Board Kristine M. Smith

Absent: None

Note: Commissioners Altman and Scarborough attended the meeting remotely.

Also Present: CMS Chair Elyse Dashew and CMS Board Members Thelma Byers-Bailey,
Ronda Cheek, Lenora Ship, Dr. Ruby Jones, Margaret Marshall, Carol Sawyer, and Sean Strain.

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chair Dunlap, followed by introductions and the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.
June 7, 2021

Motion was made by Commissioner Leake, second by Commissioner Cotham and carried 6-1 with Commissioners Dunlap, Cotham, Jerrell, Leake, Meier, and Rodriguez-McDowell voting yes, and Commissioner Powell voting no, to allow Commissioners Altman and Scarborough to participate in the meeting remotely.

Facilitators Mac McCarley, Trey Ellis, and Chelsea Rush from Parker Poe Law were introduced as the meeting mediators.

What Will Happen at this Meeting?

- Chairs open their meetings
- Mediator describes process and ground rules
- Presentations by CMS Board of Education and Mecklenburg County Board of Commissioners
- Opportunity for comments from each Board member
- Mediator will test for potential resolutions
- Meetings adjourned
Ground Rules

1. Presentations will be timed and alerts given. Participants are expected to comply with the time limits.
2. All participants will respect each other, the process and the ground rules. Speakers will not be interrupted. Questions and comments should be offered in the presentations and individual board members’ comments.

Ground Rules

3. The purpose of this process is to determine what it would take to resolve differences regarding the sufficiency of the CMS budget appropriation. A common understanding of essential information is needed to resolve the issues. It would be helpful if comments stayed focused on those two issues.
CMS Board of Education Chairwoman Dashew said in the budget request, the BOE asked for what the students needed and in the BOCC’s budget vote, it did not appropriate sufficient funding. She said by holding back funds based on conditions the BOCC was claiming an oversight that was not its purview. She said this meeting was a first step in their attempt to resolve the disputes.

Chairwoman Dashew said there were enormous achievement gaps in CMS that likely had grown due to the pandemic. She said children were struggling because of long-term intersecting systemic issues. She said education, public health, jobs, and housing issues would only be healed and resolved if the two Boards worked together.
Facts
Respect
Collaboration

A national challenge
The nation struggles with reading performance

NAEP Reading Grade 4 – All Students
Percentage of Students At or Above Proficient: 2019

Especially true for Black students

NAEP Reading Grade 4 – Black Students
Percentage of Students At or Above Proficient: 2019
Ernest Winston, CMS Superintendent continued the presentation.
Inequities in Black and brown student experiences

Strategies for low-performing schools

- High-quality principals
  - Learning community superintendents develop and place high-quality principals, with proven success, into schools that are low performing

- High-quality teachers
  - Teacher Leader Pathway strategy that attracts, retains and extends the reach of high-quality teachers to more students

- Intensified and accelerated support to ensure great teaching
  - Professional development to support high-quality teaching and learning
  - District and school level efforts to address the effects of racism and bias, and their influence on the learning environment

- Differentiated supports for low-performing schools
  - Weighted Student Staffing - additional staffing in higher need schools to reduce class sizes and increase teacher supports
  - Title I schools have preferential hiring allowing them to have access to highest quality staff
  - The FY 2022 budget includes intensive supports for schools that have been deemed low performing by the state
Sheila W. Shirley, CMS Chief Financial Officer, continued the presentation for FY2022 County Funding.
County budget request reflects CMS priorities for students

- Strategic and intentional budget process, informed by strategic plan and focus areas
- Reflects ongoing needs that will continue long after the pandemic subsides
- Utilized COVID funding as much as possible within the purpose of the funding (prevention of, reduction of or in response to COVID-19)
  - American Rescue Plan (ARP) funding is specific to COVID-19 impact--not to pay for routine, ongoing operating costs
- County request only includes:
  - Funding needs where an alternate source is not available or allowable
  - Mandated and highest priority investments

County funding for CMS is not sufficient for FY 2022

County budget ordinance appropriates $470.9M in unrestricted funding for CMS in FY 2022:

- $80.5M less than requested
  - $56.0M of ongoing funding not accessible
  - $24.5M unfunded new requests
- $54.0M less than FY 2021
Implications of $80.5M funding gap

• With more than 80% of our budget dedicated to staffing costs, position reductions and hiring delays are unavoidable at both the school and district level.

