

MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING OF THE ALBEMARLE COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD
Thursday, July 16, 2026
[Meeting Video Link](#)

Roll Call - UPON THE ROLL BEING CALLED, THE FOLLOWING WERE PRESENT:

Board Members - Dr. Kate Acuff, Mr. Bob Beard, Dr. Rebecca Berlin, Mr. Jim Dillenbeck, Ms. Judy Le, and Ms. Allison Spillman.

Absent – Ms. Osborne

Staff Members – Acting Superintendent Chandra Hayes; Chief Legal Officer Josiah Black; Assistant Superintendent Daphne Keiser; Chief Operating Officer Rosalyn Schmitt; Public Affairs and Strategic Communications Officer Jason Grant; Chief Human Resources Officer Dan Redding; and Clerk of the Board Christine Thompson

AGENDA ITEM NO. 1.0 CLOSED MEETING - At 6:00 p.m., Mr. Dillenbeck offered a **motion** that the Albemarle County Public School Board of Albemarle County, Virginia go into a closed meeting as authorized by the Virginia Freedom of Information Act, Section 2.2-3711(A) of the Code of Virginia under Subsection 1, which authorizes the discussion, consideration, or interviews of prospective candidates for employment and the assignment, appointment, promotion, performance, demotion, salaries, disciplining, or resignation of specific public officers, appointees, or employees of any public body. The purpose of this item is to review three recent personnel issues. Ms. Le seconded the **motion**. **The motion passed with a voice vote of 6-0-1, Ms. Osborne was absent.**

AGENDA ITEM NO. 2.0 OPENING ACTIVITIES

Agenda Item No. 2.1 Call to Order - At 6:31 p.m., Chair Berlin called the Albemarle County School Board meeting back to order.

Agenda Item No. 2.2 Closed Meeting Certification - At 6:31 p.m., Mr. Dillenbeck offered a **motion** that the Board certify by recorded vote that to the best of each Board member's knowledge, only public business matters lawfully exempted from the open meeting requirements of the Virginia Freedom of Information Act and identified in the motion authorizing the Closed Meeting were heard, discussed, or considered in the Closed Meeting. Ms. Le seconded the **motion**. **The motion passed with a voice vote of 6-0-1, Ms. Osborne was absent.**

Agenda Item No. 2.4 - Pledge of Allegiance

Agenda Item No. 2.5 - Moment of Silence

AGENDA ITEM NO. 3.0 APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Agenda Item No. 3.1 Approval of Agenda - Ms. Le offered a **motion** to approve the agenda. Ms. Spillman seconded the **motion**. **The motion passed with a voice vote of 6-0-1, Ms. Osborne was absent.**

AGENDA ITEM NO. 4.0 ANNOUNCEMENTS

Agenda Item No. 4.1 Spotlight on Education - The Board received an overview of the 2026 ACPS & UVA National Society of Black Engineers (NSBE), Jr. Pre-College Initiative Summer Academy, which provides students with opportunities to explore STREAM education and engineering-related fields. Students highlighted their experiences with teamwork, engineering design, robotics, coding, problem-solving, and resilience, including building and programming robots and choreographing the BYTE robot dog.

NSBE Jr. PCI Chapter Students

Jaidyn Agee - Rising 9th grader, Albemarle High School
Shamar Griffin - Rising 11th grader, Albemarle High School
Daylen Israel-Hampton - Rising 12th grader, Albemarle High School
Jeshua McDowell - Rising 12th grader, Albemarle High School
Alex Payne - Rising 10th grader, Albemarle High School
Cecilia Waters - Rising 6th grader, Journey Middle School
Oliver Waters - Rising 6th grader, Journey Middle School

2026 NSBE, Jr. PCI Chapter Staff

Mr. Clifford Ayres-Brown - ACPS & NSBE, Jr. Alumnus, Howard University Grad & Johns Hopkins University Grad Student
Mr. Navian Francis - Mechanical Engineering PhD Graduate Research & Teaching Assistant, University of VA
Mr. Stanley Speed, Jr. - ACPS Student Support, Journey Middle School
Mrs. LaNika Barnes - ACPS Science, Biotechnology, and Diversity Resource Teacher & Pulse Studio Co-Lead, ACE at Lambs Ln
Ms. Jess Mason - ACPS Special Education Teaching Assistant, Albemarle High School
Mr. Thomas Yancey, Jr. - ACPS Student Security Officer, Albemarle High School

Agenda Item No. 4.2 School Board, Superintendent, and Committee Updates

Dr. Hayes provided follow-up updates from the previous meeting. She shared that Director of Equity Education Ayana Mitchell will work with Community Lab School Principal Chad Ratliff and his team to develop a plan to increase ELL student enrollment to better reflect division enrollment. She also announced that Secondary ELA Coordinator Monica Cabarcas will provide the Board with an overview in September of the division's process for reviewing literature used in classrooms and school libraries, including requirements related to parental notification for mature materials.

