



Office of the School Board

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Dear School Board Members:

For the past three years, revenue considerations have challenged our community, staff and you to sustain the quality of educational opportunities available to the young people we serve. Even though the current economic picture represents the bleakest in memory of career educators, you and I recognize that we must continue to accelerate critical innovations while maintaining the best of our current work in support of strategic goals. We have traveled a considerable distance from the first Standards of Learning tests when, in 1998, no schools in this Division were fully accredited as a result of poor SOL test performance. Our Division's resultant focus on accountability to standards, interventions to address performance gaps, professional development, teacher compensation, and increased curricular rigor and relevance have all led to increased performance over time.

Despite the successful implementation of these strategies and the improved performance trend data as measured in the [Annual Progress Report](#), our Goal work is not finished. Our young people live in a world in which workforce uncertainties and global problems present challenges to our local community, state and nation. Our community cannot afford to have one student fail to graduate. All of our young people need the knowledge and skills necessary to live and work successfully in a rapidly changing world. Today, it simply is not enough to memorize dates and events in history, to choose a multiple choice response to single-step math problems, to hand-write a response to a prompt, or to know the basics of scientific content.

In reality, high quality learning in the 21st century demands that all teachers use excellent instructional strategies to engage students in meaningful, challenging, and technology-rich learning. Across the millennia, superb teachers have understood the critical importance that learners apply, analyze, evaluate and create. Today's teachers must bring forward the best practices of all those who have taught before them and embrace the use of innovative learning technologies unique to our schools today.

Albemarle County Public Schools is viewed as a very good school division in our region and across Virginia. Even though the students who experience the greatest academic success today still are those who have familial access to learning resources, academic background knowledge, enriched experiences, and active parental support, we have made progress towards closing achievement gaps. Our progress can be attributed to strategic accountability that pushed this Division to not just recognize achievement gaps but to take actions on behalf of students who exist in a gap "limbo" because of factors often beyond their control. Because of this Board's "laser" focus to support elimination of achievement gaps, we have aligned the Division budget to:



- build the capacity of educators to use effective instructional and assessment strategies,
- align and allocate resources to address the greatest areas of need and,
- recruit and retain educators with the competencies necessary to attaining strategic goals.

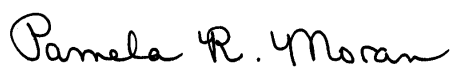
Since the advent of SOL testing ten years ago, the work we have implemented has been the right work for our times. But, it is now time to reassess direction, reengage our community in strategic processes, and move forward in the next phase of our strategic planning cycle. In doing so, we must be clear of our intention to sustain an upward trajectory of student performance across multiple measures of achievement. We also must not limit measures to traditional indicators of success but rather expand our definition of achievement indicators so that all students graduate with the workforce, college and civic readiness skills necessary for success in life.

To that end, I ask that our staff, community and you begin to consider these questions as we move into the next phase of strategic planning:

- What do we believe education for our young people should look like in the future? What is of greatest urgency and importance as we plan to prepare children for jobs that might not even exist yet? How do we increase learner engagement and motivation to achieve?
- How do we, as a community, envision and identify the desired 21st century learning outcomes we hold dear for all graduates? How are these similar and different to learning outcomes we established in the 20th century accountability model? How do we use current research knowledge to better understand the relationship of Pk-12 development and learning to the desired outcomes we value for all graduates?
- How do we simplify our strategic plan and key measures of success so our work is easily accessible, transparent, concise, and clear to our staff, parents, young people, and community members?(See Virginia Beach's 2-page [Compass 2015](#))
- How do we apply Baldrige criteria for performance excellence so that we increase our staff's capacity to positively embrace continuous improvement in our practices?

Thank you for your abiding commitment to Albemarle's young people and the staff who serve to educate and support our learners. As a Board team, you keep learners and learning at the center of all the decisions we make, work we do, resources we allocate, and funds we expend. As a result, achievement of our Vision, Mission, Goals and Core Values is clearly in reach of staff and all learners in our classrooms.

Sincerely,



Pamela R. Moran
Superintendent

**Albemarle County Public Schools
2008-09 Annual School Board Retreat
Preparation Notes and Timeline**

“The need for a dramatically more skilled and highly educated workforce in a global knowledge economy- combined with profound changes in students’ and families’ life circumstances- have created unprecedented demands on education leaders.”

Tony Wagner, *Change Leadership*

Please use the questions below to capture your reflective responses to data and information provided as we move through Part I and II of the Board/Superintendent evaluation and Priority-setting processes for 2007-08.

May 28 Regular Board Work Session

- Discussion regarding School Board Self-Evaluation and Evaluation of the Board as a Collective Body
- Discussion of Resource Utilization Study and Key Metrics

How would you describe the current status of Board governance as compared to your vision of the desired state?

What are the key areas for improvement in the Board’s governance related to evaluation of criteria per policy BBA that would improve the Board’s work?

June 1 Annual School Board Retreat: Evaluation of Year I of Biennial Priorities Using Baldrige’s Seven Criteria for Excellence

12 – 12:45 p.m.	Call to order/Lunch Break
1 – 2:30 p.m.	Retreat Work • Finalize evaluation of the School Board/Superintendent Biennial Priorities • Begin discussion of 2009-10 priority work with staff based on data and evidence analysis
2:30 – 2:45 p.m.	Break
2:45 – 5:00 p.m.	Continued discussion of Strategic Planning processes to realize a new Strategic Plan for implementation in 2010-2011
5:00 p.m.	Adjournment

The questions below are a limited subset of questions from each of the seven Baldrige Criteria and should provide a guide to analysis of progress towards attainment of each Goal.

