

A Work Session of the Albemarle County School Board was held on February 27, 2020 at 6:30 p.m., Albemarle County Office Building, Lane Auditorium, 401 McIntire Road, Charlottesville, VA 22902.

**PRESENT:** Dr. Kate Acuff; Ms. Judy Le; Mr. Graham Paige; Ms. Ellen Moore Osborne; Mr. Jonno Alcaro; and Ms. Katrina Callsen.

**ABSENT:** Mr. David Oberg.

**STAFF PRESENT:** Dr. Matthew Haas, Superintendent; Ms. Debora Collins, Deputy Superintendent; Ms. Clare Keiser, Assistant Superintendent; Dr. Bernard Hairston, Assistant Superintendent; Ms. Rosalyn Schmitt, Chief Operating Officer; Mr. Jay Thomas, Director of Secondary Education; Mr. Jeff Prillaman, Student Center Designer; Ms. Jamie Gellner, Division Program Evaluator; Mr. Ross Holden, School Board Attorney; and Ms. Jennifer Johnston, Clerk of the Board.

**Agenda Item No. 1.1. Closed Meeting.** None.

**Agenda Item No. 1.2. Closed Meeting Certification.** None.

**Agenda Item No. 1.3. Call to Order.**

At 6:30 p.m., Mr. Alcaro, Chairman, called the meeting to order.

**Agenda Item No. 1.2. Pledge of Allegiance.**

**Agenda Item No. 1.3. Moment of Silence.**

**Agenda Item No. 2.1. Agenda.**

Dr. Acuff offered a **motion** to approve the agenda. Ms. Osborne **seconded** the motion, **and the motion passed.**

**Agenda Item No. 3.1. Approval of Consent Agenda.**

- 3.1 Approval of Consent Agenda
- 3.2 Charter School Annual Report and Charter Amendment Proposal
- 3.3 Personnel Action
- 3.4 Personnel Action – Athletic Coaches
- 3.5 For Information: Policy Reviews and Revisions
- 3.6 Educational Broadband Service (EBS) Lease Agreement with Shentel

Mr. Paige offered a **motion** to approve the consent agenda. Dr. Acuff **seconded** the motion, **and the motion passed.**

**Agenda Item No. 4.0. Items Pulled from the Consent Agenda.** None.

**Agenda Item No. 5.1. Public Comment.**

Ms. Lori Ann Stoddart is a Cale teacher. She shared comments and advocated for Cale Elementary School and the recent removal of a poster at the school.

Ms. Katie Morgans is a Cale teacher. She said that removal of the poster at Cale Elementary School was a micro-aggression.

Ms. Tannis Fuller is a Cale parent. She said that she is disappointed with the removal of a poster at Cale Elementary School.

Mr. Brian Tate is a Monticello High School parent. He asked that the School Board address the drug usage and distribution problem at the high school.

Ms. Amanda Moxham asked that the Board censure Dr. Haas for his direction to remove the poster at Cale Elementary School.

Ms. Aubrey Israel Hampton read a statement from Emily Mahone a Albemarle County parent. The statement was about the removal of the poster at Cale Elementary School.

Ms. Bekah Saxon read a statement from Vernon Liechti, teacher at Albemarle High School. The statement was in regards to teacher compensation and teacher workload. Collective bargaining is in the General Assembly which is a positive.

### **Agenda Item No. 6.1. Announcements.**

Dr. Haas thanked everyone for their comments. He said that he has received numerous emails offering different responses to our decision to remove the “They didn’t steal slaves” poster. He appreciates the community engagement, as he firmly believes that openly sharing diverse viewpoints provides a positive opportunity for discovery and growth. The decision to take down the poster not because its message was untrue or unworthy of discussion, but because it unfortunately generated a contentious environment that undermined its value. There was more that school staff could have done prior to using the poster to set the stage for a positive dialogue and outcome. A school committee of about a dozen teachers did not seek the principal’s approval because the poster was used the year prior. There were three differences from a year ago: 1) The poster was enlarged, 2) the poster was placed in a much more prominent location – just outside the main office, and 3) there also not a planned academic program to support the poster and its message. Within the first week of the poster’s display in the main foyer of the school next to the main office without any caption or explanation, eight different staff members told the principal the poster was divisive and was setting up what they called an, “us vs. them” perception. During the second week, the principal witnessed arguments among students about their interpretation of the poster’s message. Four other staff members reported to the principal that they too, had witnessed several such disagreements among students. He was forwarded one email from the parents of an African-American child which said that a student in his class had told him the poster was offensive because his family "didn't own slaves" and a student made a slavery joke and the African-American student had to tell the student it wasn't funny. Another parent reached out to the parents of the African-American student and said that it seemed like the discussion was a space for "angry white boys to express themselves." These were third graders, and the poster in its original form in Mississippi last year was created with middle school students. At the end of the second week, on February 13, the principal called to discuss how to contain these incidents and move forward. I conferred with the Board’s legal counsel and Mr. Giaramita. Then I decided to have the poster taken down. Both the staff and parents were informed of this decision to take down the poster on the day it was made. It became clear that in order for the poster’s message to educate and inspire, we educators needed to provide some age-appropriate context and facilitate thoughtful, cooperative conversations with students. Essentially, the poster by itself, without a supplemental and common lesson, missed its mark.