Mr. Beard appointed Lindsay Hauser, Director of the Office of Community Outreach and Engagement at the UVA Cancer Center, to the School Health Advisory Board.

Dr. Acuff shared information about the Albemarle Foundation for Education's Sunday, August 9, from 12:00 to 4:00 p.m. at the former JCPenney location. The event will provide backpacks and school supplies, along with services such as haircuts, athletic exams, and vaccinations. Volunteers and donations are still needed, including assistance with backpack packing, event setup, distribution, and cleanup.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 5.1 – Discussion of Proposed Revisions to Public Comment Guidelines

[Public Comment Procedures and Policy Revisions](#)
[Public Comment Guidelines](#)
[More than Twenty Speakers](#)
[Policy BDDH Public Participation at School Board Meetings](#)

The Board discussed proposed revisions to the public comment procedures and rules of decorum.

Board members requested clarification that the provisions apply to regularly scheduled meetings, rather than only "business meetings," and suggested using "presiding officer" instead of "Chair" to account for situations in which another individual may be managing public comment.

The Board discussed language related to ‘private personal matters,’ expressing concern that the term was too vague. Members supported striking that language while retaining provisions requiring comments to relate to matters within the Board’s authority and maintaining appropriate standards of decorum.

The Board also discussed student privacy, including the disclosure of confidential student information and the identification of individual students during public comment. Members noted the importance of protecting student information while recognizing that parents and family members may choose to speak publicly about their own students.

The Board agreed that speakers should not be required to state their home address and that identifying their voting district is sufficient. The Board also discussed applying the same public comment procedures and time limitations to public hearings for consistency.

The Board reviewed the existing practice of allowing additional speaking time for individuals representing a group. Staff noted that the procedures already provide the Board with flexibility to modify speaking limitations when appropriate.

Ms. Spillman **moved** to approve the public comment procedures as amended by the School Board on July 16. Ms. Le seconded the **motion. The motion passed with a roll call vote of 6-0-1, Ms. Osborne was absent.**

AGENDA ITEM NO. 6.0 PUBLIC COMMENT

Agenda Item No. 6.1 Public Hearing on Policy: Professional Boundaries and Prevention of Sexual Misconduct and Abuse

Jimmy Belew of the Scottsville district expressed concerns regarding the proposed Professional Boundaries and Prevention of Sexual Misconduct and Abuse policy, particularly the division’s internal investigation and oversight processes. He questioned whether the policy provides sufficient independent review, accountability, and protections while allegations involving employees are investigated. Mr. Belew referenced concerns he had previously raised regarding employee conduct and urged the Board to strengthen the policy’s accountability provisions. He also requested that the Board authorize an independent third-party investigation into matters involving Woodbrook and Hollymead schools.

Daisy Rojas of the Rio district stated that her concerns were less about the language of existing policies and more about how the division responds when concerns are raised. She shared comments provided to her by parents and staff describing concerns related to administrative responsiveness, student supports, discipline decisions, special education services, and alleged employee conduct. Ms. Rojas said the accounts reflected broader concerns about whether families and employees feel heard and whether reported issues are addressed appropriately. She urged the Board to focus on accountability, follow-through, and the division’s response to concerns raised by students, families, and staff.

Heidi Gilman Bennett of the Samuel Miller district expressed general support for the proposed policy but stated that her primary concern is the division’s culture and leadership response to reports of misconduct. She described allegations that an assistant superintendent had repeatedly used a photograph of her in a disparaging and inappropriate manner during Central Office staff meetings and said she learned of the alleged incidents through employee Title IX and EEOC complaints. Ms. Bennett stated that she has heard concerns from families and employees who felt discouraged from reporting harassment or discrimination and argued that failures to address inappropriate conduct can create a culture in which employees do not feel safe raising concerns. She urged the Board to adopt the policy while also addressing leadership accountability and making personnel changes where appropriate.

