



AUG 18 2021

Albemarle County
School Board Office

By: Ther

At-Large

School Board Member Application

Applications must be received no later than 5:00 p.m. on Friday, August 21, 2026

Name **Lynsie Steele**

Home Address

**You must be registered to vote in Albemarle County. You can determine this by checking your voter card or by calling the Voter Registration Office at 434.972.4173.*

Phone

Cell Phone

Email

Do you currently have children/grandchildren in ACPS?



YES



NO

If no, have you had children/grandchildren in ACPS?



YES



NO

How long have you resided in Albemarle County

Have you previously served on the Albemarle County School Board or an Albemarle County Public Schools Committee or Council?

If so, please explain your previous committee/council work.

No.

Please indicate why you are interested in serving on the School Board.

I have four sons currently in Albemarle County Public Schools and two more children who will start in the next one and two years, respectively, which gives me a fifteen-year stake in what this Board decides. But my interest is not only as a parent.

For two decades I have done the work of connecting people in this county to each other and to information they need. Most recently, as Area Director for Girls on the Run Central Virginia and Blue Ridge, I worked inside ACPS schools alongside coaches, families, and staff across the division. That work taught me something I would carry into this seat: there is real distance between a decision made at 401 McIntire Road and how it lands in a school cafeteria, on a bus route, or in a family's kitchen at 6:45 in the morning. Policy is not what is written. It is what families experience.

I have also taught children directly, as a cooking instructor at Mountaintop Montessori, through a cooking camp I founded and ran, and through garden-to-table programming. I am not a licensed classroom teacher and would not claim that expertise. But I know what it takes to hold a group of children, and I know how quickly a good program falls apart without adult support behind it.

What I most want to offer is clear communication and real listening. Families do not disengage because they stop caring. They disengage because they cannot tell how a decision was made or where their input went. Closing that gap is what I have done professionally for twenty years, and it is the contribution I would make here.

Please indicate where appropriate, areas in which you have experience or knowledge:

- | | |
|--|--|
| ☐ School Construction | ☒ Research |
| ☒ Education/Curriculum | ☒ Strategic Planning |
| ☒ Databases | ☒ Finance/Budget |
| ☒ Community Engagement | ☒ Nonprofit and Human Services |
| ☐ Public Administration | ☐ County Government |
| ☐ Policy Development | ☒ Statistics/Demographics |
| ☐ Governance | ☒ Other |

Please further describe the experience, education, and leadership skills you would bring to the School Board.

I hold a B.A. from Sweet Briar College, Class of 2005, with roughly twenty years in communications, community leadership, and nonprofit work.

I have been an active parent volunteer in our schools, including service with the PTO at Ivy Elementary as VP of Fundraising and President. As Area Director for Girls on the Run Central Virginia and Blue Ridge, I recruited, trained, and background-screened volunteer coaches, built site partnerships with ACPS schools, developed sponsor and board relationships, and organized a season culminating in a community 5K on an ACPS campus involving hundreds of volunteers. I have taught cooking to children at Mountaintop Montessori, founded and ran an independent cooking camp, and worked on garden-to-table programming. Earlier, as Development Director and board member for the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation's Virginia chapter, I chaired committees and led campaigns that depended entirely on persuading people to show up.

I also founded and host Third Place Thursdays, a monthly gathering in Crozet that brings women in this community together across professional and personal lines.

Professionally, I run Roost Studio, building digital infrastructure for small businesses and organizations, work that is fundamentally about making information findable and usable for people who do not have time to hunt for it. I serve as Digital Editor for Charlottesville Guide and previously led marketing for Starr Hill Brewery for three years. I am also a co-founder of Glass Umbrella, an education technology company building early reading tools for children ages five to twelve, where I analyzed Virginia Standards of Learning reading data to understand where reading gaps run widest. I hold a minority interest and am not involved in daily operations, and I would disclose and recuse as required. Across all of this work the constant is translation: taking something complicated and making it clear enough that an ordinary person can act on it. I am fluent in French.

To this Board I would bring deep existing relationships across this county's schools, nonprofits, small businesses, local media, and parent networks in both the urban ring and the western feeder pattern, a habit of asking how decisions will actually be felt by students and families, and a temperament suited to hard conversations held in public.

Please see the attached supplement for additional detail.

Indicate if you are attaching additional information pertinent to this application.

- ☒ Attachments are provided
☐ No attachments were necessary

Signature Lynsie Steele

Date 08/18/2026

Please be advised that, upon submission, this application and any supporting documents become public records and may be disclosed or published by Albemarle County Public Schools.

Applications may be submitted by email or delivered/mailed to:

M. Christine Thompson, Clerk of the Board
Albemarle County School Board
401 McIntire Road, Room 345
Charlottesville, VA 22902

Phone: 434-296-5820

cthompson@k12albemarle.org

Lynsie Steele

Crozet, Virginia • [REDACTED]

Supplemental information in support of my application for the At-Large seat on the Albemarle County School Board.

