

MINUTES
ALBEMARLE COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD
Business Meeting and Presentation of the 2026-2027 Draft Funding Request
Thursday, February 12, 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, Ms. Ellen Osborne, Ms. Allison Spillman, and Student School Board Representative Maxwell Keys

Absent – None

Staff Members - Superintendent Matthew Haas; Chief Legal Officer Black; Assistant Superintendent Daphne Keiser; Chief Operating Officer Rosalyn Schmitt; Chief of Human Resources Dan Redding; Public Affairs and Strategic Communications Officer Jason Grant; 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, 3 “for discussion or consideration of the acquisition of real property for a public purpose or the disposition of publicly held real 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 a parcel of land that might be used for a fourth comprehensive high school; and 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 on issues relating to a recent meeting of a student organization. Ms. Le seconded the **motion**. **A voice vote was called, and the motion passed unanimously (7-0).**

AGENDA ITEM NO. 2.0 OPENING ACTIVITIES

Agenda Item No. 2.1 Call to Order - At 6:30 p.m., Chair Berlin called the Albemarle County School Board meeting 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**. **A voice vote was called, and the motion passed unanimously (7-0).**

Agenda Item No. 2.3 - Roll Call

Agenda Item No. 2.4 - Pledge of Allegiance

Agenda Item No. 2.5 - Moment of Silence

AGENDA ITEM NO. 3.0 APPROVAL OF AGENDA - Ms. Osborne offered a **motion** to approve the agenda. Ms. Le seconded the **motion**. **A roll call vote was called, and the motion passed unanimously (7-0).**

AGENDA ITEM NO. 4.0 ANNOUNCEMENTS

Agenda Item No. 4.1 School Board, Superintendent, and Committee Updates

School Board Student Representative Maxwell Keys of Albemarle High School introduced members of the Albemarle High School Black Student Union. The students shared an [update](#) on their spring retreat, upcoming events, and current initiatives, and presented a student-developed [proclamation](#) in recognition of Black History Month.

Attendees:

Lanika Barnes, BSU Advisor

Members of the BSU Executive Board

Tyler Turner

Tumpe Mwenechanya

Sienna Robinson

Malcolm Washington

Yuri Brady

Maxwell Keys

Other BSU Scholars

School Board Student representative Maxwell Keys read a [statement](#) of gratitude in recognition of School Board Appreciation Month and staff presented them with certificates.

Superintendent Haas read a [statement](#) in recognition of Student School Board Representative Month. Students received certificates and notebooks from Central Office staff.

School Board Student representative Maxwell Keys of Albemarle High School, shared a [statement](#).

Miles Nelson, Coordinator of Mental Health and Wellness recognized National School Counselors Week and expressed appreciation for school counselors, mental health support specialists, and school psychologists for their service to students and families.

Mr. Nelson also announced that ACPS had been awarded a \$300,000 state grant to support student mental health services, with the potential for renewal over five years for a total of \$1.5 million. Through the grant, the division will partner with Cartwheel, a school-based telehealth counseling provider, to expand access to mental health services for students across all ACPS schools.

He reported that the program will provide individual counseling, family support, and consultation with school staff. Families may access services by contacting their school counselor. Mr. Nelson also noted that implementation activities and training would begin in the coming weeks.

Assistant Superintendent, Dr. Daphne Keiser provided an update on the review of School Board Policy IGDA related to clubs and outside organizations. Following a comparative analysis of peer division policies and discussion by the Policy Review Committee, additional input was gathered through a presentation to the Family Council and through targeted interviews and focus groups with students and families connected to the policy area.

Dr. Keiser further reported that the Student Leadership Cabinet would review the work on February 26. A revised draft of the policy was expected to be presented to the Policy Review Committee the following week and to the School Board on March 12.

Superintendent Haas provided an update regarding possible student walk outs anticipated for February 13, particularly at Albemarle High School and Monticello High School. He reported that participation levels were unclear, but that the division was monitoring the situation closely and coordinating with local law enforcement and county officials. Principals had been directed to communicate clearly with their school communities, including advising students not to leave school grounds.

Dr. Haas also provided an update on the division's response to the recent ice storm and extended weather-related closures. He reported that several departments, including Transportation, Building Services, Communications, and Human Resources, were conducting an after-action review of operational response, staffing, communications, and possible policy implications. Dr. Haas noted that staff performed extensive work during the storm response and recovery efforts. He stated that a high-level summary report would be prepared for the Board, including operational recommendations and any potential policy revisions for consideration.

Ms. Spillman referenced community feedback received following the extended weather closures and requested that administration conduct a feasibility study regarding the potential use of virtual learning during prolonged school closures. The requested study would include consideration of equity, training, technology, infrastructure, and the number of closure days that might warrant such an option.

