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Dear Chairman Gallaway and Members of the Board:

At the April 2nd, 2015 School Board Meeting the Board directed me to convene a Redistricting Advisory Committee with a primary objective to study solutions for the current and projected overcrowding at Albemarle High School and Greer Elementary school. I solicited applications and appointed 8 citizens to serve on the committee. The committee began their work in April and concluded this month with a final recommendation to me.

I'm extremely grateful to the committee for their conscientious work. Redistricting is a difficult and emotional topic, and I'm pleased with the level of transparency and professionalism with which the committee conducted themselves. They devoted their time and energy analyzing the data, listening to families, and deliberating a wide range of options. They hosted three community meetings, conducted surveys and received emails all in an effort to maximize feedback from the public.

As I told the committee in their final meeting, the good thing about Albemarle County is that everyone loves their school. The consequence, though, is that students and families do not want to change schools. I'm confident in the quality of all of our schools and believe based on past redistricting decisions that families and their children come to quickly value their new school.

I am forwarding to you the Redistricting Advisory Committee's final recommendations regarding the overcrowding at Albemarle High School and Greer Elementary School. **I endorse the committee's recommendation with one note for consideration.**

I would like to call the Board's attention to one specific detail for further discussion as it is different than past committee's recommendations. The committee recommended a grandfather clause that would allow all current students to finish their years at the school they are currently enrolled in; this is not unique. In their recommendation, though, the clause would also apply to all siblings currently enrolled in Albemarle County Public Schools and allow them to attend Albemarle High School as well. This is a very liberal grandfather clause for which there is no precedent. For the purpose of transparency, I am sharing grandfather clause recommendations from redistricting committees over the last ten years.

The following is the language of the two most recent boundary changes:

Hollymead, 2012: "Extend a 'grandfather privilege' for families of rising 5th graders and their siblings that are currently enrolled at Hollymead Elementary to stay at Hollymead through 5th grade."

Agnor-Hurt, 2014: "All rising fifth graders and their siblings are permitted to remain at Agnor-Hurt for one more year."

In 2006, a county-wide study was done. This was the last time high school students were redistricted. A grandfather clause was included that read:

"All students be allowed to finish their years in the school in which they are enrolled when the redistricting plan is implemented. A few caveats follow:

- Transportation would not be provided
- Younger siblings not currently in the school would not be grandfathered with older siblings
- The school would work with each affected family to make a decision within a defined timeline."

In the affected neighborhoods of the recommendation, there are 87 siblings of current Albemarle High School students. 57 of those siblings are in middle school and 30 are in elementary school. By extending the clause to younger siblings, it reduces the relief needed at that school due to the numbers of students exceeding the capacities of that school.

A second grandfather option for you to consider along with that of the redistricting committee follows:

All current Albemarle High and Sutherland Middle students be permitted to finish their years in the schools in which they are enrolled. Siblings of current Albemarle High students who are currently at Sutherland and Burley Middle Schools would be grandfathered for attendance at Albemarle High. Transportation will not be provided by the school division to families who choose to grandfather. The choice to grandfather for the 2016/17 school year will need to be made no later than January 29th, 2015.

The rationale for Board consideration of this option is that it slows Monticello High from reaching and exceeding capacity while increasing the transition movement of students to Monticello High and Burley Middle School. At the same time, it also provides time for families with siblings to make the transition without having children in two different high schools unless they choose to do so.

The School Board, Long Range Planning Committee members and school staff have all acknowledged that overcrowding at these two schools needs to be addressed. If the recommended areas are moved from Albemarle High School to Monticello High School, Albemarle will begin to see relief next school year even with grandfathering of existing

students. If moving these students is not supported by the Board, I recommend that the School Board consider a request to the Board of Supervisors for capital funding to place an addition on Albemarle that would include classroom space, expansion of the cafeteria, additional parking, and other infrastructural needs to support a larger population. The growth at Albemarle High is expected to continue as the northern feeder pattern communities continue to develop and expand. The capacity issues at Albemarle High are urgent and the capacity demands will continue to increase into the future. The Long Range Planning Committee has operated under Board direction to limit enrollment of Albemarle High to fewer than 2000 students (the current capacity is 1819). The Redistricting Committee noted in their final committee discussion that they believed all further redistricting of neighborhoods from Albemarle High to Monticello High would be challenging beyond their current recommendation.

In the case of Greer Elementary School, it does not appear that there is a redistricting solution that is viable based on the redistricting committee's extensive work to analyze potential shifts in students. Staff will be working diligently to define an alternative solution to bring to the School Board within the next couple of months. Solutions that will be considered will include, but not necessarily be limited to, moving the 5th grade to Jouett Middle School, moving the preschool program to Jouett Middle School, and adding trailers at Greer. I make note that any of these solutions should be considered short term and that the only known long term solution at this point in time is to build an addition at Woodbrook Elementary School. That addition will address the growing enrollment in the urban ring schools to include Greer Elementary School.

Thank you in advance for your consideration of this committee's intensive and extended work to generate redistricting solutions to growth in the northern feeder pattern. I believe that without capacity solutions being added that our division staff and families will be challenged by continued growth across the county but specifically in the northern feeder pattern. As committee members commented in the final discussion with me they believe this process has become more the norm than the exception. Over the thirty years that I have worked in Albemarle County Public Schools I have experienced redistricting as a parent, principal, assistant superintendent and superintendent. I have learned that each time a committee works with due diligence to find solutions, our communities express their desire to minimize changes in school boundaries. To minimize further redistricting, capital needs must be addressed that add capacity where our growth occurs and families live.

Sincerely,



Pamela R. Moran, Ed.D.

Superintendent