

To: Dr. Kate Acuff, Chair, Albemarle County School Board
From: Matthew Haas, Superintendent
Date: September 16, 2025 (Updated September 28, 2025)
Re: Recommendation on Legislative Priorities and Engagement with State Legislators

At the Region V Superintendents' meeting on September 15, a survey was conducted to gather information on how divisions across our region organize and communicate their legislative priorities.

Survey Results (Region V Superintendents):

- Superintendent-led: 12
 - School Board member(s) lead: 7
 - Managed in-house: 0
 - Dedicated government relations position/office: 0
 - Supported by a third party (consultant/lobbyist): 1 (Coalition of Small/Rural Schools)
 - Through associations/consortia (VSBA, VASS, regional groups): 10
 - Hybrid/Other: 0
- Region V Legislative Priorities...

Recommendation for ACPS:

Based on this input, I recommend the following approach for Albemarle County Public Schools:

1. **Adopt Statewide Priorities:** Use the legislative priorities established by VASS and VSBA as the foundation for an ACPS priorities list. Both associations employ staff who actively monitor legislation and lobby on behalf of school divisions, ensuring that our core interests are well represented.
2. **Customize When Needed:** If ACPS has a unique item not captured by VASS or VSBA, the Board and staff can directly advocate with our legislators. This could include sending a delegation of staff and Board members to Richmond or arranging targeted outreach. Our Communications and Community Engagement teams can help facilitate.
3. **Review and Approval:** Compile draft ACPS legislative priorities, incorporating statewide items (VASS/VSBA) and any unique division-specific issues. Present this draft list to the School Board at their October meeting for review, discussion, and approval.

4. **Communicate with Legislators:** Once priorities are vetted and approved by the Board, prepare a concise letter to share with our three state legislators.
5. **Build Relationships:** Establish a semi-annual meeting schedule with our delegation, alternating between Zoom and in-person meetings (around a meal or coffee). These sessions would be co-led by the Board Chair and Superintendent, with the option for the Assistant Superintendent for Community Engagement to lead. The Board could also designate a rotating point person to attend.

Plan one school site visit for legislators to sign up and attend between November 1st and December 5, 2025. Students at the [Impact Studio](#), along with our Student School Board Members and Student Cabinet, can plan this, using the [VSBA toolkit](#) as a guide.

6. Collaborate with the Board of Supervisors and Local Government Staff on priorities.

This approach leverages statewide resources while ensuring we maintain direct, local relationships with our legislators.