SUMMARY

I am the parent of six children, four currently in Albemarle County Public Schools and two who will follow, and I have spent twenty years in this community doing one essential thing: connecting people to each other and to information they can actually use. I have taught children directly, volunteered in our schools, led nonprofits that serve ACPS students, and built a career in communications translating complicated things into plain language. I would bring to this Board a persistent focus on how decisions are felt by the students and families who live with them.

IN OUR SCHOOLS AND WITH OUR CHILDREN

Parent and school volunteer

Four sons currently enrolled in ACPS, with two younger children to come. [PTO service: school name, role, years.] I have been present in these buildings as a parent, a volunteer, and a program partner, and that has shaped how I read every division decision.

Cooking instructor and camp founder

I taught cooking to children at Mountaintop Montessori [role title, years] and founded and ran an independent cooking camp for children out of my home [years, ages, approximate number of children]. I designed the curriculum, recruited the families, and managed everything from food safety to keeping a room of children engaged across a full day. I have also [launched / supported] garden-to-table programming [program names]. I am not a licensed classroom teacher and would not claim that expertise. But I know what it takes to hold a group of children, and I know how quickly a well-designed program falls apart without adult support behind it.

Area Director, Girls on the Run Central Virginia and Blue Ridge

Led a regional chapter serving girls in grades three through eight across Albemarle County and surrounding divisions. Recruited, trained, and background-screened volunteer coaches, built site partnerships with ACPS schools, developed sponsor and board relationships, managed staff and the annual budget, and directed a season culminating in a community 5K hosted on an ACPS campus with hundreds of volunteers. This role put me inside our schools regularly, working alongside the staff and families who make programming happen.

EARLY LITERACY

Co-Founder and Board Member, Glass Umbrella

Co-founded an education technology company developing Grit, a reading adventure game for children ages five to twelve. My work covers governance, advocacy, and community partnerships, including outreach to school divisions and educational nonprofits across central Virginia. In the course of it I analyzed Virginia Standards of Learning reading data to identify where reading gaps run widest across the commonwealth. That is the same span the Virginia Literacy Act now covers in kindergarten through grade eight. I follow closely how reading instruction and reading data reach students, from outside the classroom. I hold a minority ownership interest in the company and am not involved in its daily operations. I would file the required disclosure, recuse from any matter where that interest could bear on my judgment, and would not participate in any procurement involving the company.

COMMUNITY AND NONPROFIT LEADERSHIP

Founder and Host, Third Place Thursdays

Founded and host a monthly gathering in Crozet that brings women in this community together across professional, civic, and personal lines. Built entirely from local relationships and sustained by them.

Development Director and Board Member, Cystic Fibrosis Foundation, Virginia Chapter

Served on the chapter board, chaired event committees, and led fundraising campaigns including the annual Brewer's Ball, for which I was later named an honoree. The work depended on persuading people to show up and on holding volunteers accountable without authority over them.

COMMUNICATIONS AND STRATEGY

Founder, Roost Studio. Build digital infrastructure and web presence for small businesses and organizations, work that is fundamentally about making information findable and usable for people who do not have time to hunt for it. **Digital Editor, Charlottesville Guide.** Direct digital editorial and audience strategy for a publication covering this region. **Marketing Lead, Starr Hill Brewery.** Led marketing for three years, including the Starr Hill Presents partnership with Red Light Management. **Earlier:** marketing and communications for Local Food Hub, and roughly twenty years of independent practice in brand strategy, content, and media relations.

EDUCATION

Bachelor of Arts, Sweet Briar College, Class of 2005. Fluent in French.

WHAT I WOULD BRING TO THIS BOARD

- **Community reach.** Existing working relationships across this county's schools, nonprofits, small businesses, local media, and parent networks, in both the urban ring and the western feeder pattern. I can find out what families actually think, and they will tell me.
- **Public communication.** Families rarely disengage because they stop caring. They disengage because they cannot tell how a decision was made or where their input went. Closing that gap is what I have done professionally for twenty years, and it is the contribution I would make here.
- **A student and family lens.** My instinct in any decision is to ask how it will be experienced by a child in a classroom or a parent trying to make a morning work. Policy is not what is written. It is what families live.
- **Early literacy perspective.** Useful as the division carries out the Virginia Literacy Act across kindergarten through grade eight and continues working through the recommendations of the 2023 instructional practices audit, particularly its findings on curricular resources and stakeholder engagement.
- **A long stake.** With four children enrolled and two still to come, I will live with the consequences of this Board's decisions for the next fifteen years.

Additional detail is available at lynsiesteele.com. I am glad to provide references from ACPS families, school staff, and community partners on request.

Lynsie Steele

Crozet, Virginia • lynsiesteele.com

Supplemental information in support of my application for the At-Large seat on the Albemarle County School Board. This document also contains my responses to the two narrative questions on the application form.

WHY I AM INTERESTED IN SERVING ON THE SCHOOL BOARD

I am the parent of six children, four currently in Albemarle County Public Schools and two who will follow. I have spent twenty years in this community doing one essential thing: connecting people to each other and to information they can actually use. I have taught children directly, volunteered in our schools, led nonprofits that serve ACPS students, and built a career in communications translating complicated things into plain language.

