

# Needs-Based Public School Capital Fund

## 2023-24 Grant Application

**Application Deadline: January 5, 2024**

Rev. 11/13/2022



# **NEEDS-BASED PUBLIC SCHOOL CAPITAL FUND      FY2023-24 GRANT APPLICATION**

## **PROGRAM CRITERIA**

Date: 11/20/23

### **MAXIMUM AWARD**

Grant award maximums are as follows:

- Up to \$42 million for an Elementary School
- Up to \$52 million for a Middle School
- Up to \$62 million for a High School

An applicant may not apply for projects that exceed an aggregate amount greater than the maximum grant award amounts listed above in any single year.

Applications will be reviewed in the context of projected enrollment to evaluate the reasonableness of project size and scope.

### **REPORTING**

Grant recipients are required to submit a report by April 1 of each year, with each grant funds distribution request, and upon completion of the project, detailing: the use of grant funds, progress on the project, and impact of the project on the county's school capital plan.

Grant funds will be disbursed in a series of payments based on the progress of the project. To receive a distribution, the grant recipient must submit a request for distribution, along with documentation of the expenditures for which the distribution is requested, and evidence that the matching requirement has been met. DPI will provide grant recipients with Reporting and Distribution Request forms following announcement of awards.

### **AGREEMENT**

A county receiving Needs-Based grant funds is required to enter into an agreement with the Department of Public Instruction detailing the use of grant funds, in accordance with G.S. 115C-546.12.(a). DPI will provide grant recipients with Agreement Forms following announcement of awards. Signed Agreements are due within 60 days of award announcement.

# NEEDS-BASED PUBLIC SCHOOL CAPITAL FUND      FY2023-24 GRANT APPLICATION

## PROGRAM CRITERIA

Date: 11/20/23

### EVALUATION

Applications are evaluated on critical needs, budget detail, and the following criteria per G.S. 115C-546.10.:

Prioritization	Definition/Calculation/Data Source
Tier Designation	Counties designated as development tier one areas. (NC Department of Commerce, 2023 NC Development Tier Designations)
Ability to Generate Tax Revenue	Total revenue generated by a one-cent per \$100 valuation increase in the county property tax rate. (NC State Treasurer, Analysis of Debt of North Carolina Counties 6-30-2022)
Ratio of Debt to Tax Revenue	<u>Debt</u> : Sum of County Debt from [General Obligation Bonds, Installment Purchase Debt, Special Obligation Bonds, QZABs and QSCBs, Certificates of Participation] (NC State Treasurer, Analysis of Debt of North Carolina Counties 6-30-2022)  <u>Revenue</u> : Sum of County Revenues from Property Taxes, Other Taxes, and Sales Tax, FY 2021-22 (NC DOR, Statistical Abstract of North Carolina Taxes 2022, Advance Edition)
Critical Deficiency	The extent to which a project will address critical deficiencies in adequately serving the current and future student population.
Facility Construction	Projects with new construction or complete renovation of existing facilities.
Facility Replacement	Projects that will consolidate two or more schools into one new facility.
Applicant Status	Counties that have not received a grant in the previous three years.

**NEEDS-BASED PUBLIC SCHOOL CAPITAL FUND      FY2023-24 GRANT APPLICATION**

**CONTACT INFORMATION**

Date: 11/20/23

SUBMIT ONE APPLICATION PER SCHOOL CAMPUS – A PROJECT MAY INCLUDE MULTIPLE BUILDINGS

County: Jackson

Primary Contact: Darlene Fox

Title: CFO / Acting County Manager

Address: 401 Grindstaff Rd, Sylva NC, 28779

Phone: 828-586-4055

email: darlenefox@jacksonnc.org

School Unit: Jackson County Public Schools

Primary Contact: Jake Buchanan

Title: Deputy Superintendent

Address: 398 Hospital Rd, Sylva NC, 28779

Phone: 828-506-5733

email: jbuchanan@jcpsmail.org

**APPLICATION SUBMITTAL**

Submit completed applications and supporting materials by Friday, January 5, 2024, via email to:

Nathan Maune | School Planning Section Chief | 984-236-2919 | [nathan.maune@dpi.nc.gov](mailto:nathan.maune@dpi.nc.gov)

**SUBMITTAL CHECKLIST – SUBMIT ALL FILES IN PDF FORMAT**

- Contact Information
- Application Form
- Project Narrative
- Budget Estimate
- Additional Documentation (as appropriate)
- Signed Assurance Page

**NEEDS-BASED PUBLIC SCHOOL CAPITAL FUND      FY2023-24 GRANT APPLICATION**

**PROJECT INFORMATION**

Date: 11/20/23

Project Title:

Blue Ridge School Gym and Classrooms

Location:

Blue Ridge School and Blue Ridge Early College (Shared Campus)

Type of Facility:

New Gym and Classroom Space

Short Description of Proposed School Construction Project:

See attached document

Describe the critical need this project addresses and the impact on student outcomes:

See attached document

*(please attach additional information as necessary)*

**NEEDS-BASED PUBLIC SCHOOL CAPITAL FUND      FY2023-24 GRANT APPLICATION**

**PROJECT INFORMATION**

Date: 11/20/23

Was this project identified in the 5-year plan in the 2020-21 Facility Needs Survey?       YES     NO

If not, provide explanation and attach equivalent information:  
See attached document

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Will this project replace any existing facilities?       YES     NO

If YES, which school(s): \_\_\_\_\_

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How many students will be served by this project? 293

Has Advanced Planning been done for this project?       YES     NO

Conceptual Designs - Clark Nexsen

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Have Construction Documents been completed for this project?       YES     NO

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Anticipated or Actual Bid Date: July 15th, 2024

Planned Start Date of Construction\*: Sept 1st, 2024

Planned Completion Date of Construction: March 30, 2027

\*Construction must begin within 24 months of grant award under G.S. 115C-546.12.(b) .

**NEEDS-BASED PUBLIC SCHOOL CAPITAL FUND      FY2023-24 GRANT APPLICATION**

**PROJECT BUDGET**

Date: 11/20/23

Total NBPSCF Grant funding requested for this project: \$10,758,888

Minimum NBPSCF Grant funding for project to proceed (optional): \_\_\_\_\_

Estimated Project Costs	Local (non-State)	NBPSCF Grant Funds	Total
Planning	\$ <u>892,793</u>	\$ <u>0</u>	\$ <u>892,793</u>
Construction	\$ <u>401,036</u>	\$ <u>10,758,888</u>	\$ <u>11,159,924</u>
Other Costs*	\$ <u>604,797</u>	\$ <u>0</u>	\$ <u>604,797</u>
<b>Total</b>	\$ <u>1,898,627</u>	\$ <u>10,758,888</u>	\$ <u>12,657,514</u>

\*Project costs normally categorized as 'owner's direct costs' on a construction project – may include items such as site surveys, materials testing, site utilities, geotechnical reports, etc. Land acquisition costs are not eligible.

**Source(s) of required Local Matching Funds:**

Article 40, 41, and 46 sales tax  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Have any of the Local Matching Funds been expended at the time of application?       YES     NO

If YES, provide amount expended: \_\_\_\_\_

If YES, provide description of work: \_\_\_\_\_

**Estimated Project Expenditures by Fiscal Year** (show estimated period over which funds will be spent by Fiscal Year)

Total Planned Expenditures	2022-23 or earlier	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26 or later	Total
Local Matching Funds	0	29,200	892,793	976,634	1,898,627
Requested NBPSCF Grant Funds*	0	0	7,923,545	2,835,343	10,758,888
Total Estimated Expenditures by Fiscal Year	29,200	29,200	8,816,338	3,811,977	12,657,514

\*Total requested grant funding cannot exceed maximum allowed under G.S. 115C-546.11.(c) .



