

A Business Meeting of the Albemarle County School Board was held on April 16, 2020 at 6:30 p.m., via Zoom, Charlottesville, Virginia 22902.

PRESENT: Mr. Jonno Alcaro; Mr. Graham Paige; Dr. Kate Acuff; Ms. Ellen Moore Osborne; Ms. Katrina Callsen (arrived at 6:35 p.m.); and Mr. David Oberg.

ABSENT: Ms. Judy Le.

STAFF PRESENT: Dr. Matthew Haas, Superintendent; Ms. Debbie Collins, Assistant Superintendent; Dr. Clare Keiser, Assistant Superintendent; Dr. Bernard Hairston, Assistant Superintendent; Dr. Christine Diggs, Chief Technology Officer; Ms. Rosalyn Schmitt, Chief Operating Officer; Ms. Maya Kumazawa, Director of Planning and Budget; Mr. Jay Thomas, Director of Secondary Education; Mr. Kevin Kirst, Executive Director of Student Services and Special Education; Mr. Ross Holden, School Board Attorney; and Ms. Jennifer Johnston, Clerk to the School 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, Chair, called the meeting of the Albemarle County School Board to order.

Mr. Alcaro said that the meeting is being held electronically pursuant to Virginia state law and Albemarle County ordinance because the Covid-19 pandemic makes it impracticable and unsafe to assemble a quorum physically in a single location. The meeting is being streamed live on the Albemarle County Public School's website, and public comment may be offered through the Zoom waiting room feature in accordance with the School Board's protocol or by written submission.

Agenda Item. No. 2.1. Approval of Agenda.

Dr. Acuff offered a **motion** to approve the agenda. Mr. Oberg **seconded** the motion. **Roll was called, and the motion passed by the following recorded vote:**

AYES: Ms. Callsen, Mr. Paige, Mr. Alcaro, Dr. Acuff, Mr. Oberg, and Ms. Osborne.

NAYS: None.

ABSENT: Ms. Le.

Motion carried by a 6:0:1 vote.

Agenda Item No. 3.0. Approval of Consent Agenda.

- 3.1. Approval of Consent Agenda
- 3.2. Minutes
- 3.3. School Security Equipment Grant
- 3.4. For Action: Policy Reviews and Revisions
- 3.5. Personnel Action
- 3.6. Personnel Action – Athletic Coaches

Dr. Acuff offered a **motion** to approve the consent agenda. Mr. Paige **seconded** the motion. **Roll was called, and the motion passed by the following recorded vote:**

AYES: Ms. Callsen, Mr. Paige, Mr. Alcaro, Dr. Acuff, Mr. Oberg, and Ms. Osborne.

NAYS: None.

ABSENT: Ms. Le.

Motion carried by a 6:0:1 vote.

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

Agenda Item No. 5.1. Public Comment. None.

Agenda Item No. 6.1. Spotlight on Education.

Ms. Osborne read the following resolution:

WHEREAS, on Friday, March 13, Virginia Governor Ralph Northam ordered the closing of all schools in the Commonwealth for a period of two weeks to protect against the spread of the coronavirus, and,

WHEREAS, this action to protect public health through the closure of schools meant that students who participated in the federal government's free-and-reduced lunch program lost their access to the nutritious meals provided each day at school, and,

WHEREAS, in Albemarle County Public Schools, thousands of students were negatively impacted by this loss of access, and,

WHEREAS, among the school division's four values is its young people, specifically their academic and personal development, their health and well-being, and,

WHEREAS, in response to the closure of schools, the division's Child Nutrition Department immediately began to plan to meet the needs of all children for healthy breakfasts and lunches on a daily basis, and,

WHEREAS, within one business day of the Governor's closure announcement, Child Nutrition team members under the guidance of Director Christina Pitsenberger, had organized a food distribution program, and,

WHEREAS, the program began with six school sites throughout the county, serving more than 1000 meals a day to students and their siblings 18 years of old and younger, and,

WHEREAS, on March 23, the Governor extended the closure of all K-12 schools in the Commonwealth through the end of the current academic year, and,

WHEREAS, the Child Nutrition Office continued to monitor the need among its students in all communities across the county for healthy meals and to work with the Department of Transportation in setting up additional food distribution sites, and,

WHEREAS, as the result of this ongoing planning and teamwork, the office now distributes breakfasts and lunches to students from 21 locations at schools and in communities, and,

WHEREAS, since March 17, the Child Nutrition Office has provided more than 30,000 meals to students from all schools and locations in the county and is continuing to evaluate the needs to further expand this service,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Albemarle County School Board expresses its deep appreciation to Ms. Pitsenberger and her highly dedicated and skilled team for their invaluable support in meeting the nutritional and health needs of thousands of Albemarle County public school students and their siblings, and,

For doing so through such an expeditious and increasingly inclusive plan, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the School Board also salutes the contributions of the Transportation Department, its Director, James Foley and his team for enabling the food distribution program to bring its services directly into the neighborhoods where students reside, thereby expanding participation in this vitally beneficial program.