The message on the poster, as you may know, originally surfaced last year when a middle school math teacher in Mississippi decorated her classroom door with words inspired by author and poet Nadine Drayton-Keen. While he personally feels the message is both true and compelling, its presence at Mountain View, one of our pre-K through Grade 5 elementary schools, spawned destructive confrontations between students who obviously lacked the mature perspective to understand the intent of the message.

While it was decided to remove the poster, that was not our final action. With the guidance of the school division’s anti-racism policy and Dr. Bernard Hairston, our Assistant Superintendent for School Community Empowerment, the school’s administrative team is currently collaborating with their Black History Month Committee and remainder of the school staff to evaluate the poster, assess the situation, and determine next steps. Among their goals are uncovering misunderstandings and misconceptions, considering all perspectives, and leveraging culturally responsive teaching and experiences to benefit students, the school, and the community as a whole. Dr. Hairston has held meetings with the staff; he also held a meeting with African-American parents at the school this afternoon. They had several suggestions for moving forward, to include that the poster could be put on

display in a more meaningful sort of way. The principal has scheduled a professional development session on “Identifying and Responding to Racial Microaggressions at Work” for next Monday. He left it open-ended as to whether the poster - with the proper work put into it, could be put back on display. I made this clear to Dr. Hairston; he made it clear to Ms. Wells, and Ms. Wells - to my understanding from Dr. Hairston - made it clear to the school committee.

In the meantime, yesterday evening, he met with Dr. Rick Turner and Ms. Janette Martin from the NAACP to discuss the matter, as they had contacted me last week and offered to support the school moving forward. He asked if they would consider collaborating with Cale in their Black History month program.

The words from this poster on that middle school classroom door poignantly and candidly emphasize the atrocity of the institution of slavery and its ravagement of human potential. It is as factual as it is emotional. As public school educators, we need to be thoughtful about our handling of such topics, especially with our youngest and most impressionable students.

He again thanked the many who have taken the time to reach out and share his/her perspective with him. Where there is diverse community engagement, there is hope that we are collectively supporting a healthy learning community.

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Ms. Mindy Moran, Lead Coach for Visual and Performing Arts, provided the Board with information on Albemarle County Visual Arts Celebration with a special celebration for Liberation and Freedom Day.

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Mr. Alcaro said that the Student Representatives on the School Board will be voted on at a future meeting.

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Ms. Le offered a **motion** to appoint Dr. Mark Niehaus as the Rivanna District representative on the School Health Advisory Board. Ms. Osborne **seconded** the motion, **and the motion passed.**

Ms. Osborne offered a **motion** to appoint Mr. David Storm to the Long-Range Planning Advisory Committee as the Scottsville District representative and Ms. Kristen Carty to the School Health Advisory Board as the Scottsville District representative. Ms. Le **seconded** the motion, **and the motion passed.**

Mr. Alcaro offered a **motion** to appoint Ms. Gail Lovette to the Long-Range Planning Advisory Committee as the At-Large representative and Ms. Rebecca Abernathy to the School Health Advisory Board as the At-Large representative. Dr. Acuff **seconded** the motion, **and the motion passed.**

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Dr. Acuff offered a **motion** that the School Board approve the following resolution:

WHEREAS, the Virginia School Board Association has designated one week in February to be set aside as School Board Clerk Appreciation Week, and

WHEREAS, the vision, mission and goals of the School Division are established by the School Board and based upon a “partnership of mutual trust and vision between the School Board and Superintendent,” and

WHEREAS, by policy, the School Board, together with the Superintendent, takes responsibility for ensuring that Albemarle County Public Schools is an effective school system, and

WHEREAS, the duties and activities of the Clerk of the Albemarle County School Board are vital to supporting and promulgating all Board actions and policies, and

WHEREAS, the Clerk ensures that Board meetings are conducted in accordance with all applicable state laws and Board policies, and

WHEREAS, the Clerk is a vital contributor to the planning, efficiency and success of all Board meetings, and