• Delayed funding is a cut to funding when it comes to schools.

• Staffing reductions at schools mean students will receive less individualized support.

• Schools will bear the burden of downsizing central office teams, as services which support day-to-day school functions are reduced.

• Will need to cut, delay or downsize initiatives essential to improving outcomes for students.

Implications of $56M not accessible

|$56M is not available for use in the following categories:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$27.4M - School Leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$11.0M - Human Resources &amp; Finance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$2.5M - Accountability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$15.1M - Policy, Leadership &amp; Public Relations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Cuts in these areas WILL impact the classroom and strategic plan efforts:

• Leadership at the school level is critically important to acting on the key strategies and providing support to the classroom.

• The Office of Accountability drives continuous improvement at the district and school levels, providing tools and supports for schools to monitor and act on data.

• Central office functions such as HR, Finance and Communications support schools in critical ways including recruiting and hiring the best talent, procuring school-based resources, disseminating important information to families and the community, all of which allow schools to focus on our core work.
### Summary of unfunded new requests

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Allocation of Funding Increase by Category</th>
<th>Proposed Budget (millions)</th>
<th>BOCC (millions)</th>
<th>Budget Gap (millions)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Investing in our Employees</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estimated state mandated salary increases–3%</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benefit increases – health and retirement</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Subtotal</strong></td>
<td><strong>$10.1</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>($10.1)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Student Growth and Additional Space</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charter growth – pass-through funding increase</td>
<td><strong>7.6</strong></td>
<td><strong>2.1</strong></td>
<td><strong>($5.6)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New/replacement schools and additional space</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Subtotal</strong></td>
<td><strong>$9.7</strong></td>
<td><strong>$2.1</strong></td>
<td><strong>($7.6)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Program Expansion and New Initiatives</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Wellness and Academic Support</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavior and Support Centers</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preventive Maintenance (one-time funding)</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compliance Office and Legal Support</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>System Modernization Project (one-time funding)</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Subtotal</strong></td>
<td><strong>$10.8</strong></td>
<td><strong>$4.0</strong></td>
<td><strong>($6.8)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Funding Gap for New Requests</strong></td>
<td><strong>$30.6</strong></td>
<td><strong>$6.1</strong></td>
<td><strong>($24.5)</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Implications of unfunded new requests

- **Mandatory or “must do” budget items**
  - $10.1M for state mandated salary and benefit increases
  - $7.6M for charter funding pass-through increase
  - $1.5M for system modernization project (year 3 of implementation)

- **$19.2M of unfunded new requests will require redirection of county funding from planned uses to cover these required cost increases**

- Position reductions will be unavoidable and delays in new initiatives, such as social and emotional staffing, maybe necessary again
CMS Chairwoman Dashew concluded the presentation. She said the FY2022 Budget clearly laid out they weren’t being sufficiently funded. She said there was no other alternative method of funding to compensate what the County was asked to fund.

Chairwoman Dashew said they had a strategic plan and for many months they had been hard at work revising it in light of the pandemic. She said they needed to establish a new baseline and revisit their goals and targets. She said they were sharpening their goals and how they monitored and reported progress of those goals. She said for months they had been working with AJ Grabill of the Council of Great City Schools to adopt an ambitious new governance framework called Student Outcome Focused Governance. She said this would be shared with the community in the coming weeks and months and that it would make a significant difference in student outcomes.

### Implications of unfunded new requests (continued)

- The unfunded request of $5M for facility maintenance has significant negative impacts:
  - Limits ability to perform repairs that are needed to extend the life expectancy of facilities
  - Increases the likelihood of significant and often unbudgeted capital expenditures
  - Maintains a reactive model for facility maintenance
  - Creates additional distraction for schools and disrupts instruction
Insufficient Funding

Student Outcomes
Focused Governance
Chair Dunlap thanked CMS Chair Dashew for her presentation. He said it was his hope that at the end of this mediation process all questions about funding were answered, and that the two Boards established framework for working together in the future. He said he believed there was a common goal to ensure the children of Mecklenburg County were given the opportunity to obtain a sound basic education within CMS. He said the County stood ready to partner with CMS to move forward on strategies that ensured a uniform system of education for all County
Chair Dunlap said a year ago the Board asked for a plan with specific strategies that addressed the growing inequities in education attainment.