Agenda Item No. 6.2. Announcements.

Dr. Haas thanked the Board for continuing to do the work of the Division even through COVID closures.

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

Mr. Thomas provided the Board with an update on verifying credits without the use of state testing due to COVID-19.

Dr. Diggs provided the Board with an overview of how the IT Service Desk work has changed over the past month including the support provided to families.

Mr. Alcaro said that are meetings scheduled for the next three Thursdays.

Mr. Alcaro noted the awards that Albemarle County students won at the regional Science Fair.

Agenda Item No. 8.1. Special Education Advisory Committee Annual Report.

Mr. Kirst and Ms. Stephanie Hicks, chair of the Special Education Advisory Committee, provided the Board with a review of the Special Education Advisory Committee annual report. The Special Education Advisory Committee submits an annual report and recommendations regarding the education of children with disabilities to the division superintendent for transmission to the local school board.

Any recommendations made by the Special Education Advisory Committee that have fiscal implications would be pursued and developed based on direction of the School Board. These initiatives or a redirection of resources would be brought forward through the budget initiative procedures established during the development of the 2020-2021 or 2021-2022 school budgets.

The report included:

1. Implement the Safe Schools Ambassador Program: The Safe Schools Ambassador Program (SSA) is an evidence-based model that works with students to teach them the skills to influence behavior and create positive change. Research shows that other students are present in 85% of bullying incidents making it imperative that students are trained and included in the anti-bullying process.¹ The SSA program is taught by professional trainers from Community Matters, a 501(c) 3 organization that has been addressing bullying issues for more than twenty years and has worked with over two thousand schools. SSA trainers conduct the initial sessions and then Train the Trainer courses are offered to keep the program active. Offering a turn-key program with a documented record of success will simplify the process of rapidly improving the antibullying culture in our schools.
2. Include Special Education in the Culturally Responsive Teaching initiative: Albemarle County's focus on Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT) is commendable, and we want to be certain special education is included. Our students with learning differences have cultures that should be respected and honored as part of CRT. For example, the Autism Culture Movement, deaf culture, and the ADHD community all have preferences for honoring and respecting our differences. Including our students in special education in the CRT process can help other students accept these and other differences as part of everyday society and not as anomalies to be disparaged.
3. Include Special Education in Planning the Contemporary Schooling Initiative: The current system being used at some schools is to grade tests only, raising the question "What is learning?" The principle of mastery learning can be more effective as it relies on teaching students until they can show understanding or mastery of the concept being presented. This was the teaching strategy in use at Murray High School and the Community Public Charter School and was very effective for students with learning differences. With the shift to Contemporary Schooling, this approach is being changed

to focus on the new International Baccalaureate track. We are concerned our students in special education will not fit into this new paradigm. We request that representatives from special education be included in planning for Contemporary Schooling and the changes to our learning centers.

4. Provide Training for Teachers and Staff on ADHD and Related Challenges: ADHD affects about 11% of school-aged children resulting in developmentally inappropriate levels of inattention, impulsivity and hyperactivity.² Teachers, staff and administration work with these students daily and would benefit from additional training. We are recommending professional development and follow up to help our teachers help students with ADHD and related challenges and to improve classroom management and allow for more instructional time.
5. Information and Care for Families with Students in Special Education: The members of the Special Education Advisory Committee are concerned about the potential loss of the PREP Parent Resource Center (PRC). With the changes put forth by VDOE, remaining in the PREP PRC cohort would become more expensive. If we leave this cohort, we lose the valuable resources provided by this organization. If ACPS were to create a separate PRC, we are concerned the support might not remain as fair, balanced, and unbiased as it is now. Our families need the education, information, and understanding of an experienced PRC. Being the caregiver to a student with special needs and navigating the special education process can be quite challenging. We want to be certain our families have the support they need to become and remain effective members of IEP teams for the benefit of the student, the family and the schools.

Mr. Alcaro asked for information on the Parent Resource Center.

Dr. Acuff asked about challenges currently for special education students due to distant learning.

Mr. Paige asked if services previously received at PREP will still be provided to students.

Dr. Acuff said the previous reports have focused on teacher education – not just for special education teachers.

