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News Release

Commissioners Tentatively Agree to Funding Amounts for Schools

June 5, 2014, Monroe, NC – Union County Manager Cindy Coto on Thursday sought direction concerning the Manager's amended proposed budget from the Union County Board of Commissioners. The outcome of those discussions included \$87 million in operating funds and \$19.5 million in capital funds for Union County Public Schools. Commissioners unanimously tentatively agreed to the funding for UCPS.

"Our board wants to fund the needs of Union County Public Schools, but we cannot fund the entire amount requested without significantly raising taxes for all residents," said Chairman Frank Aikmus. "The County Commission has to make some hard decisions related to how we are going to fund not just the needs of the schools, but also areas like public safety."

One of the proposed budget's focus areas is compensation for teachers, and the proposed budget includes current expense base funding of \$83 million, increased teacher supplements of \$1.9 million, increases in "state" benefit costs of \$161,654 and reserve for state budget impact of \$791,261.

Another of the proposed budget's focus areas is ensuring there is a sustainable capital program with ongoing funding. The county's funding of \$19.5 million for capital in the proposed budget makes student safety, ADA restroom renovations, roofing projects and buses a priority.

"The county is interested in funding priorities that focus on student safety, the ADA restroom renovations and needs, roofing projects and buses," Aikmus added.

County staff will now submit to UCPS the Board's list of areas it has identified as needing funding and ask UCPS and the Board of Education to prioritize those funding needs.

"Both our boards serve the same people of Union County," Aikmus said. "Commissioners want to meet and openly communicate with the Board of Education and work together to prioritize the school's capital project requests."