

**MINUTES**  
**REGULAR MEETING OF THE ALBEMARLE COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD**  
**Thursday, December 11, 2025**  
[Meeting Video Link](#)

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

**Board Members** - Dr. Kate Acuff, Dr. Rebecca Berlin, Ms. Judy Le, Ms. Ellen Osborne, Mr. Graham Paige, Ms. Leslie Pryor, and Student School Board Representative Amy Wang

**Absent** – Ms. Allison Spillman

**Staff Members** - Superintendent Matthew Haas; Chief Legal Officer Josiah Black; Assistant Superintendent Patrick McLaughlin; Assistant Superintendent Daphne Keiser; Assistant Superintendent Chandra Hayes; Chief Operating Officer Rosalyn Schmitt; Public Affairs and Strategic Communications Officer Jason Grant; Acting Clerk of the Board Lauren Crawford

**AGENDA ITEM NO. 1.0 CLOSED MEETING** - At 6:00 p.m., Ms. Le offered a **motion** that the Albemarle County Public School Board 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 for 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 discuss (1) the appointment of a candidate for the position of Principal of Mountain View Primary School;

Subsection 3 for discussion or consideration of the acquisition of real property for a public purpose or the disposition of publicly held property, where discussion in an open meeting would adversely affect the bargaining position or negotiating strategy of the public body. The purpose of this item is to discuss parcels of land that might be used for a fourth comprehensive high school;

Subsection 8 for consultation with legal counsel employed or retained by the School Board regarding specific legal matters requiring the provision of legal advice by such counsel; the purpose of this item is for the Division's Chief Legal Officer to advise the School Board concerning two new complaints by community members. Dr. Berlin seconded the **motion**. **A roll call vote was called, and the motion passed unanimously (6-0) [Ms. Spillman was absent].**

**AGENDA ITEM NO. 2.0 OPENING ACTIVITIES**

**Agenda Item No. 2.1 Call to Order** - At 6:30 p.m., Chair Acuff called the Albemarle County School Board meeting back to order.

**Agenda Item No. 2.2 Closed Meeting Certification** - At 6:31 p.m., Ms. Le 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. Dr. Berlin seconded the **motion**. **A roll call vote was called, and the motion passed unanimously (6-0) [Ms. Spillman was absent].**

Ms. Le offered a motion to appoint Ms. Christine Peterson, as recommended by staff as principal of Mountain View Primary School. Mr. Paige seconded the **motion. A voice vote was taken, and the motion passed unanimously (6-0) [Ms. Spillman was absent].**

**Agenda Item No. 2.3 - Roll Call**

**Agenda Item No. 2.4 - Pledge of Allegiance**

**Agenda Item No. 2.5 - Moment of Silence** - During the moment of silence, Chair Acuff asked those in attendance to hold in their thoughts Savion J.C. Henderson, a 17 year old senior at Albemarle High School who recently lost his life in a car accident.

Savion was known for his strong circle of friends and his great sense of humor. He will be deeply missed by his family, classmates, and the entire Albemarle High School community.

**AGENDA ITEM NO. 3.0 APPROVAL OF AGENDA** - Ms. Le offered a motion to approve the Agenda. Dr. Berlin seconded the motion. **A voice vote was taken, and the motion passed unanimously (6-0). [Ms. Spillman was absent].**

**AGENDA ITEM NO. 4.0 ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**Agenda Item No. 4.1 Spotlight on Education**

Atalaya Sergi, Executive Director, [Albemarle Foundation for Education](#)

**Agenda Item No. 4.2 School Board and Superintendent Business**

Dr. Acuff presented Mr. Graham Paige with a [Proclamation](#) upon his retirement from the School Board. Honoring his 10 years of dedicated service to students, the community, and staff of Albemarle County.

Dr. Berlin presented Ms. Leslie Pryor with a Marble Apple and thanked her for her service to the Albemarle County School Board during 2025.

