



VIRGINIA GENERAL ASSEMBLY 2016

Legislative Agenda

Strengthening Virginia's 21st Century

Albemarle County Public Schools has one student-centered goal: that **all students will graduate having actively mastered the lifelong-learning skills they need to succeed as 21st century learners, workers and citizens.**

What's more, business leaders are calling for high school and college graduates to be better prepared to contribute immediately upon hire.

If Central Virginia is to prosper by attracting high-quality, growth-oriented businesses, the K-12 public education system must produce the talent that will fuel that expansion.

Governor Terry McAuliffe, in a visit to Albemarle County's Agnor-Hurt Elementary School in October, said that his budget for the next biennium will propose increasing the state's contribution to the K-12 public education system.



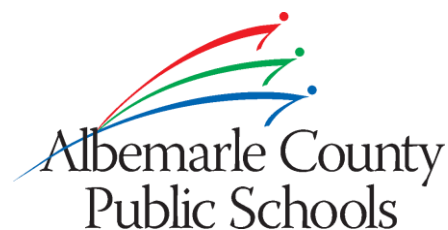
The importance of such an increase is magnified by a review of alarming trend data.

The state's investment in Albemarle County's students has declined in five of the last seven years, and since 2008, state revenue has fallen from 31 percent of Albemarle County's per pupil investment to nearly 27 percent.

According to a JLRAC study this year, **Virginia's school divisions are spending nine percent less on instruction than they did 10 years ago,** and divisions have slashed support for facility renovation and construction by 30 percent. **This approach, the study posits, likely will hinder long-term effectiveness and efficiency.**

This sharp reduction in state support for education has had two immediate and painful consequences: The more regressive property tax burden has increased, and innovative programs designed to prepare children for success in the global economy have not been affordable.

We urge you as representatives of our children and their families, and as catalysts for our county and our state's economic competitiveness, to support increased funding for K-12 public education, and to begin to restore a healthy, historic, and more balanced partnership that positions all Virginians for prosperity.



Our Mission

The core purpose of Albemarle County Public Schools is to establish a community of learners and learning, through relationships, relevance and rigor, one student at a time.

Our Vision

All learners believe in their power to embrace learning, to excel, and to own their future.

Our Core Values

Excellence
Young People
Community
Respect

Our Student-Centered Goal

All Albemarle County Public Schools students will graduate having actively mastered the lifelong-learning skills they need to succeed as 21st century learners, workers and citizens.

Our Objectives

1. We will engage every student.
2. We will implement balanced assessments.
3. We will improve opportunity and achievement.
4. We will create and expand partnerships.
5. We will optimize resources.

2016 Priorities

Accountability & Assessment

The Albemarle County School Board applauds the General Assembly's initial steps in reforming the Standards of Learning (SOL) program through the removal of five SOL tests at the elementary and middle school levels.

However, despite those improvements, the SOL program compels educators to "teach to the test," with an emphasis on an instruction model that rewards drill, memorization, and multiple choice decision making.

We support assessment methods that reinforce the interdisciplinary instructional model of the current century by promoting problem-solving, critical thinking and analysis, creativity, collaboration, and communication skills.

→ We urge the General Assembly to eliminate all SOL tests in grades 3-12 not linked to federal reporting requirements, consistent with Senate Bill 1020 filed in 2014.

→ We propose the General Assembly authorize a pilot program in which a representative number of school divisions partner with the state Department of Education to develop and demonstrate authentic assessment and accountability measures that more closely align curricula with 21st century skill requirements.

→ Within the current system of assessment, we support credit accommodations on English and Math SOL tests for students who are English Language Learners.



English Language Learners represent the future multilingual leaders of our community, and holding them from graduation due only to several multiple choice questions on an assessment that they are taking in their second or, in some cases, third or fourth language represents an opportunity loss for the state.

Russell Carlock,
Int'l & ESOL Program Coordinator



Standards of Quality

The current Standards of Quality (SOQ) were designed and instituted more than 40 years ago, in some cases. They reflect the instructional models and quality requirements of a prior century.

→ We urge the General Assembly to authorize a JLARC study of the SOQ with the goal of updating requirements to 21st century standards that represent the quality of education that best positions Virginia's students for success.

→ We further request this study examine a reform of current state funding practices in which the state funds only a portion of the inflationary increases in SOQ requirements, which adds to the financial burden of local taxpayers for state-mandated purposes.

Reducing the Property Tax Burden

As state support for education has declined, local property taxes have increased, shifting more of the responsibility for financing local education to the more regressive tax on real estate.

→ We join with the Albemarle County Board of Supervisors and the Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission in urging the General Assembly to pass legislation that would give counties the same authority as cities now have to generate revenue across a broader, more progressive base.

Fair & Equitable Composite Index

→ We support reform of the composite index that would include a real property assessment component to reflect the real property tax monies actually received by the locality. This reform will enable the composite index for all localities to fairly and accurately reflect the locality's ability to pay.