7 Results:

Using information and data provided to evaluate the status and progress towards accomplishment of Goals and Priorities, what are our current levels and trends in key measures or indicators of student learning? How do these

results compare with the performance of comparable organizations and of other appropriate student/market segments? **(all goals)**

6 Work Process Management:

How do we improve work processes (core competencies and work systems) to maximize student success, to improve educational programs, offerings, and student services; and to keep the processes current with educational needs and directions? **(Goals 4 and 5)**

5 Workforce Environment:

How do we prepare our workforce for changing capability and capacity needs? How do we recruit, hire, place and retain new employees? **(Goal 3)**

4 Measurement, Analysis and Knowledge Management:

How do we select, collect, align, and integrate data and information for tracking daily operations and overall organizational performance measures, including short and longer-term financial measures? **(all goals)**

How do we keep data and information mechanisms, including software and hardware systems, current with educational service needs and directions and technology changes? **(all goals)**

3 Student, Stakeholder, and Market Focus:

How do we use voice-of-the customer information and feedback to become more student- and stakeholder focused, to better satisfy student and stakeholder needs and desires, and to identify opportunities for innovation? **(all goals)**

2 Strategic Development:

How do strategic objectives (priorities) address opportunities for innovation in educational programs, offerings, services, and operations? How do we ensure that priorities balance short- and longer-term challenges and opportunities? **(all goals)**

1 Leadership:

How do our senior leaders create a focus on action to accomplish the organization's objectives, improve performance, and attain our Vision? **(all goals)**

How do senior leaders and the Board through its governance use performance reviews to further develop and improve both their personal leadership effectiveness and that of the Board and Leadership Team, as appropriate? **(Goal 4)**

How does our Division actively support and strengthen key communities? What are these communities? **(Goal 4)**

June 11 Regular Board Meeting; Superintendent's Appraisal

- Evaluation of the Superintendent in Closed Meeting
- Brief reflective focus on work of the Division and Next Steps

What improvement areas relevant to development of knowledge, skills, or dispositions essential to high-impact leadership should be key focus areas for the superintendent for 2008-09?

After reflecting upon the discussion of the Board's evaluation on May 24 and the June Retreat discussions, is there anything additional you would see as critical for governance focus in 2008-09?

June 25 Board Work Session to Continue Goal/Priorities/Metrics Evaluation to Determine Placement in the Strategic Portfolio

In what priority areas has the Division improved or performed well to address the 2007-09 Biennial priorities of the strategic plan? Evidence? Not reached expected performance levels? Evidence?

What key metrics and priorities do the Board members believe must be included in the Board's strategic portfolio to monitor as a component of Board agendas on a quarterly basis in 2008-09?

Why do you believe accomplishment of this priority critically contribute to achievement of a Board goal(s)?

How will our vision for learning be advanced through this priority? How does this priority innovate our Division's strategic work?

What other information or research do you need as a Board to validate this priority as critical to the Division's strategic work?

What evidence would be needed to document to the Board accomplishment of this priority?

June 2009 Retreat and Evaluation Timeline and Strategic Plan Update

April 23	Work Session to review work session summaries
End of April	Establish Strategic Planning Steering Committee
Month of May	Conduct Listening Tours to gather input
May 5	Distribute to School Board through e-mail the electronic copy of Self Evaluation and Evaluation of the Board as a Collective Body. In addition, the link to the website for submission of the evaluations will be included in the e-mail. Board members are asked to complete the evaluation on-line only. Submissions are anonymous.
May 14	Regular Meeting of the School Board.
Week of May 18	The Superintendent will provide the Board with information to help conduct her evaluation.
May 15	Distribute electronically to School Board the Superintendent evaluation tools. Evaluations are to be submitted electronically. Distribute electronically to School Board the evaluation tools for the evaluation of the School Board/Superintendent Priorities
May 20	School Board Member Self Evaluation and Evaluations of the Board as a Collective Body are to be submitted electronically by 5 p.m.
May 22	Evaluation Results will be included in the May 28 th Board Packet
May 26	Evaluations of the School Board/Superintendent Priorities should be submitted by 5 p.m.
May 29	Evaluation results of the School Board/Superintendent Priorities will be distributed to the Board.
By end of May	Solicit input from Advisory Committees and conduct focus groups
June 1	Superintendent Evaluations are to be submitted electronically by 12 p.m.
June 1	School Board Retreat to discuss the evaluation of the priorities. Begin discussion of priorities with staff and provide direction for adjustments that need to be made and/or future direction

June 5	Evaluation results of the Superintendent evaluation will be provided in closed meeting materials for the June 11 th Regular Board Meeting
June 11	Regular Board Meeting. Closed Meeting discussion to include the evaluation of the Superintendent.
End of June	Revise Priorities
July	Identify draft metrics and key strategies
August	Reconvene stakeholder focus groups and conduct a telephone town hall meeting on draft strategic plan
September	Hold feeder pattern forums hosted by Parent Council Review stakeholder feedback and draft strategic plan Post final draft for additional stakeholder feedback
October	Review stakeholder feedback/revise strategic plan/adopt revised strategic plan including Biennial Priorities