Amy Wang, School Board Student Representative, AHS - [Statement](#)

Dr. Patrick McLaughlin presented a [summary](#) of the VDOE State Performance and Support Framework. The scores for ACPS reflect that as students progress through the ACPS system, their academic performance relative to the standards improves. This is evidenced by the fact that all of our high schools met or exceeded standards, and all but one of our middle schools met or exceeded standards (Burley Middle, with a score of 79.9, narrowly missed the standard score of 80.0). However, there is clearly more work to do at the elementary school level in particular.

The linked report lists each school's final score and final performance categories. Below is a brief summary:

- Distinguished--8 schools
  - Brownsville, Hollymead, Ivy, Stony Point, Murray, Henley, Community Lab, Western Albemarle

- On track--8 schools
  - Baker-Butler, Broadus Wood, Red Hill, Journey, Lakeside, Walton, Albemarle, Monticello
- Off track--6 schools
  - Crozet, Mountain View, Scottsville, Stone-Robinson, Woodbrook, Burley
- Needs intensive support--2 schools
  - Agnor, Greer

We have six schools that received federal improvement designations as follows:

- Five schools are identified for “Targeted Support and Improvement,” which means they have at least one category of students (Black, Students with Disabilities, EL Students, or Economically Disadvantaged Students) who are underperforming in Math, Reading, and Science. These schools are Agnor, Crozet, Greer, Mountain View and Stone-Robinson. When there is a federal designation, the school’s rating is reduced by one category to focus support for the targeted population needs. That final rating is reflected in the information above.
- Woodbrook is designated as a “Comprehensive Support and Improvement” school. This means that it is among the lowest performing 5% of Title I elementary schools in Virginia. Please note Woodbrook is categorized as “Off-Track” and has not been penalized for their federal designation. We checked with the VDOE and this is accurate--there is no category penalty for CSI schools. We’re a bit unclear as to why this is, but it does put Woodbrook, our lowest performing school on the framework, in a category higher than Greer and Agnor, which outperformed Woodbrook.

## **AGENDA ITEM NO. 5.0 PUBLIC COMMENT**

Emily Mathon, a Rio District resident and officer of Family Council, spoke about access to disability evaluations in ACPs. She shared findings from Family Council’s research with families who had requested evaluations for their children.

Quoting directly from parent feedback, she described the referral process as difficult to access and understand. Families reported that the process is not clearly outlined, can feel stressful or intimidating, and lacks simple guides or step-by-step explanations. Some parents felt they had to rely on prior experience or personal connections to navigate the system, which led to delays in services. Others shared that they were left feeling unsupported and unsure how to help their child.

Ms. Mathon encouraged the Board to consider the recommendations in the upcoming SEAC Annual Report and to make improvements to better support students with suspected disabilities.

Jimmy Bellew, a Scottsville District resident, spoke in follow-up to the previous speaker regarding the difficulty of obtaining services for his child with autism, stating that he has struggled for five years to secure appropriate assistance.

He informed the Board that he has filed a multi-million dollar civil complaint against the Albemarle County School Board, as well as the principal and assistant principals of Stone Robinson Elementary School. He alleged that unsubstantiated claims were made to Child Protective Services, resulting in police and detectives coming to his home. He described the experience as deeply disruptive to his family and asked who would be held accountable and how the situation would be made right.

Mr. Bellew also raised concerns about access to transportation footage, stating that he had previously been told it would be provided but that this position had since changed. He indicated that copies of the civil complaint were available for Board members and noted that it should have been formally served.

Daisy Rojas addressed the Board regarding concerns about special education identification and services. She noted that she co-founded the Families Helping Families Fund and shared parent feedback gathered through a recent survey.

Quoting from responses, she described concerns about denials of external testing, including a case in which a student received a provisional dyslexia diagnosis from a private evaluator but was not tested by the school division. She shared examples of parents feeling their input was dismissed, including concerns about notetaking and written expression. Other families reported that students were denied evaluations because they were not considered to have sufficient academic impact, were not far enough behind grade level, or were told to discontinue outside tutoring before further consideration. Some parents also expressed the perception that students without behavioral challenges face greater difficulty being evaluated.