Chair Dunlap read G.S. 115C-429 that said, “The Board of County Commissioners shall have full authority to call for, and the Board of Education shall have the duty to make available to the Board of County Commissioners, upon request, all books, records, audit reports, and other information bearing on the financial operation of the local school administrative unit.” He said the County had not asked for that information in the past but were now asking for their plans to help guide their funding decisions now and into the future. He said in the past, for many years the County funded above and beyond the basic funding typically provided by counties for public education. He said over the years the County funded requests and initiatives that it hoped would alleviate some pressures and helped improve outcomes. He said it was a reasonable request so that the County knew how best to invest taxpayer’s dollars in education.

Chair Dunlap said he hoped they could find a way to work together to make sure future funding was aligned so that every student in Mecklenburg County regardless of whether they went to a charter school or CMS would have their funding needs met.

Chair Dunlap introduced County Manager Dena Diorio who gave a presentation.

County Manager Diorio said her presentation would demonstrate that the BOCC provided funding that exceeded the amount legally necessary to maintain a system of free public schools and provided resources outside of CMS designed to enhance and support education in Mecklenburg County.
Dispute Resolution
Opening Presentation

Presented to
Mecklenburg Board of County Commissioners
Charlotte Mecklenburg School Board
June 7, 2022

Overview

- Budget Considerations
- County Funding to CMS
- CMS Enrollment
- Local Per Pupil Spending
- Charter School Funding
- Annual Budget Enhancements
- Beyond Basic Education
- Teacher Supplements
- Fund Balance
- County Efforts to Support CMS
- Conditional Allocations

MeckNC.gov
Budget Development Process

5 Considerations

- Revenue
- Redirections
- Mandates
- Commissioner Priorities
- Strategic Plans

County Funding to CMS

CMS Annual Budget Requests

- Sustaining Operations
- Investing in Employees
- Student Growth and Additional Space
- Program Expansion

Budget recommendation developed based on 5 considerations, prior year funding decisions, and potential General Assembly action.
County Funding to CMS

Since FY2015, $3.6 billion has been appropriated to CMS for operations.

An increase of $170 million or 48%.

County Funding to CMS

$173 million in additional funding since FY2015.

Combined with operating, funding to CMS totaled $3.8 billion from Fiscal Year 2015 to Fiscal Year 2022.
June 7, 2021

**CMS Enrollment**

Enrollment for FY2022 projected to be 1% below FY2015
Per Pupil Spending increased by 27% since FY2015

FY2022 is projected
Excludes pre-K through funding for Charter Schools

**Per Pupil Spending**

Per Pupil Spending Exceeds 2015 Adjusted for Inflation

Ongoing Funding for CMS Only
(Excluding Money Budgeted for Charter Pass-Through)
Based on 20th Day Enrollment
Per Pupil Spending

CMS ranks #5 in Local Per Pupil Spending in the State


Charter School Funding

CMS requested increased Charter School Funding of $32.3 million
Actual funding increase was $30.8 million
Annual Funding Enhancements

Fiscal Year 2015

Total Increase: $36.7 million

Highlights

- $12.2 million for a 7% salary increase to county-funded teachers
- $862,000 to initiate Teach Charlotte
- $3.5 million to Academic Choice & Personalized Learning
- $3.7 million for additional Counselors, Social Workers, and Psychologists to complement state positions
- $1.2 million to support a literacy initiative
- $5 million of County fund balance for capital and technology

Annual Funding Enhancements

Fiscal Year 2016

Total Increase: $20 million

Highlights

- $5 million for a salary increase for County funded teachers and principals
- $2.1 million to provide one-time bonuses
- $1.4 million for additional Counselors, Social Workers, and Psychologists
- $4 million of County fund balance for capital and technology
Annual Funding Enhancements

**Fiscal Year 2017**

Total Increase: $11.3 million

Highlights
- Fiscal Year 2017 was a year of sluggish revenue
- County appropriation represented 50% of the CMS request and was not allocated to any specific purposes
- Initial year of deferred maintenance funding of $18 million

---

**Fiscal Year 2018**

Total Increase: $15.2 million

Highlights
- $7.3 million for enrollment growth
- $2.3 million for additional Counselors, Social Workers, and Psychologists
- $18 million for deferred maintenance
Annual Funding Enhancements