# **NEEDS-BASED PUBLIC SCHOOL CAPITAL FUND      FY2023-24 GRANT APPLICATION**

## **ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION**

Date: 11/20/23

Any project funded with a grant from the Needs-Based Public School Capital Fund must follow the same review process as any other LEA capital project.

- A registered Architect and/or registered Engineer shall prepare the drawings and specifications in accordance with G.S. 133-1 through 133-4.1, as applicable.
- School Planning design review is required. Design documents must be submitted at appropriate intervals during design – SD, DD, and CD. Neither the LEA nor the County shall invest any funds in construction of the project until the review process is completed.
- Transmittal of drawings and specifications to School Planning must include the form at: <https://www.dpi.nc.gov/documents/schoolplanning/project-submittal-form/download>
- Design of the project should be in compliance with DPI School Planning Guidelines: <https://www.dpi.nc.gov/districts-schools/district-operations/school-planning>
- DPI Facility Design Guidelines can be found at: <https://www.dpi.nc.gov/documents/schoolplanning/facility-design-guidelines/download>
- DPI School Science Facility Requirements can be found at: <https://www.dpi.nc.gov/documents/schoolplanning/science-facilities-planner/download>  
<https://www.dpi.nc.gov/documents/schoolplanning/science-safety-checklist/download>
- For projects involving the closing of an existing school, the LEA must follow these procedures: <https://www.dpi.nc.gov/documents/schoolplanning/school-closing-procedure/download>
- For projects involving the demolition of an existing school building, the LEA must follow the closing procedure noted above and must submit a Feasibility and Cost Analysis: <https://www.dpi.nc.gov/documents/schoolplanning/costfeas-1/download>
- DPI Lottery Capital Funding FAQ can be found at: <https://www.dpi.nc.gov/documents/schoolplanning/lottery-capital-funding-faq-document/download?attachment>

**NEEDS-BASED PUBLIC SCHOOL CAPITAL FUND      FY2023-24 GRANT APPLICATION**

**ASSURANCE PAGE**

Date: 11/20/23

By signing below, we assure the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction that we are officials of our respective organizations and we are authorized to submit this application on behalf of these organizations.

We certify the following:

- The information provided in this proposal is correct and complete.
- The project described in the application is within the parameters of the Needs-Based Public School Capital Fund as required in Article 38B of G.S. 115C-546, and that all of the required local funding is available and designated as a match for this project.
- All Needs-Based Public School Capital Fund grant proceeds and the required Local Matching funds will be used for the construction project described in the application.
- We will work cooperatively with the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction in monitoring and evaluating the progress of the project to meet statutory reporting requirements. We will report on project status and State and local funds expended by April 1 of each year, at the time of each distribution request, and within 90 days of project completion.
- Within 60 days of receiving a Needs-Based Public School Capital Fund grant award, we will enter into an agreement with the Department of Public Instruction detailing the use of grant funds, in accordance with G.S. 115C-546.12.(a).
- All applicable federal and state laws will be adhered to, including promotion of equal opportunity without regard to race, color, religion, gender, age, disability, political affiliation, or national origin.
- Generally accepted fiscal control and accounting procedures will be followed to ensure proper disbursement and accounting of funds from the Needs-Based Public School Capital Fund grant proceeds and required Local Matching funds.
- All Needs-Based Public School Capital Fund grant proceeds are subject to forfeiture provisions, requiring full repayment, in accordance with G.S. 115C-546.12.(c).

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(Signature – Chair, County Commissioners)

(Date)

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(Signature – Chair, Board of Education)

(Date)

## **Short Description of Proposed School Construction Project**

The goal for this project has two parts. The first part is to provide a new gym with performance space for Blue Ridge School and Early College—two schools on one campus serving Pre-K through Early College students. It is located in the remote southern part of Jackson County and serves the children and families of the Cashiers community. The second part is to provide classroom space for the PreK - 5th-grade portion of the campus, known as Blue Ridge School.