Ms. Rojas stated that families want to partner with educators and called for accountability and improvement. Drawing on her experience as a former student, parent of four ACPS students, published writer on special education and equity issues, and former member of the Long Range Planning Committee, she expressed concern that barriers to identification and services create both short-term financial costs and long-term community impact. She noted that families sometimes seek legal remedies to secure services required under IDEA, which can result in legal expenses, reimbursements, or private placements. She concluded by emphasizing that delayed or denied access to appropriate services limits student potential and affects the broader community.

Christine Hoff, representing Lakeside Middle School, spoke on behalf of Family Council regarding delays in access to disability evaluations in Albemarle County. She shared parent feedback describing extended delays in meetings and what families characterized as difficulty obtaining evaluations. Some parents reported feeling discouraged from pursuing identification, while others expressed concern that families who can afford private services often fill gaps that schools do not address.

She cited examples from parents, including a comment made during a 504 meeting suggesting that a child's future career prospects did not necessarily warrant accommodations. She noted that the student ultimately received a 504 plan and is now in college, crediting supportive teachers. Another parent shared that they enrolled their child in a different school rather than continue through the IEP process, describing frustration over not being able to secure needed support.

Ms. Hoff also shared her personal experience as both a former IEP student and a parent of a child with ADHD and trauma-related needs. She stated that it took several years and intervention at the superintendent level before her daughter was evaluated and found eligible for services. She concluded by thanking the Board for its time.

Diane McKeel, speaking as a Jack Jouett District resident and not in her role with the Board of Supervisors, presented two community initiatives she has been advancing in partnership with the school division. She noted that Superintendent Haas and County Executive Jeff Richardson are aware of both efforts and that neither requires funding from the School Division or County.

The first initiative is the Lambs Lane Campus Dental Task Force. She shared that after speaking with principals on the Lambs Lane campus in 2024, dental services for students emerged as a priority. A task force was formed and has been working for approximately 16 months to address student access to dental care. Through that work, the group also identified a shortage of dental hygienists in the community and has been collaborating with Piedmont Virginia Community College to establish a dental hygiene program, anticipated to launch in the coming years.

The second initiative involves expanding student art in the community. Ms. McKeel referenced previous mural projects completed by Albemarle High School students in her district and shared that, with VDOT permission, large traffic signal utility boxes will be wrapped with student-designed artwork. Students from Center I are expected to develop the designs. She invited Board members to review the materials provided and to reach out with questions.

**AGENDA ITEM NO. 6.0 APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA** - Ms. Le offered a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Dr. Berlin **seconded the motion. A voice vote was taken, and the motion passed unanimously (6-0). [Ms. Spillman was absent].**

- 6.1 Approval of Consent Agenda
- 6.2 Approval of the Minutes
- 6.3 For Action: Mountain View Upper Elementary School Easements
- 6.4 FY 2026 Appropriation for Capital Improvements Program
- 6.5 For Information: Policy Review and Revision
- 6.6 Donations & Reimbursements to School Division FY25-4th Quarter
- 6.7 Donations & Reimbursements to School Division Fy26-1st Quarter
- 6.8 Personnel Action

**AGENDA ITEM NO. 7.0 ITEMS PULLED FROM CONSENT AGENDA** – None.

#### **AGENDA ITEM NO. 8.0 – SCHOOL DIVISION BUSINESS**

**Agenda Item No. 8.1 Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC)** - The Special Education Advisory Committee submitted the annual report and recommendations regarding the education of children with disabilities to the division superintendent for transmission to the school board. This report was presented by the Chairperson of the Special Education Advisory Committee.

- [SEAC Presentation to the School Board](#)
- [SEAC Annual Report](#)

Board members showed interest in attending SEAC meetings - staff will send the meeting schedule to the Board.

**Agenda Item No. 8.2** - The Board took a break from 7:46 p.m. to 7:56 p.m.

**Agenda Item No. 8.3 School Health Advisory Board (SHAB) Update** - The School Health Advisory Board met with the board to inform on issues of health and related services and conditions in the context of the public schools within the community.

