



Board-to-Board

September, 2015

A monthly report from the Albemarle County School Board to the Albemarle County Board of Supervisors

Governor's Roundtable---We have 70 confirmed community leaders so far for Governor McAuliffe's education roundtable at Agnor-Hurt on Monday, October 5th. The roundtable is at 3 p.m. in the school's multi-age classroom. The Governor, Education Secretary Holton and State Superintendent Staples will be meeting with 12 students to talk about SOL test reform and innovation around "school of the future" concepts. We are planning to live-stream the program around the state and to conduct an on line chat session to receive comments from those who are unable to participate.

Redistricting---The Community Advisory Committee on Redistricting held their third public informational meeting on Tuesday, September 29th at Albemarle High School. Residents in the county also have the opportunity to comment on various options through an on line survey on the school division's home page. The committee is considering how best to address the current overcapacity of students in both Albemarle High School and Greer Elementary School. Albemarle is more than 100 students beyond their building capacity this year and could be as much as 500 beyond capacity by 2020. The various options presented at the public information meeting would move between 150 and 300 students to Monticello High School beginning next August. Greer now is 25 students beyond its building capacity with projected student enrollment showing continued growth. The option for Greer would move the school's fifth grade classrooms to Jouett Middle School on a temporary basis. The advisory committee will be forwarding their recommendation to Superintendent Moran next week and she will send her recommendation to the School Board later in the month. The Board is planning on a public hearing in November and their decision by the end of December.

Graduation Rates---The state department of education is expected to release the on-time graduation and drop-out rates for all school divisions in the state on September 30th. Early numbers indicate that Albemarle County students again placed within the top performing school divisions in Virginia for 2015. The county's on-time graduation rate of 94 percent essentially was unchanged from a year ago and is higher than the statewide averages for every one of the 50 states. The drop-out rate also was relatively unchanged at 2.3 percent but especially of note were significant improvements in the drop-out rate for African-American and Hispanic students. The rate for Hispanic students nearly was cut in half, from 10.3 percent to 5.3 percent and the 1.9 percent rate for African-American students was better than the overall rate for all students.

SAT Scores---Albemarle County public school seniors outperformed their state and national peers on SAT test results from the spring. Average reading scores were 42 points above the state average and 68 points higher than national averages; average math scores were higher than state averages by 40 points and 55 points better than the national average and for writing, Albemarle County students exceeded state and national averages by 39 and 59 points respectively. On the College Board's college readiness measure, 59 percent of Albemarle County students were above the benchmark compared to 45 percent of all Virginia seniors who took the SATs and 42 percent of all students across the nation.

Capital Improvement Budget—At its September 10th meeting, the School Board only made one change to its CIP request, switching the order of two out year requests for high school additions. Due to the most recent enrollment projections, the board moved up the priority for an addition at Western Albemarle High School to accommodate Environmental Studies Academy needs and it moved down the priority for an addition at Monticello High School. The Western addition and renovation is in the plan for 2017-18 and at Monticello for 2019-2020.

Strategic Priorities Update—At its September 24th meeting, which was held in Agnor-Hurt's multi-age classroom, the school board formally approved four strategic priorities for the next two years. They include having all students graduate prepared for citizenship, post-secondary education and workforce entry levels; an increase in the number of students accruing college and career pathway credentials; an increase in the efficacy of instructional staff connected to contemporary learning and the achievement of a fully-funded capital and operational budget that meets needs in learning space modernization, digital learning, competitive recruitment and retention of personnel.

National Merit Scholars---Eleven Albemarle County high school students have been selected as National Merit Scholarship semi-finalists for 2016. They will be competing for selection as finalists and as Merit Scholars next spring. These students ranked in the top one percent of the 1.5 million high school juniors who took the qualifying test during the previous school year.

John Baker Legacy Dinner---The fifth annual John E. Baker Legacy Dinner will be held on Friday evening, October 23 at Farmington County Club. The dinner is the primary fund-raising vehicle for the African American Teaching Fellows (AATF), an organization now in its 10th year. Superintendent Pam Moran is receiving the organization's Baker Legacy Award and its Community Education Award will be given to Holly Edwards. John Charles Thomas, Virginia's youngest state Supreme Court Justice, will be the keynote speaker for the dinner. AATF was founded to increase the number of teachers of color in local schools. It provides financial support and professional development programs for undergraduates who seek to become teachers. Since its founding, the organization has supported 32 fellows, seven of whom currently are teaching in Albemarle County public schools and six whom are Charlottesville City school teachers.

School Board website: <http://www2.k12albemarle.org/Pages/default.aspx>