Joellen Pisarczyk of the White Hall district expressed concern that existing safeguards and review practices had not prevented the current situation. She referenced federal guidance regarding prevention of sexual abuse in schools and argued that regular review and updating of procedures is important. Ms. Pisarczyk urged the Board to authorize an independent investigation to determine what went wrong, identify any systemic failures, and establish stronger protections for students. She stated that an independent review would help the Board understand the full scope of the problem, restore public trust, and develop corrective actions to prevent future harm.

Lisa Broadaway, a Rio district parent expressed appreciation for the development of the proposed policy but stated that policy changes alone would not restore trust. The speaker described the impact of alleged misconduct on her son and reiterated her request for an independent outside investigation. She stated that concerns about the employee had been raised over several years and alleged that complaints from parents and staff were not adequately addressed. She emphasized the vulnerability of students with disabilities and urged the Board to examine how concerns were evaluated, communicated, and acted upon. She called for greater transparency, accountability, and a full review of the circumstances that allowed the alleged misconduct to continue.

Phil Riese of the Rivanna district expressed support for strengthening the division's sexual misconduct policies but urged the Board to authorize an independent investigation into the circumstances surrounding alleged sexual misconduct involving students and a school employee. He stated that policy changes alone are insufficient without a thorough review to determine what failures occurred and how they can be prevented in the future. Mr. Riese also raised concerns about transparency, employee confidentiality, and the division's handling of information related to the allegations. In addition, he questioned whether having the Title IX Coordinator also serve as Assistant Division Counsel could create a conflict of interest. He urged the Board to prioritize student safety and accountability through an independent outside review.

Agenda Item No. 6.2 Public Comment - General

Lizzie Batman spoke about teacher and administrator retention, particularly at Greer Elementary, where she cited significant staff turnover following recent leadership changes. She expressed concern about the impact of that turnover on students and staff and urged the division to provide stronger support for teachers and employees during periods of transition. She also referenced leadership changes at other schools and asked how the division is supporting staff across both elementary and secondary schools. Ms. Batman also commented on the grading policy. She expressed concern about awarding minimum credit for work that is not completed and argued that grades should accurately reflect student effort and mastery of the material. She stated that grading practices should provide students with clear feedback and better prepare them for future academic expectations.

Phil Riese of the Rivanna district discussed employee confidentiality and public access to personnel information, citing Virginia law and arguing that the division has discretion in some circumstances to disclose personnel information rather than treating all such information as categorically confidential. He expressed concern that parents are often left without information about whether complaints involving employees have been investigated or addressed. Mr. Riese also shared a personal example involving a concern about a teacher's treatment of the speaker's son and stated that the family was never informed whether an investigation occurred or what action, if any, was taken. He urged the Board to seek clarification from legal counsel regarding disclosure requirements and to ensure that student interests and protections remain the division's highest priority.

Lisa Broadaway, a parent and taxpayer in the Rio District, expressed concern about whether division spending on instructional programs and technology is producing measurable improvements in student outcomes. She questioned the evidence supporting some programs and argued that funding decisions should place greater emphasis on student-facing positions and well-trained staff. Ms. Broadaway stated that technology can be a useful tool but should not replace teachers, instructional assistants, or other staff who provide direct support to students. She urged the Board to evaluate the effectiveness of instructional programs and consider whether current investments are contributing to academic growth, teacher support, and student needs.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 7.0 APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA – Dr. Acuff offered a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Mr. Dillenbeck **seconded the motion. The motion passed with a voice vote of 6-0-1, Ms. Osborne was absent.**

- 7.1 Approval of Consent Agenda
- 7.2 Personnel Action
- 7.3 Religious Exemption
- 7.4 Religious Exemption
- 7.5 Religious Exemption

- 7.6 FY27 Appropriation for State Salary Supplement
- 7.7 For Action: Policy Updates
- 7.8 For Action: Albemarle Foundation for Education (AFE) Memorandum of Understanding

AGENDA ITEM NO. 8.0 ITEMS PULLED FROM CONSENT AGENDA – None.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 9.0 SCHOOL DIVISION BUSINESS

Agenda Item No. 9.1 Special Education [Review Update](#) - The Board received an executive overview of the Comprehensive Special Education Review conducted by the Berkley Group. The independent, division-wide review examined ACPS special education structures, practices, resources, leadership, professional development, academic outcomes, and service delivery models.