WHEREAS, the Clerk performs such important duties as the keeper of all minutes and records of Board meetings, and

WHEREAS, the Clerk also coordinates the appointment of citizen volunteers to such significant Board committees as the Long-Range Planning Committee and the Health Advisory Board, and

WHEREAS, the Clerk is instrumental in implementing the Board's goal of broadening community participation in Board meetings, and

WHEREAS, these actions have included the delivery of live video-streaming of Board meetings to homes across the county and the expansion of opportunities for community members to address the School Board on matters of great importance, and

WHEREAS, Jennifer Johnston has served the Albemarle County School Board for more than two decades, initially as an assistant clerk and for the majority of her service as Clerk, and

WHEREAS, Ms. Johnston has performed her responsibilities and duties in a highly professional, thorough and responsive manner, often working well beyond a normal work week,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that on the occasion of School Board Clerk Appreciation Week across the Commonwealth, that the Albemarle County Public School Board expresses its deep appreciation and gratitude to Jennifer Johnston for her exceptional contributions to the Board and to the Albemarle County School Division.

Mr. Paige **seconded** the motion, **and the motion passed.**

**Agenda Item No. 7.1. School Board Superintendent Business.**

Ms. Osborne said that she attended an international event at CATEC. It was excellent.

**Agenda Item No. 7.2. Board Member Reports.** None.

The Board took a break from 7:20 p.m. until 7:30 p.m.

**Agenda Item No. 8.1. Project Management in the Division.**

Ms. Collins and Ms. Gellner provided for the Board's consideration information on project management in the Division. She said that Albemarle County Public Schools uses project management philosophies and the Project Management Oversight Committee to monitor and control major strategic projects in the Division.

**Agenda Item No. 8.2. High School Redesign.**

Ms. Collins, Mr. Thomas, and Mr. Prillaman provided for the Board's consideration information on the high school redesign. They share key components of ACPS High School Redesign. They said that the work session would include: history behind the creation of the Center Model; the Logic Map that guides the work; creation of Virginia's Career Academies; and how career clusters might work in ACPS. Time would be allocated so that board members might align career clusters together as an exercise to understand the connections and how they might be assigned to our seven high school locations (4 high schools, 2 centers, CATEC) as well as understand the philosophical underpinnings of our future academies.

At 7:48 p.m., the Board went into breakout sessions to unpack the VDOE Career Clusters and to place them in groupings (2, 3, 4, etc.)

1. Understand clusters:
  - a. Ask questions
2. Analysis packet of materials:
  - a. ACPS student survey (6th graders)
  - b. Multiple examples of state’s cluster models
  - c. VDOE Career Cluster cards
3. Pair career clusters together to create 10+ academies
4. Present your academies and groupings with rationale.

At 8:30 p.m. the Board reconvened to share the academies and groupings that they came up with and the rationale for the academies/groupings.

Mr. Prillaman shared with the Board staff’s first take on making career academies at that high schools and high school centers.



# HIGH SCHOOL CAREER ACADEMIES

[www.k12albemarle.org](http://www.k12albemarle.org)

## ACPS Career Academies

Starting with the 2022-23 school year, students will see some exciting additions to our high school course offerings. Aligned with the Virginia Department of Education’s Career Clusters, our career academies will give students the chance to explore career pathways that interest and excite them. Each of our high schools will continue to offer a comprehensive experience, while our career academies will afford students the option to immerse themselves in a discipline of interest beyond the courses offered at their base school. The division will provide transportation for students to attend any career academy of their choice, and students will retain their base school identity and access to extracurricular activities there. Our career academies are designed to support the ambitions and future success of our students, whether they plan to enter the workforce after high school or continue their formal education.

**Albemarle High School**

**TECHNICAL SCIENCE ACADEMY**  
 Architecture & Construction  
 Hospitality & Tourism  
 Manufacturing  
 Transportation & Logistics

**MULTIMEDIA ARTS ACADEMY**  
 Audio/Video  
 Technology & Film  
 Journalism & Broadcasting

**PERFORMING ARTS ACADEMY**  
 Instrumental & Vocal



**Monticello High School**

**HUMAN SERVICES ACADEMY**  
 Education & Training  
 Government & Public Administration  
 Human Services  
 Law & Public Safety  
 National Defense Cadet Corps (NDCC)