Positions & Policy Statements

Accountability & Assessment

We support assessment methods that reinforce the interdisciplinary instructional model of the current century by promoting problem-solving, critical thinking and analysis, creativity, collaboration, and communication skills.

Standards of Quality

We urge the General Assembly to authorize a JLARC study of the SOQ with the goal of updating requirements to 21st century standards that represent the quality of education that best positions Virginia's students for success.

Reducing the Property Tax Burden

We request that the General Assembly pass legislation that would extend to counties the same authority cities have to generate revenue across a broader, more progressive base.

Fair & Equitable Composite Index

We support reform of the composite index that would include a real property assessment component to reflect the real property tax monies actually received by the locality.

Charter Schools

We oppose any actions that would permit external authorities to establish a charter school in a community without local school board approval.

School Bus Video-Monitoring Systems

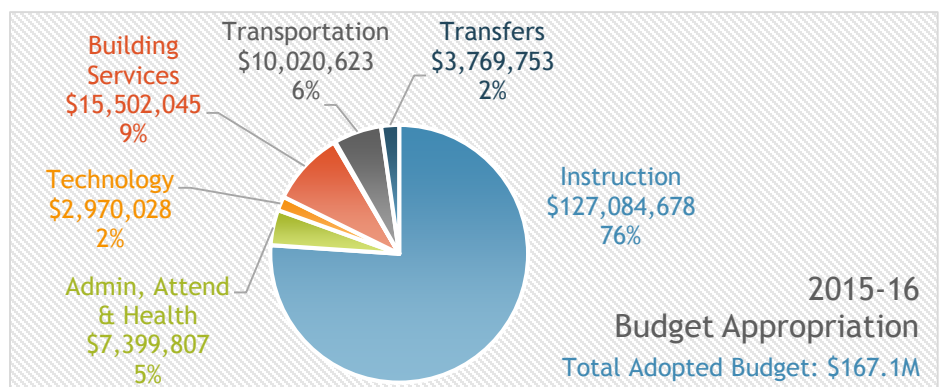
We request that the General Assembly amend Virginia Code Section 46.2-844 to allow for service by mail similar to the provisions contained in Virginia Code Section 15.2-968.1's traffic signal enforcement program.

Non-Public Student Participation in VHSL Activities

We urge that any re-introduction of this bill be amended to include safeguards that ensure a uniform set of standards and their applicability for all students who seek to compete in interscholastic athletic competition.

Primary Elections

We continue to support the movement of June primary elections to no earlier than the third week in June to avoid disruptions to school operations.



2015 Division Snapshot

Our Facilities

26 schools

- 16 elementary schools (PK-5)
- 5 middle schools (6-8)
- 1 charter middle school (6-8)
- 3 comprehensive high schools (9-12)
- 1 charter high school (9-12)

1 Engineering Lab School (6-8)

3 STEM/STEM-H Academies (9-12)

1 Vocational-Technical Center

1 Alternative Education Center

Our Employees

1,255 teachers

- 64% hold advanced degrees
- 3% are National Board Certified
- Average years of teaching experience: 14

1,255 other school division employees

Our Students

13,737 students (PK-12)

- 8.4% are identified as Limited English Proficient (LEP)
- 28.8% are eligible for free/reduced meals
- 10.5% are served by Special Education
- 9.6% are identified as Gifted

Other Statistics

Our students were born in 60 countries and speak 80 languages.

2:1 student-to-computer ratio (K-5)

1:1 student-to-computer ratio (6-12)

Over 9,000 meals served daily

14,005 school bus miles traveled daily

211 homeless students served last school year

HOW DO WE COMPARE?

	ACPS	State
On-time Graduation Rate	94.3%	90.5%
Drop-out Rate	2.3%	5.2%
Graduates Who Earned an Advanced Studies Diploma	69.0%	51.5%
Average SAT Scores	Verbal	557
	Math	553
	Writing	534
Students Earning a Passing Score (3, 4 or 5) on AP Exams	76.5%	61.0%

SCHOOL BOARD

Ned Gallaway, Ed.D., Chair
 Katherine Acuff, Ph.D., Vice-Chair
 Jason Buyaki
 Steve Koleszar
 Barbara Massie Mouly
 Pamela Moynihan
 Graham Paige

Email the School Board at:
schoolboard@k12albemarle.org



DIVISION LEADERSHIP

Pamela Moran, Ed.D.
 Superintendent
moran@k12albemarle.org

Matthew Haas, Ed.D.
 Assistant Superintendent
mhaas@k12albemarle.org

Dean Tistadt
 Chief Operating Officer
dtistadt@k12albemarle.org

Vincent Scheivert
 Chief Information Officer
vscheivert@k12albemarle.org

Debora Collins
 Exec. Director, K-12 Education
dcollins@k12albemarle.org

Bernard Hairston, Ed.D.
 Exec. Director, Community Engagement
hairston@k12albemarle.org

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS & PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Phil Giaramita
 Strategic Communications Officer
pgiaramita@k12albemarle.org

Tim Shea
 Legislative and Public Affairs Officer
tshea@k12albemarle.org