- [SHAB Presentation to the School Board](#)

Mr. Paige asked whether the cardiac response training piloted at Mountain View would be expanded to other schools. Ms. Gomez responded that all schools are required to have a cardiac response plan in place. While Mountain View served as the pilot site, implementation is division-wide.

Chair Acuff asked about the type of training provided to coaches and personnel working at athletic events. Ms. Gomez explained that coaches are required to complete preseason training that includes recognizing the warning signs of sudden cardiac arrest, as well as concussion protocols and extreme heat and

cold safety. “Stop the Bleed” training has not yet been added for coaches. For school staff, training is incorporated into professional development days, and some modules are available online for professional development credit.

Chair Acuff also asked about training for principals and administrators. Ms. Gomez noted that administrators can participate in related sessions during “Making Connections” days and that many have attended optional trainings, including opioid overdose response.

**Agenda Item No. 8.4 4th Quarter Financial Report** - Ms. Osborne offered a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Ms. Pryor **seconded the motion. A voice vote was taken, and the motion passed unanimously (6-0). [Ms. Spillman was absent].**

- [FY2024-2025 Financial Report School Fund Summary](#)
- [FY2024-2025 4th Quarter Financial Report](#)

**Agenda Item No. 8.5 FY26 1st Quarter Financial Report** - Ms. Osborne offered a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Mr. Paige **seconded the motion. A voice vote was taken, and the motion passed unanimously (6-0). [Ms. Spillman was absent].**

- [FY2025-2026 Financial Report School Fund Summary](#)
- [FY2025-2026 1st Quarter Financial Report](#)

**Agenda Item No. 8.6 FY27 Budget Development Update** - The School Board discussed and provided feedback on their priorities for the FY 27 Funding Request. Staff presented preliminary revenue and expenditure assumptions.

- [FY27 Budget Development Update Presentation](#)

During discussion of FY27 budget development, Board members shared priorities and suggestions for the upcoming work sessions.

One member asked staff to provide a summary of items previously deferred to this budget cycle, including technology and other postponed expenditures, noting that revisiting those commitments would be a priority.

Several members emphasized closing opportunity and achievement gaps, referencing data showing intersectional disparities in discipline and outcomes for Black students, students with disabilities, and economically disadvantaged students. Continued investment in strategies that demonstrably improve outcomes was identified as a central focus.

Board members highlighted the importance of inclusive practices and the two special education support positions that have been requested in prior years, noting the need to strengthen support for general education teachers working with students with disabilities. There was also interest in maintaining investments in reading specialists and mental health and social emotional supports, along with reviewing data on newer initiatives from the past three years to assess effectiveness and return on investment.

Concerns were raised about previous reductions, including instructional coach positions, with a request to review whether current staffing levels are sufficient and whether additional support should be directed to higher need schools.

Members expressed interest in reviewing potential efficiencies or reductions and in examining any internal reviews that inform budget recommendations. They also noted that collective bargaining proposals will

introduce new cost considerations this year and will require clear presentation to help the Board evaluate trade offs.

Regarding process, members generally supported maintaining the current structure of budget work sessions but requested earlier opportunities to provide feedback on new proposals so staff can adjust accordingly. Staff indicated that proposals, including collective bargaining costs, will be presented in a format similar to other new initiatives and that member feedback will guide the sequence of deeper discussion. Staff concluded that the input provided was helpful in moving forward with budget development.

**No. 9.0 OTHER BUSINESS**

**Agenda Item No. 9.1 Other Business by Board Members and/or the Superintendent - None.**

**Agenda Item No. 9.2 Closed Meeting – None.**

**Agenda Item No. 9.3 Closed Meeting Certification – None.**

**AGENDA ITEM NO. 10.0 ADJOURNMENT** - At 8:39 p.m., hearing no objections, Chair Acuff adjourned the meeting of the Albemarle County School Board.

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Clerk

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Chair