The review identified several strengths, including above-average academic outcomes for students receiving special education services, high rates of inclusive placement, dedicated staff, positive family relationships, and existing areas of effective practice. Five major themes for improvement were identified: consistency of practice, staffing and professional learning capacity, communication and family partnership, service models and instructional focus, and leadership and organizational readiness.

The Berkley Group presented 12 short-, mid-, and long-term recommendations, including establishing a clear division-wide vision for special education, reviewing identification and access practices, restoring dedicated co-planning time, developing consistent special education practices across schools, reviewing the Base School Program, strengthening professional learning and paraprofessional support, improving student progress monitoring, and aligning staffing and organizational structures.

The presentation also outlined next steps focused on leadership, communication, accountability, stakeholder engagement, and establishing a continuous improvement process to support implementation of the recommendations.

Vice Chair Spillman expressed strong support for the review and emphasized the need for better communication with families of students receiving special education services. She noted that the division's special education programs and service models can be difficult for families to understand and expressed concern that access to services may depend too heavily on a parent's ability to advocate for their child.

Vice Chair Spillman also raised concerns about staffing levels, teacher burnout, reliance on provisionally licensed special education teachers, and the need to ensure that students receive instruction from appropriately trained staff. Additional concerns included discipline practices involving students with IEPs or 504 plans, particularly whether administrators have sufficient understanding of students' disabilities and individual plans when responding to behavior.

She stressed the importance of consistent data collection and progress monitoring to determine whether students are making meaningful academic progress. Vice Chair Spillman encouraged the division to fully implement the review's recommendations so that the work results in measurable improvements for students and families.

Dr. Acuff asked about professional development for special education and general education staff, including opportunities for joint planning and training. She noted prior discussions with the Special Education Advisory Committee regarding the importance of providing special education training to general education teachers as well as special education staff.

Dr. Hayes explained that differences in employee contracts can create challenges in providing joint professional development for licensed staff and teaching assistants. She shared that, prior to the review, she had asked Dr. Megan Wood, Ms. Ashley Struzik, and Ms. Leslie Glover to develop a three-year professional learning plan for special education teachers and teaching assistants. The plan is intended to expand training beyond areas such as CPI to include additional instructional and content-focused professional development. She noted that implementation will need to consider VDOE requirements, employee contracts, and available funding.

Ms. Spillman discussed the role of the Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) and suggested establishing formal School Board representation on the committee so that Board members can regularly hear concerns and report updates regarding the needs of students receiving special education services.

Dr. Hayes addressed the feasibility and implementation of the recommendations, stating that she believes all are achievable within the proposed timelines. She noted that some recommendations will require future budget discussions and planning but emphasized that the phased approach allows the division to move the work forward in a reasonable manner.

Dr. Hayes shared that Dr. Murphy and Dr. Baker have agreed to continue supporting implementation and monitoring of the recommendations. She also noted that retired Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources Clare Keiser has agreed to assist with the work and help establish a regular process for providing updates to the Board.

Dr. Hayes further explained that the division has already begun strengthening communication with the Special Education Advisory Committee and other stakeholder groups. She stated that the full report will be shared with the broader community and that the division intends to engage families and advisory groups in determining how best to communicate progress and next steps.

Chair Berlin recommended establishing regular progress updates to the Board, potentially every other month, to track implementation of the special education review recommendations. She suggested using clear status indicators, identified timelines, and designated staff responsibility for each recommendation so the Board can monitor whether the work remains on track.

Chair Berlin also emphasized the importance of connecting the recommendations to the budget process, particularly those involving staffing levels, caseloads, student-to-teacher ratios, and professional development. She asked that the division and the Berkley Group provide guidance on promising practices, identify potential costs, and distinguish between recommendations that can be implemented within existing resources and those that may require future budget investments.

Agenda Item No. 9.2 Transportation [Update](#) - The Board received a Transportation Department update from Director Jamie Gellner. The presentation included an overview of department operations, maintenance, training, routing and planning, and administrative functions. The department currently operates approximately 160 buses with 252 employees and supported more than 2,100 activity trips during the previous school year.

Ms. Gellner highlighted several department successes, including implementation of upgraded routing and fleet management software, continued support for special education and specialty schools, professional learning efforts, and the addition of 27 new school buses in 2026, with three more expected later in the year.