Agenda Item No. 8.2. Special Education Annual Plan.

Mr. Kirst provided for the Board's consideration a review of the Special Education Annual Plan. Under the provisions of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA), the IDEA Federal Regulations, and the Regulations Governing Special Education Programs for Children with Disabilities in Virginia, local educational agencies are required to submit an annual plan and application for providing special education and related services to children with disabilities in order to secure Federal funds. Albemarle County Public Schools must ensure that its policies and procedures are consistent with the Regulations Governing Special Education Programs in Virginia, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act and corresponding Federal Regulations.

The Annual Plan consist of the following components:

1. The Annual Plan document, that includes the applications for Section 611 Flow-Through Grant (K-12) and the Section 619 Early Childhood Special Education (PK) Grant.
2. The Part B Set Aside Calculation and Plan that outlines how a portion of the Federal funding was calculated, developed with consultation from private schools and parents and the resulting implementation plan. These funds are used to support children eligible for special education services that are unilaterally placed by their parents in home or private school programs located in Albemarle County.

The approved version is planned to be submitted to the Virginia Department of Education on or before May 08, 2020.

This plan was reviewed, as required by Virginia Regulations, by the Special Education Advisory Committee via an e-mail sent to voting members on April 8, 2020 13.

Ms. Callsen asked about the money set aside for overidentification.

Agenda Item No. 8.3. Away for the Day.

Ms. Collins, Mr. Thomas and middle school principals provided the Board with an overview of the Away for the Day initiative. Beginning in 2019-20, after various pilots in several middle schools, ACPS middle schools adopted an "Away for the Day" cell phone practice. Following a national trend, ACPS middle school principals developed and implemented a cell phone practice that prompts students and staff to have their cell phones put out of sight during the school day. Principals will share their current practice and what they have learned over the course of the year to date.

Dr. Acuff asked if there was a reason to limit it to only middle schools.

Mr. Alcaro said that it will become part of culture that students cannot have cell phones in school.

Mr. Oberg asked if it was feasible for one day or certain hours at the high school level.

Agenda Item No. 8.4. FY 2020/21 Budget Development Update.

Ms. Schmitt and Ms. Kumazawa provided a brief update on the FY 2020/21 budget development. In response to significant revenue changes projected for FY 21, staff presented an update on the current budget development process. Staff provided high level guiding principles and budget strategies for the School Board to consider to aid in the development of revised expenditures, in preparation for a Public Hearing on May 7th (tentative) and Budget adoption on May 14th.

Dr. Acuff about hiring teachers for the upcoming school year.

Agenda Item No. 8.5. Red Hill Addition & Renovation (Phase 2) Capital Funding Request.

Ms. Schmitt provided for the Board's consideration a brief update on the capital improvements program and then provided an update on the Red Hill addition and renovation. Phase II of the Red Hill Addition & Renovation project is scheduled to be complete and occupied in August 2021. Phase 1 of the project was completed in 2016/17. The addition will add 6,300 square feet, comprised of a new gymnasium and support spaces such as staff offices and storage space. The current gym at Red Hill will be renovated and re-purposed into a new media center. Site work will include additional parking and outdoor learning areas. Existing spaces to be renovated include the cafeteria, bathrooms, hallways, and kitchen equipment. The project has been designed and is out to bid. Bids are due Monday, April 9th.

In addition to the Red Hill Addition & Renovation project, Albemarle County is currently in the planning phase for an addition at Scottsville Elementary school. Bids for the Scottsville project recently came in under budget.

In the event that the Red Hill project comes in over budget, staff recommends the School Board request the BOS to re-appropriate available funds from the Scottsville project to the Red Hill project. Staff recommends accepting all additive alternates if possible as this allows the projects to remain on par with each other (example: each new gym would have a stage).

This item is for information only and will be on the April 23rd agenda for action. An exact figure and funding need will be identified at that time. If the bids come in favorable no additional action is required. Please note, due to the uncertainty of the county's financial forecast, all capital projects are currently under review. This

recommendation is contingent on a decision of whether this project will proceed on its original timeline or be delayed.

Funding for both the Red Hill and Scottsville Addition & Renovation projects are in the Capital Improvement Program budget.

Mr. Paige asked if both projects will proceed.

Ms. Callsen asked if there was a way to rebid projects given the current economic status.

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

Agenda Item No. 10.1. Closed Meeting – if needed. None.

Agenda Item No. 11.1. Closed Meeting Certification. None.

Agenda Item No. 12.1. Adjournment.

At 7:56 p.m., hearing no objections, Mr. Alcaro adjourned the meeting of the Albemarle County School Board.

Chairman

Clerk