Fiscal Year 2019
Total Increase: $31 million

Highlights
• $11 million for a 3% increase to all the County funded positions
• $6.9 million for a 7% increase to the County funded salary supplement
• $4.7 million for additional Counselors, Social Workers, and Psychologists
• $4.6 million one-time funding for security upgrades
• $18 million for deferred maintenance

Fiscal Year 2020
Total Increase: $49.6 million

Highlights
• $8 million to increase local salary supplements
• $7.2 million to increase the hourly wages of non-certified staff
• $7.4 million to provide a 6% increase for local funding to match the state
• $5.8 million for additional Counselors, Social Workers, and Psychologists
• $1 million to fund increased staffing levels above the staffing provided each year with new schools
Annual Funding Enhancements

Fiscal Year 2020 (continued)

• $5 million in one time funding for facility upfits
• $3 million in one time funding for an Enterprise Resource Planning System
• $4.6 million in one time funding for security upgrades
• $18 million for deferred maintenance

Annual Funding Enhancements

Fiscal Year 2021
Total Increase: $23.5 million

Highlights
• $3.4 million for Counselors, Social Workers, and Psychologists
• $946,000 to increase exceptional children staffing and special education support
• $2.8 million in one time funding for facility upfits and
• $1.3 million in one time funding for an Enterprise Resource Planning System
• $13 million for deferred maintenance
Annual Funding Enhancements

Fiscal Year 2022
Total Increase: $6.1 million

Highlights

• Enrollment declined from a projection of 147,203 down to 140,073
• CMS projects enrollment to be 143,856, indicating a further decrease in students over the FY2021 budget estimate of 3,347
• Despite declining enrollment, the County increased operating funding to CMS by $6.1M
• $4 million of Counselors, Social Workers and Psychologists
• $18 million for deferred maintenance

Beyond Basic Education

County Funding supports items that exceed basic education

• $87 million for Teacher Supplements
• $280,000 for Teacher Bonuses
• $3 million for Additional Responsibility Pay to Teachers
• 64% or $36.9 million of all Technical and Administrative Salaries
• 47% or $28.3 million of all Administration Salaries
• $694,000 in one-time bonuses to Operational Support Staff
• $10.1 million for Deans/Facilitators
• $945,000 for Travel Reimbursements

MeckNC.gov
Teacher Supplements

Average Teacher Supplements are the Highest in the State

Average Locally Funded Teacher Salary Supplement

County Funded Positions

County funds over 3,000 positions at CMS

- Teachers
- Administration
- Building Services
- Support Staff
- Assistant & Tutor
- Principals & Asst. Principals
- Transportation

FY2022 Proposed
Fund Balance

County funding is not fully utilized each year

CMS - General Fund Balance (excludes State & Federal Funds)

- CMS had an unassigned fund balance of \$18.2M at the end of FY2020, and total of \$80.35
- State funds revert to the State at the end of the year
- The Local Government Commission does not prescribe a minimum fund balance for schools
- Fund balance can be taken into consideration when determining the budget

County Efforts To Support CMS

\$63.6 million in funding to services that support education
- Charlotte Mecklenburg Library - \$40 million
- School Health Nurses - \$20 million
- Communities In Schools - \$900,000
- Culture Blocks - \$1.1 million
- Road to Hire - \$884,000
- Studio 345 - \$350,000
- Young Black Leadership Alliance - \$150,000
- Read Charlotte - \$100,000
- Big Brothers/Big Sisters - \$75,000
County Efforts to Support CMS

Early Childhood Education

- Launched Meck Pre-K in Fiscal Year 2019
- Fiscal Year 2022 Adopted Budget includes $23.3 million for 105 classrooms
- Will serve 1,890 students, an increase of 18% over Fiscal Year 2021
- $12.9 million or 45% of CMS Bright Beginnings Program is funded by the County
- FY2022 budget includes $20.7 million for childcare subsidies