### **Describe the critical need this project addresses and the impact on student outcomes:**

Building a new gym at Blue Ridge would first and foremost provide a better learning environment for our students involved in physical education and health classes. The current gym does not offer classrooms for health. Elementary and high school classes have to share the gym simultaneously, which can cause disruptions or force one class out of their learning space. Students in health classes either have to drag chairs out of the lobby to sit inside the gym or crowd into the weight room. A new gymnasium with an appropriate learning space would create a more stable and comfortable learning environment for elementary, middle, and high school students.

Furthermore, building a new gym would allow the school to be comparable to our area's surrounding schools' facilities. The gym is one of the smallest in the state of North Carolina. At times, we have had to utilize our cafeteria for crowd overflow and offer the game via a camera feed to stay in compliance with fire marshall guidelines. The court size is extremely small and is not regulation size. The court is so close to the bleachers that we have had unnecessary interactions with spectators, players, and officials. There is no clear path to enter the bleachers without walking near players and coaches. The baseline is very close to the wall and bleachers, which is hazardous for athletes and spectators. Because of the lack of space, the home team's bench area is located in the visitor's section, resulting in many unnecessary incidents with visiting fans.

In addition to the small court size, various objects on the wall protrude and impede play. If a player or spectator were to run into these objects, they could be injured. Students cannot shower after games at times because the locker rooms must also be used for storage. Furthermore, the doors in the gym cause constant foot traffic near the court resulting in disruptive actions. Teams have to sit in the crowd during games and be exposed to fans because we do not have proper space to separate teams from spectators; this is another safety risk. The construction of a new gym would benefit our sports teams that use the gym in the Fall, Winter, and Spring. Our gym is

used by both our middle school and high school teams. We cannot provide gym access to all of our teams, resulting in busing students to the local recreation center for practices. We also have to push our practice times to later in the evening, resulting in our students getting home later. Having a second gym would allow all of our teams for practices and cut down on time spent after school hours for our teachers and students.

Blue Ridge School and Early College do not currently have a performance arts space or an adequate music and theater instruction classroom. Music classes and storage were recently housed in a couple of old portable classrooms behind the school. Currently, any performance on campus would take place in the cafeteria. Students and families would have to travel 45minutes to the closest proper performance space. Even though Blue Ridge has a small student body, it has been a goal to offer many of the same opportunities the students would have at a larger school, including experience in performing arts. As these students apply to college, it is helpful for them to show a variety of pursuits on their transcripts and resumes, including artistic endeavors and classes.

Blue Ridge School was initially built with the open classroom concept design in the 1970s. Over the years, the two pods that were used by the PreK-5th grades have been divided up with wooden construction walls and temporary barriers. Also, spaces to serve Pre-k students, students with disabilities, and English language learners have been created out of closets and hallways. These make-shift classrooms and DIY classroom divisions also cause difficulties for HVAC systems that are designed for large spaces to be subdivided into small spaces. Though the school recently replaced the HVAC units in these spaces, it was impossible for the architect and engineer to develop a comfortable and efficient system for the makeshift spaces.

## **Why not in 5 year Plan**

For the past ten years, the school system's primary concern has been failing roofs and HVAC systems on all of our seven campuses. This has been reflected in the capital request to the Jackson County Commissioners, and the Facility Needs Surveys for NCDPI. Fortunately, JCPS and the Jackson County Board of Commissioners could secure a QSAB loan for \$10 million to address the failing roof and HVAC needs. After three years of projects, we are happy to report that our roofs and HVAC are up to the needed standards. Since completing those projects, the district has now focused on other capital improvement needs. This is why this project has not appeared on the Facility Needs Survey for the past ten years.



This picture shows how close fans are to the playing court. Also, take notices of the visiting team athletes setting with home fans.



Again, this picture shows how there is not enough room for a traditional bench for student athletes and they are forced to set in the stands with fans.