The Board recognized Clerk Christine Thompson during School Board Appreciation Week and expressed appreciation for her essential support and behind-the-scenes work that helps Board meetings run smoothly. A small token of appreciation from the Board and Cabinet was presented in recognition of her service.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 5.0 PUBLIC COMMENT

Jimmy Belew of the Scottsville district welcomed the new Board members and expressed hope that their service would be marked by action, transparency, accountability, and responsiveness to families. Mr. Belew raised concerns about the Board's lack of response to a prior open letter and shared concerns regarding delays in the special education evaluation process for his child, the development of an IEP that could not be fully implemented due to staffing shortages, and the availability of staffing and student data related to special education services at Stone-Robinson.

Phil Riese from the Rio district addressed the Board regarding the budget process, emphasizing the need to balance strong educational outcomes with county affordability. He questioned whether current enrollment projections justify construction of a new high school, encouraged the Board to identify budget savings that would not directly affect student learning, and urged close review of administrative staffing and spending while supporting teacher raises.

Mary McIntyre, President of the Albemarle Education Association, spoke on behalf of the organization and described the evening as a historic milestone in the collective bargaining process. She noted the growth of AEA membership and representation across the division, recognized past and present union leaders and bargaining participants for their work, thanked School Division and union representatives for their efforts throughout negotiations, and stated that ratification marked an important step forward while acknowledging that significant work remains ahead.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 6.0 APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA – Dr. Acuff offered a motion to approve the Consent Agenda Items 6.1 through 6.7 and 6.9. Item 6.8 Family Life Resource for Adaptive Curriculum was pulled to give the Special Education Advisory Council (SEAC) an opportunity to review at their next meeting. Spillman **seconded the motion. A voice vote was called, and the motion passed unanimously (7-0).**

- 6.1 Approval of Consent Agenda
- 6.2 Personnel Action
- 6.3 Religious Exemption
- 6.4 Approval of the Minutes
- 6.5 Personnel Action – Athletic Coaches
- 6.6 FY 2025-2026 Carry Forward of Fund Balances
- 6.7 For Information: Grades 6-12 Language Arts Curricular Resource Adoption
- 6.8 For Information: Family Life Resource for Adaptive Curriculum
- 6.9 For Action: ACE Academy @ Lamb’s Lane Dominion Easement

AGENDA ITEM NO. 7.0 ITEMS PULLED FROM CONSENT AGENDA – Family Life Resource for Adaptive Curriculum

AGENDA ITEM NO. 8.0

Agenda Item 8.1 For Action: [Collective Bargaining Agreements](#)

The Board considered and approved the collective bargaining agreement for the 2026 school year. During discussion, members expressed appreciation for progress made in benefits and compensation for teachers and support staff, noted the importance of continuing to examine competitive wages in future years, and raised implementation considerations related to substitute staffing and human resources. A student Board representative also commented positively on the agreement and its significance to employees. Dr. Acuff offered a **motion** to approve the Collective Bargaining Agreements. Ms. Spillman seconded the **motion. A roll call vote was called, and the motion passed unanimously (7-0).**

The Board took a break from 7:40 p.m. to 7:50 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 9.0 PRESENTATION OF THE DRAFT FUNDING REQUEST

Agenda Item No. 9.1 Superintendent’s Presentation of the [FY 2026-2027 Draft Funding Request](#)

AGENDA ITEM NO. 10.0 OTHER BUSINESS

Agenda Item No. 10.1 Proposed Adjustments to the 2026-2027 School Year Calendar - Staff presented proposed refinements to the 2026-2027 School Year Calendar, which had previously been adopted as part of a two-year calendar. The proposed revisions shifted two existing professional learning days, from September 25 to September 8 and from February 16 to January 19, to better support instructional and operational needs without adding days to the student or teacher calendar.

Staff reported that the recommended changes were based on feedback from school-based administrators, teachers, and a community survey. The revisions were intended to improve the distribution of professional learning days across the year, align those days more strategically with existing holidays and workdays, and support sustained professional learning and teacher planning. Staff also proposed explicitly identifying possible inclement weather make-up days on the 2026-2027 calendar.

Agenda Item No. 10.2 Other Business by Board Members and/or the Superintendent

Chair Berlin acknowledged an earlier omission and invited Mr. Redding to recognize the management-side collective bargaining team. Mr. Redding thanked the management-side negotiating team for their work in developing the collective bargaining agreement, including principals Stacey England, Ashley Johnson, and Joe McCauley, Budget Analyst Brooke Conover, Director of Transportation Jamie Gellner, and of course, Chief Legal Officer Josh Black.

In other business, Board members reflected on concerns raised by students regarding low expectations and the impact on student experience and achievement. Members noted that, while funding and programmatic supports remain important, cultural issues related to student expectations also warrant attention. The Board discussed the importance of hearing directly from students, including through student leadership groups, and expressed interest in further conversation with students and staff about how to address those concerns.

Agenda Item No. 10.3 Closed Meeting – None.

Agenda Item No. 10.4 Closed Meeting Certification – None.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 11.0 ADJOURNMENT - At 8:55 p.m., hearing no objections, Chair Berlin adjourned the meeting of the Albemarle County School Board.

Clerk

Chair