The Board also received an update on hiring and route coverage. Transportation hired 34 employees during the previous school year and continues recruitment efforts through referral bonuses, advertising, social media, and job fairs. While several routes still require coverage, the department is planning to absorb or stack routes as needed and expects to cover all home-to-school routes with staff.

Mr. Dillenbeck asked about numbers – students and routes. Ms. Gellner noted that the division operates approximately 160 bus routes. Of approximately 14,000 students enrolled in ACPs, about 10,000 request transportation services, with approximately 6,000 to 7,000 students riding the bus on a regular basis.

Mr. Beard asked whether stacked routes could eventually be eliminated, particularly those that may require elementary students to remain at school later than usual.

Ms. Gellner explained that the division began her first year with 12 stacked routes and reduced that number over time. The following year, no stacked routes were scheduled at the start of the year, but staffing shortages later required the department to cover approximately 27 to 30 open routes each day through a combination of absorbed routes, building staff support, and delayed transportation.

She stated that using a limited number of planned stacked routes provides greater predictability for families and schools than making last-minute transportation changes. Transportation is currently planning for approximately five stacked routes at the start of the year and will continue to reduce them as staffing allows.

Dr. Acuff asked about driver turnover and the reasons employees leave the Transportation Department. Ms. Gellner reported an approximately 85% first-year retention rate, with retention remaining about 74% over two years and 70% over three years, which she described as strong for the industry.

Ms. Gellner explained that some drivers leave during the first year because of the demands of the job, including managing students in addition to driving. Other departures are related to family responsibilities, career changes, retirements, or other personal circumstances. She noted that the department continues to monitor retention and look for ways to support employees.

The discussion also touched on employee compensation and housing affordability. Ms. Gellner noted interest in whether transportation employees may qualify for a new county housing initiative for full-time staff and shared that most Transportation Department employees do not live in Albemarle County.

Vice Chair Spillman asked whether assigning monitors or aides to more general education bus routes could help with student behavior and potentially improve driver retention. She noted the positive impact of having an aide on her child's special education bus and suggested the Board consider the issue during future budget discussions.

Ms. Gellner said the department has explored the idea and recently piloted student management support on selected routes when additional assistants were available. She explained that the role requires different training and that staffing needs on special education buses limited how long the pilot could continue.

Vice Chair Spillman also suggested exploring combined positions in which employees could work on buses before and after school and serve in school-based roles during the day, creating more full-time positions with benefits.

Dr. Acuff asked whether aides assigned to special education buses are employees of the Transportation Department or the Special Education Department. Ms. Gellner confirmed that they are Transportation Department employees.

Ms. Le asked about the difference between the approximately 10,000 students who request transportation and the 6,000 to 7,000 students who ride regularly, and whether that gap presents an opportunity for greater efficiency. Ms. Gellner explained that prior efforts to more closely match service to actual ridership created more administrative work than benefit, given the size and demographics of the county.

Ms. Gellner added that the department is beginning to focus more closely on service quality measures, including route mileage, ride times, the number of students assigned to each bus, and overall route design. She emphasized that the goal is not simply to transport students to school, but to continually improve how transportation services are provided.

Chair Berlin asked how parents are notified when their child is assigned to third-party transportation, particularly for students with disabilities or developmental delays.

Ms. Gellner explained that the department works directly with families when third-party transportation is necessary and provides parents with information and contact details for EverDriven. She noted that Transportation is also notified of complaints and that the vendor's contract includes requirements related to background checks and other safety standards.

Ms. Gellner added that, once the new professional boundaries policy is adopted, she plans to review it with EverDriven and ensure the vendor follows the same expectations. She also identified improved oversight of third-party transportation as a goal for the coming year, including collecting more data on arrival times, communication, and overall service performance.

Agenda Item No. 9.3 Assessment and Accountability [Update](#) – Accepted as submitted by the Board.

Agenda Item No. 9.4 – the School Board took a break from 9:09 p.m. to 9:20 p.m.

Agenda Item No. 9.5 [Update](#) on Mental Health and Social Emotional Supports in Schools - The Board received an update on mental health and social-emotional supports in schools. Executive Director of PreK-12 Leadership & Instruction, Dr. Kecia Lipscomb reviewed the transition from Social Emotional Learning Coach/Counselor positions to more clearly defined support roles. Staff previously serving in SEL positions were notified in 2024 that they must obtain the required credentials for the Mental Health Support Specialist role by 2028.