County Funding for Education & Literacy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Recommended Budget</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CMS Operating</td>
<td>$526,898,334</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CMS - Capital, Debt Service, Deferred Maintenance</td>
<td>196,453,914</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPCC - Operating</td>
<td>40,564,652</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charlotte Mecklenburg Library</td>
<td>40,002,257</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meck Pre-K</td>
<td>23,580,424</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPCC - Capital, Debt Service, Deferred Maintenance</td>
<td>22,065,416</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child Care Subsidy</td>
<td>20,700,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASC - Culture Blocks</td>
<td>1,092,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communities in Schools</td>
<td>900,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Road to Hire</td>
<td>884,035</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Studio 345</td>
<td>350,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Young Black Leadership Alliance</td>
<td>150,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Read Charlotte</td>
<td>100,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Big Brothers Big Sisters</td>
<td>75,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$693,477,860</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Budget</td>
<td>44.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Conditional Allocations

Conditions on portions of CMS's budget allocation is not new

- **Fiscal Year 2015**: $7.3 million until the adoption of the State budget
- **Fiscal Year 2019**: $4.6 million until CMS presented a security plan
- **Fiscal Year 2021**: $11 million until CMS provided a $15.00 per hour minimum wage to its employees
- **Fiscal Year 2022**: $56 million until CMS provides an educational attainment plan

---

Conditional Allocations

**Statute 115C-429 is clear**

“The board of county commissioners shall have full authority to call for, and the board of education shall have the duty to make available to the board of county commissioners, upon request, all books, records, audit reports, and other information bearing on the financial operation of the local school administrative unit”

BOCC request for an educational attainment plan is consistent with the statute
Chair Dunlap said Dr. Pughsley wrote in an unpublished editorial that CMS did not have a funding problem, it had a leadership problem.

CMS Board Member Thelma Byers-Bailey read article G.S 153A-77. She said the Board of County Commissioners did not have oversight authority over the Board of Education.

CMS Board Member Ronda Cheek said the solution should be for all students in all 176 schools. She said there were students with food and housing insecurity, homelessness, and health issues. She said these were issues that fell under the County’s purview and were inhibiting some students’ abilities to learn and the ability for teachers to focus on teaching and learning.

Commissioner Altman said there was misconception in the public thinking the CMS school Board had created a strategic plan. She said the plan was 4 pages long and half of it filled with kids’ pictures. She stated the refusal of the CMS Board to give a detailed strategic plan was their refusal to be transparent and give accountability.

Commissioner Cotham said an article recently published in the Charlotte Observer made her think about red flags received with regard to the children in CMS learning to read and write. She said children were failing to read and write year after year. She said one school had been
failing for six years. She said the Board expected the same thing from CMS that was expected from others that were funded. She said CMS 2024 Strategic Plan was written in 2018. She said detailed action plans for the money they received and how outcomes would be affected needed to be provided.

CMS Board Member Jennifer De LaJara (via video) said she spoke at the BOCC’s January 19 meeting to explain CMS’s equity program and how County dollars allowed them to provide critical resources to the most high-need schools. She said there was no specific plan or study that showed that divesting from public education improved student outcome.

CMS Board Member Dr. Ruby Jones said she defended every dollar that was asked by the CMS Board. She said the funds served every child and many with special needs. She said charter schools could and did choose many times not to serve them. She said many schools had students with severe or intensive emotional behavioral needs and many needed single student attention. She said CMS provided IB, AP, STEM, early UNCC college engineering and school and health sciences, and sports and language academies. She said black and brown students were close to 75% of student population, 50% of whom lived below the poverty line. She said many of them began schools three years behind in academic readiness.

Commissioner Jerrell said moving from outrage to action had to be done. He said a plan was needed because from an economic standpoint, the current rate of the outcomes was unsustainable. He said the large percentage of schools underperforming could not continue. He said in his district alone, 15 of the 23 elementary schools had at least 60% African American children at level one or two in reading with one school at 80%. He said high poverty schools should receive the same level access to high quality teachers as pointed out in the Breaking the Link report that was referenced.

Commissioner Leake said all she heard about was money and not the well-being of the children. She said CMS had a responsibility to provide quality education for every child in the community. She said there were 24 failing schools in District 2. She said poverty didn’t mean their brains were weak. She said a better job needed to be done in recruitment of black teachers. She said in eight years $3.8B dollars had been spent. She said 30.5% of black children are failures in reading and 37.5% of Hispanic children were not on grade level. She said the children needed to be college and job ready.