**PERFORMING ARTS ACADEMY**  
 Theatre & Dance

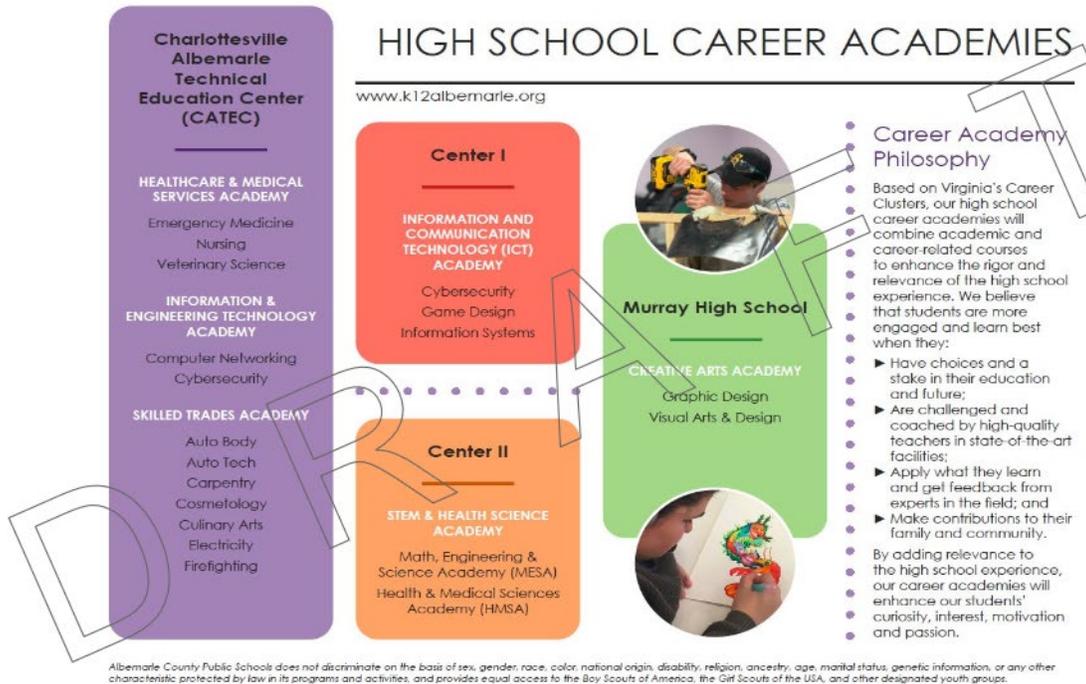


**Western Albemarle High School**

**ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES ACADEMY**  
 Agriculture, Food & Natural Resources  
 Energy

**ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND BUSINESS ACADEMY**  
 Business  
 Finance  
 Marketing





Mr. Alcaro expressed concern about the duplication of Center II programming and the same programming at CATEC. One could be seen as elitist.

Ms. Callsen said that she has been frustrated with this process. Work has been done without a lot of input from the School Board. She sees that some of the academies and centers will be elitist and tracks of privilege being created.

Ms. Osborne expressed concern about diversity.

Dr. Acuff talked about the need to expand the accessibility to MESA at Albemarle High School.

Dr. Acuff said that she is supportive of the Center model. We need to make sure that programming is robust at all schools and centers and offerings can lead to well-paying jobs.

Mr. Alcaro said that he would like to know why these particular programs at the schools were chosen over others. What work was done to determine interest? He would like to do a work session on that aspect of the programs.

Ms. Callsen asked when building Center II would it be built to specifications of an academy such as MESA. Building requirements for certain academies may require different design for the facility.

Ms. Callsen asked what money was spent at Albemarle High to fit the school for MESA. She does not want to see the Division spend money on rebuilding academies that we have already built out and spent money on.

Mr. Paige said that the suggestion for Center II programming is very elitist. He suggests moving several of the smaller programs to the Center.

Mr. Callsen said that there is a lot of potential in CATEC and this could be an opportunity to change up the programming there.

Mr. Alcaro asked for next steps.

Dr. Acuff asked if there was still a restriction on the number of students for Center 1.

Ms. Le asked for the ethnic breakdown of applicants for Center 1 for next year.

Mr. Paige asked what are we doing in middle school to raise the interest in the fields for the career pathways.

Ms. Osborne said that it seems as if the career clusters have all been given the same weight. Is that the correct approach?

Mr. Alcaro asked that the dates for school based meetings be provided to the Board. He also asked that the Board be updated every other meeting on these topics. In addition, the work session in April could be on devoted to the programming.

Ms. Callsen asked if a student could switch if they wish to switch programs.

**Agenda Item No. 9.1. Other Business by Board Members/Superintendent.** None.

**Agenda Item No. 10.1. Closed Meeting.** None.

**Agenda Item No. 11.1. Certify Closed Meeting.** None.

**Agenda Item No 12.1. Adjournment**

At 9:41 p.m., Mr. Alcaro, hearing no objections, adjourned the meeting of the Albemarle County School Board.

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Chairman

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Clerk