

TO: School Board of Albemarle County Virginia
FROM: School Health Advisory Board (SHAB)
DATE: October 9, 2026
SUBJECT: Recommendations for Consideration

Executive Summary

The School Health Advisory Board (SHAB) presents the following recommendations for consideration for future direction and/or action by the School Board of Albemarle County Virginia. These proposals address indoor air quality, environmental health, student wellness, health entrance standardization, medication administration, and school emergency preparedness to promote a safe and healthy learning environment for all students.

1. Environmental Health & Air Quality

- **Fragrance Diffuser Policy Enforcement:** Enforce current policy prohibiting fragrance diffusers across all school facilities to protect air quality and prevent allergy and respiratory triggers.
- **Ventilation & Periodic Audits:** Maintain optimal indoor air quality through adequate ventilation and air exchange systems, supported by routine periodic audits.

2. Reduction of Plastics

In recognition of growing health concerns concerning plastics, namely endocrine-disrupting chemicals found in plastics and food packaging that can interfere with children's hormones, growth and development leading to obesity, insulin resistance and neurodevelopmental issues, SHAB recommends the following phased initiatives:

- **Steel Water Bottles & Tap Water:** Promote the consumption of tap water in reusable stainless steel water bottles.
- **Alternative Packaging:** Support Child Nutrition Services (Christina's CNS) in identifying safer, sustainable alternatives to single-use disposable plastic water bottles.
- **Phase Out Giveaways:** Discontinue using plastic water bottles as promotional giveaways once existing supplies are depleted.
- **Education & Awareness:** Educate and encourage the school community toward a gradual transition away from plastic water bottles.

3. Wellness Policy Enhancements

- **Food Fundraiser Timing:** Restrict food-related fundraisers to after the last student lunch period to prevent non-nutritious foods from interfering with meal consumption.
- **Eliminate Foods with Low Nutritional Value:** Re-insert policy language stating that food items with minimal nutritional value (e.g., candy and soda) will not be used as rewards or incentives by school staff.
- **Stakeholder Representation:** Formally invite SHAB members or designated delegates to participate in all wellness policy reviews.

4. School Health Entrance Requirements

- **Standardized Hard Date:** Eliminate current inconsistency across schools by establishing and enforcing a single district-wide hard date for student exclusion regarding health entrance requirements.

5. Health Services & Medication Management

- **Streamlined Physician Signatures:** Simplify administrative requirements for families and medical providers.
- **Self-Carry Authorization:** Allow qualified students to self-carry; specifically seizure rescue medications and prescription migraine medications.

6. Safety & Emergency Preparedness

- **AED & STB Equipment Funding:** Secure funding for additional Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs) and Stop the Bleed (STB) kits as recommended by recent school safety audits.

7. Summary of Proposed Policy Updates

Policy	Policy Title	Proposed Policy Changes
EBAC	Environmental Management	Enforce prohibition of fragrance diffusers; maintain ventilation and conduct periodic air audits.
JHCD	Administering Medicines to Students	Add self-carry authorization for seizure rescue and prescription migraine meds; cap physician signature requirements to one per medication.
JHCF	Student Wellness	Restrict food fundraisers to post-lunch periods; reinstate prohibition of candy/soda as incentives; invite SHAB/delegates to policy reviews.

Respectfully Submitted,

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