The presentation outlined the qualifications and responsibilities of School Counselors, Mental Health Support Specialists, and Student Support Liaisons, formerly known as SEL Coaches. The division currently has 21 licensed Mental Health Support Specialists serving 24 schools, with additional staff working toward licensure or credentialing.

Staff also reviewed clearer boundaries for each role. School Counselors primarily provide academic, career, and Tier 1 and Tier 2 support; Mental Health Support Specialists provide more intensive Tier 2 and Tier 3 therapeutic and psychological interventions; and Student Support Liaisons focus primarily on Tier 1 student support, behavioral reinforcement, and schoolwide engagement.

All three roles will document student interactions in Branching Minds. The presentation also described multiple levels of oversight, including weekly review by principals, monthly monitoring by division staff, and quarterly superintendent review. Standard operating procedures include maintaining visible meeting spaces, notifying families regarding services and one-on-one meetings, and documenting student interactions.

Vice Chair Spillman asked about the hiring process and qualifications for Student Support Liaisons (SSLs). Staff explained that principals have historically hired these positions, but the Coordinator of Counseling and Wellness has recently become involved in interviews and will continue to participate in the hiring process.

Vice Chair Spillman emphasized the importance of having appropriately qualified staff involved in selecting employees who support students' social-emotional and mental health needs. Staff noted that the SSL job description and qualifications are currently being reviewed with Human Resources and will be updated as part of the title and role clarification process.

Vice Chair Spillman also asked about potential budget implications associated with meeting the new expectations for visible and observable meeting spaces, including whether some schools may require modifications to doors or windows. Staff indicated that those facility needs and associated costs will require further review.

Chair Berlin requested that the Board receive an update before the start of school on the revised Student Support Liaison job description and any facility concerns related to meeting the new requirements for observable meeting spaces. Staff agreed to work with Dr. Grant to determine the best way to provide that information.

Chair Berlin also emphasized the need for clear communication with staff and families regarding the distinctions among School Counselors, Mental Health Support Specialists, and Student Support Liaisons so that families understand each role and know whom to contact for support.

She further asked that the division establish a consistent process for notifying parents when one-on-one meetings with students occur, including how notifications are sent and by whom. Chair Berlin stressed that the process should be consistent across schools and accessible to families who communicate in different languages.

Agenda Item No. 9.6 Policy Discussion – Continuation: [Professional Boundaries and Prevention of Sexual Misconduct and Abuse](#) - The Board received a follow-up presentation on proposed Policy AG, Professional Boundaries and Prevention of Sexual Misconduct and Abuse. Staff reviewed public feedback and identified four primary areas of concern: establishing a dual reporting structure, clarifying the definition of an emergency, creating a centralized digital log for one-on-one student meetings, and providing parental notification in founded abuse cases.

Proposed revisions would require employees to report suspected policy violations concurrently to the building principal or department head and Human Resources, while also providing an anonymous reporting option. The definition of an emergency was revised to focus on urgent health, safety, or security needs.

Staff also proposed requiring one-on-one student meetings to be documented in a division-managed digital system, currently Branching Minds, with access for monitoring by school and division leaders. Parents or guardians would be able to request a record of one-on-one meetings involving their child.

Additional revisions addressed notification in founded child abuse cases, annual parent notification and opt-out provisions for staff whose duties involve regular one-on-one meetings with students, and limitations on electronic communications. Staff would be required to use division-approved communication systems, include parents or supervisors when appropriate, and avoid personal devices unless using an ACPS-approved application that permits parent access.

Dr. Acuff asked for clarification on what constitutes a one-on-one “meeting” for purposes of the proposed documentation requirements.

Staff explained that incidental or unplanned interactions, such as walking with a student, speaking briefly in a hallway, or being alone with the first student to arrive in a classroom, would not generally be considered meetings requiring documentation. However, all other professional boundary expectations would still apply, including visibility and accessibility of the setting.

Staff clarified that a planned one-on-one interaction, such as a teacher asking a student to come during lunch for tutoring, would be considered a meeting and would require documentation and applicable parental notification or consent.

Chair Berlin raised a question about how the professional boundaries policy would apply to School Board members who receive direct electronic communications from students. She noted that students frequently contact Board members regarding student voice and other school matters and emphasized that the policy should not discourage students from communicating with the Board.