I am seeking this appointment because the gap I encounter most often is not disagreement about what our schools should do. It is families who cannot tell how a decision was made or where their input went. Closing that gap is the work I have done professionally for two decades, and it is the contribution I would make to this Board. I would bring a persistent focus on how decisions are felt by the students and families who live with them, and with four children enrolled and two still to come, I will live with those decisions myself for the next fifteen years.

EXPERIENCE, EDUCATION, AND LEADERSHIP I WOULD BRING TO THE SCHOOL BOARD

The sections that follow describe that experience in detail, beginning with my work in and around our schools.

IN OUR SCHOOLS AND WITH OUR CHILDREN

Parent and school volunteer

Four sons currently enrolled in ACPS, with two younger children to come. At Ivy Elementary School, formerly Meriwether Lewis Elementary, I served as PTO President in 2021–22 and as Co-Vice President of Fundraising in 2024–25, with responsibility for the annual fund and event fundraising. I continue to support the PTO as event photographer and graphic designer. I have been present in these buildings as a parent, a volunteer, and a program partner, and that has shaped how I read every division decision.

Cooking instructor and camp founder

Garden to Table Chef and Instructor at Mountaintop Montessori, where I taught elementary and middle school students to harvest in-season produce and cook with it. Students prepared meals for one another at real scale, enough to feed their classmates lunch on rotating days. The kitchen turned out to be a good place to teach children responsibility and follow-through. From 2019 to 2021 I founded and ran an independent cooking camp for children out of my home, serving ages three through eighteen. I designed the curriculum, recruited the families, and managed everything from food safety to keeping a room of children engaged across a full day. I have also helped launch and support school garden programs at the International School of Charlottesville and Ivy Elementary School. I am not a licensed classroom teacher and would not claim that expertise. But I know what it takes to hold a group of children, and I know how quickly a well-designed program falls apart without adult support behind it.

Area Director, Girls on the Run Central Virginia and Blue Ridge

Led a regional chapter serving girls in grades three through eight across Albemarle County and surrounding divisions. Recruited, trained, and background-screened volunteer coaches, and built site partnerships with ACPS schools. Most of the work was relationships: with the school staff who host the program, the teachers who coach it, and the families who sign their daughters up. I also planned and directed the season's culminating community 5K on an ACPS campus, with hundreds of volunteers and a limited budget.

EARLY LITERACY

Co-Founder and Board Member, Glass Umbrella

Co-founded an education technology company developing Grit, a reading adventure game for children ages five to twelve. My work covers governance, advocacy, and community partnerships, including outreach to school divisions and educational nonprofits across central Virginia. In the course of it I analyzed Virginia Standards of Learning reading data to identify where reading gaps run widest across the Commonwealth. I follow closely how reading

instruction and reading data reach students, from outside the classroom.

I hold a minority ownership interest in the company and am not involved in its daily operations. I have reviewed Virginia's State and Local Government Conflict of Interests Act and would meet its disclosure requirements and its restrictions on contracting, which would apply to Glass Umbrella during my service.

COMMUNITY AND NONPROFIT LEADERSHIP

Founder and Host, Third Place Thursdays

Founded and host a monthly gathering in Crozet that brings women in this community together across professional, civic, and personal lines. Built entirely from local relationships and sustained by them.

Cystic Fibrosis Foundation, Virginia Chapter

Nearly a decade with the Virginia chapter. I came in as an honoree of the annual Brewer's Ball, then served as a committee member, committee chair, Vice Chair of the Board, and Director of Development, and I sit on a committee today. The work was rallying local businesses and partners behind the search for a cure, and keeping teams of volunteers motivated to carry it.

COMMUNICATIONS AND STRATEGY

Founder, Roost Studio. Build digital infrastructure and web presence for small businesses and organizations, work that is fundamentally about making information findable and usable for people who do not have time to hunt for it. **Digital Editor, Charlottesville Guide.** Direct digital editorial and audience strategy for a publication covering this region. **Marketing Lead, Starr Hill Brewery.** Led marketing for three years, including the Starr Hill Presents partnership with Red Light Management. **Earlier:** marketing and communications for Local Food Hub, and roughly twenty years of independent practice in brand strategy, content, and media relations.

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- **Public communication.** Families rarely disengage because they stop caring. They disengage because they cannot tell how a decision was made or where their input went. Closing that gap is what I have done professionally for twenty years, and it is the contribution I would make here.
- **A student and family lens.** My instinct in any decision is to ask how it will be experienced by a child in a classroom or a parent trying to make a morning work. Policy is not what is written. It is what families live.
- **Early literacy perspective.** I have spent several years looking at reading instruction and reading data from outside the classroom, including SOL reading results across Virginia. I would bring that perspective to literacy conversations without any illusion that it substitutes for what our teachers already know.
- **A real attachment to these buildings.** I still get a lift walking into a school I have not been in before. Years of showing up in ACPS buildings as a parent, a volunteer, and a program partner has not worn that off, and it is why I would spend a term in schools, with staff and families, rather than only at the dais.

Additional detail is available at lynsiesteele.com. I am glad to provide references from ACPS families, school staff, and community partners on request.