CMS Board Member Margaret Marshall said the lower enrollment rate problem was all over the state. She said it calculated to about one student per classroom per school. She said at least half of the per student costs funded by the County was fixed meaning it would not really fluctuate with student enrollment. She said when those students didn’t come to school, they still needed assistant principals, custodians, skilled trades people, counselors, magnet teaching
positions, professional technical support personnel, trash pickup, utility repairs and insurance that were funded by the County. She said the funding was essential to providing students the basics.

CMS Board Member Carol Sawyer said CMS thoroughly and transparently accounted for every penny of their state, federal and local funds. She said year over year the County funded just a portion of the CMS budget request which meant CMS had to revise their budget based on available funds. She said some of their departments were understaffed. She said the CMS staffing ratio was just half for every 100 employees. She said last year CMS raise their minimum wage to $15 an hour.

Commissioner Meier said there was bad history between the Boards. She proposed nominating someone else besides the Chairs to go behind closed doors and work through negotiations. She said the North Carolina legislature had failed every school district across the state miserably. She said they had unfunded education for years and years. She said she wanted both Boards to agree that state funding was inadequate and work together for a joint resolution to push legislators to do their jobs. She said that it was acknowledged that funding did matter.

Commissioner Powell said on December 10, 2020 the Charlotte Observer had a full-page ad funded by black pastors and black leaders that stated CMS was failing African American students at an alarming rate. She said it was important to listen, and that it was their job to do so. She said she hoped they could find a way to make sure future funding was aligned so that every student in the County was given the same opportunity.

CMS Board Member Lenora Shipp said they had work to do when it came to the CMS children. She said she was a retired principal and acknowledged that a delay in funding would impact recruitment. She said in order to make changes for low performing schools recruitment of highly effective teachers, master teachers, and nationally certified teachers was needed to make this happen.

CMS Board Member Sean Strain thanked the County for increases in Operational funding in the last three years, however he said he did not believe the funding model for local education agencies in North Carolina contemplated as a contingent or conditional model. He said CMS owed its students and families a clear action and initiative plan and an associated investment plan to achieve the necessary targets and objectives set out three years ago in its 2024 Strategic Plan. He said the County should release the contingent funds and the BOE should be held to account for delivering on the objectives set three years ago for over 140,000 students in 176 schools. He said if this BOE couldn’t advance or deliver what it agreed for the youth three years ago, the community should elect a new BOE.
Commissioner Rodriguez- McDowell said there was the need for collaboration, mediation and selecting someone else besides the current Chairs to mediate. She said she proposed that the County’s Intergovernmental chair serve in that role and hoped that CMS would do the same. She said she thought the County should pull its weight with funding but said she was also protective of the resources as the County had many competing priorities. She said the discussion should be turned toward the State to properly and robustly fund the items that were theirs to fund. She said the Boards needed to look at what it would take to properly educate the children.

Commissioner Scarborough said she hoped the Boards would be able to talk to each other and understand each other.

CMS Board Chair Dashew thanked the teachers that were present in the room. She said she believed what was the essential disagreement, was the request of financial information. She said that financial information could be requested, but that was completely different than creating a strategic plan setting and reporting it to the County throughout the year. She offered her own fact checking and gave figures and numbers. She said the business of education was CMS’$s, and the BOCC’s business was to fund it.

Commissioner Dunlap said he was concerned for all students. He said there was a moral responsibility to ensure all citizens could achieve an education. He said the asking by the Board of County Commissioners for a specific plan was done more than a year ago. He said if this plan had been provided, they would not be in this meeting. He said BOCC was responsible for the taxpayers’ money. He said as soon as a plan was produced where there was statistical data to know where the funds were going and data to support it; the funds would be released. He said equity had nothing to do with how big the pie was, it had everything to do with how the pie was distributed. He said that in the past they allowed CMS to do what they wanted with County taxpayers’ dollars but in the future, there was to be more diligence about sharing with the public how the money was spent.

Mediator McCarley asked for copies of each Board’s presentation and thanked everyone. He asked the room if anyone thought there was a possibility for agreement. The answer was all Board members agreed no.
ADJOURNMENT

Motion was made by Chair Dunlap, seconded by Commissioner Jerrell, and carried 9-0 unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 4:53 p.m.

______________________________ ____________________________
Kristine M. Smith, Clerk to the Board George Dunlap, Chair