The Board discussed how to handle situations in which a student contacts an individual Board member without including a parent or guardian. Members suggested that the communication could be copied to the full Board so that Board members also comply with the policy's expectations regarding one-on-one electronic communication. Chair Berlin emphasized the importance of clearly establishing and communicating the appropriate procedure for Board members.

Vice Chair Spillman asked how the policy would apply when a student regularly chooses to spend lunch in a teacher's classroom because the teacher is a trusted adult, or the cafeteria environment is difficult for the student. She questioned whether repeated one-on-one lunches would require parental permission or documentation each time.

Staff acknowledged that these situations may require additional clarification in the policy or procedures. Staff noted that teachers often eat lunch with groups of students and that this can be a positive relationship-building practice. However, when the interaction is one-on-one, staff emphasized the need for greater awareness of professional boundaries and compliance with expectations such as maintaining visible and accessible spaces.

Ms. Le asked how the proposed requirements for one-on-one meetings would apply to spaces such as school trailers and older buildings where appropriate meeting rooms may be limited.

Staff explained that the language had been revised to clarify that doors should remain open and that some existing offices or spaces may no longer be appropriate for one-on-one student meetings under the new policy. In those cases, administrators would need to identify alternative locations or reassign office space.

Ms. Le suggested that the division consider a more systematic review of school facilities to identify spaces that may require modifications to support compliance with the policy.

The Board discussed moving forward with adoption of the amended policy prior to the start of the school year while recognizing that additional revisions may be needed as further feedback is received. Members noted that the policy can be reconsidered or amended at a future meeting if additional information or operational concerns arise.

Dr. Hayes discussed implementation of the policy and indicated that an implementation team may be established to coordinate the work, gather staff feedback, communicate changes, and ensure that employees and students understand the new expectations. She noted that the upcoming principal leadership meeting would provide an opportunity to begin that work.

Ms. Le **moved** to approve Policy AG, Professional Boundaries and Prevention of Sexual Misconduct and Abuse, as amended. Vice Chair Spillman seconded the **motion**. **The motion passed with a roll call vote of 6-0-1, Ms. Osborne was absent.**

Agenda Item No. 9.7 Policy: IKBA Grading Policy Part II - The Board received a presentation on proposed changes to Grading Policy IKBA and related grading regulations for the 2026-2027 school year. Staff reviewed findings from the division's grading study, including that overall grade distributions had not changed significantly, but the validity of grades had improved for historically lower-performing students while becoming less valid for higher-performing students. The review also found that ACPS provides less procedural detail than peer divisions in areas such as reassessment, late work, missing assignments, family communication, grading scales, and minimum assignment requirements.

Staff explained that the proposed changes are intended to improve accuracy, clarity, consistency, and communication while responding to community feedback. Proposed regulations included required family contact when a student is at risk of failing or experiences a significant decline in performance, use of rolling semester averages, clearer limits on late work and reassessments, and more consistent grading practices across schools.

The proposed regulations would also require a minimum of five grades per quarter, limit the weight of any single assignment or assessment to no more than 35% of a quarter grade, and establish a differentiated grade floor in which a grade of 40 is reserved for missing work while reasonably complete submitted work receives a grade of 50 or higher.

The amended policy continues to state that grades should accurately represent student mastery, support student learning, and be applied consistently. It also directs the division to establish procedures addressing reassessments, late work, minimum grades, communication with families, minimum assignment requirements, and grading scales.

Staff outlined implementation steps including revising and republishing the grading handbook, professional learning for school leaders and new teachers, staff FAQ sessions, and communication with families prior to the start of the school year.

[Grading Policy](#)

[Grading Policy Proposed Changes - Presentation](#)

[Grading Policy White Paper](#)

[Grading Policy Handbook for Teachers](#)

Ms. Spillman **moved** to approve the amended grading policy as presented. Dr. Acuff seconded the motion. **The motion passed with a roll call vote of 6-0-1, Ms. Osborne was absent.**

AGENDA ITEM No. 10.0 OTHER BUSINESS

Agenda Item No. 10.1 Other Business by Board Members and/or the Superintendent – None.

Agenda Item No. 10.2 Closed Meeting – None.

Agenda Item No. 10.3 Closed Meeting Certification – None.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 11.0 ADJOURNMENT – At 11:51 p.m., hearing no objections, Chair Berlin adjourned the meeting of the Albemarle County School Board.

Clerk

Chair