

## MINUTES

### REGULAR MEETING OF THE ALBEMARLE COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD

Thursday, September 14, 2023

**ROLL CALL** - UPON THE ROLL BEING CALLED, THE FOLLOWING WERE PRESENT:

**BOARD MEMBERS** - Dr. Kate Acuff, Mr. Jonno Alcaro, Dr. Rebecca Berlin, Ms. Katrina Callsen, Ms. Judy Le, Ms. Ellen Osborne, Mr. Graham Paige, and Student Representative; Ms. Opal Kendall.

**ABSENT** - None.

**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE** - Superintendent Matthew Haas; School Board Attorney Ross Holden; Assistant Superintendent Clare Keiser, Assistant Superintendent, Patrick McLaughlin; Assistant Superintendent, Daphne Keiser; Assistant Superintendent Chandra Hayes; Chief Operating Officer Rosalyn Schmitt; Public Affairs and Strategic Communications Officer Phil Giaramita; and Clerk of the School Board Christine Thompson.

#### AGENDA ITEM NO. 1.0 CLOSED MEETING

At 5:30 p.m., Mr. Alcaro offered a **motion** that the Albemarle County Public School Board go into a closed meeting as authorized by the Virginia Freedom of Information Act, section 2.2-3711(A) of the Code of Virginia under: Subsection 1 for discussion, consideration, or interviews of prospective candidates for employment and the assignment, appointment, promotion, appointees, demotion, salaries, disciplining, or resignation of specific public officers, appointees or employees of any public body. The purpose of this item in the closed meeting is to review and discuss miscellaneous personnel issues of ACPS staff; and 2. Subsection 8 for consultation with legal counsel employed or retained by a public body regarding specific legal matters requiring the provision of legal advice by such counsel. The purpose of the item in the closed meeting is to discuss legal issues in connection with a resolution for public sector collective bargaining and a draft Memorandum of Understanding with the Charlottesville City Schools establishing certain operating procedures for CATEC. Dr. Acuff seconded the **motion**. **A voice vote was called, and the motion passed by the following recorded votes:**

<b>AYES:</b>	Dr. Acuff, Mr. Alcaro, Dr. Berlin, Ms. Callsen, Ms. Osborne, Mr. Paige, and Ms. Le.
<b>NAYS:</b>	None
<b>ABSENT:</b>	None

**Motion carried by a 7:0 vote.**

#### AGENDA ITEM NO. 2.0 OPENING ACTIVITIES

**Agenda Item No. 2.1 Call to Order** - At 6:30 p.m., Chair Le called the Albemarle County School Board meeting back to order.

## Agenda Item No. 2.2 Closed Meeting Certification

At 6:30 p.m., Mr. Alcaro offered a **motion** that the Board certify by recorded vote that to the best of each Board member's knowledge, only public business matters lawfully exempted from the open meeting requirements of the Virginia Freedom of Information Act and identified in the motion authorizing the Closed Meeting were heard, discussed, or considered in the Closed Meeting. Mr. Paige seconded the **motion**. **Roll was called, and the motion passed by the following recorded votes:**

**AYES:** Mr. Alcaro, Dr. Acuff, Dr. Berlin, Ms. Callsen, Ms. Osborne, Mr. Paige, and Ms. Le

**NAYS:** None.

**ABSENT:** None.

**Motion carried by a 7:0 vote.**

## Agenda Item No. 2.3 - Roll Call

## Agenda Item No. 2.4 - Pledge of Allegiance

**Agenda Item No. 2.5 - Moment of Silence** – Chair Le asked those in attendance to please think about student Ryan Ragland's family during this time.

## AGENDA ITEM NO. 3.0 APPROVAL OF AGENDA

**Agenda Item No. 3.1 Approval of Agenda** – Dr. Acuff offered a **motion** to approve the agenda. Mr. Alcaro seconded the **motion**. **Roll was called, and the motion passed by the following recorded votes:**

**AYES:** Dr. Berlin, Ms. Callsen, Ms. Osborne, Mr. Paige, Dr. Acuff, Mr. Alcaro, and Ms. Le

**NAYS:** None.

**ABSENT:** None.

**Motion carried by a 7:0 vote.**

## AGENDA ITEM NO. 4.0 APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

Dr. Acuff offered a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Mr. Paige **seconded the motion**. **A voice vote was called, and the motion passed by the following recorded votes:**

**AYES:** Dr. Acuff, Mr. Alcaro, Dr. Berlin, Ms. Callsen, Ms. Osborne, Mr. Paige, and Ms. Le

**NAYS:** None.

**ABSENT:** None.

**Motion carried by a 7:0 vote.**

- 4.1 Approval of Consent Agenda
- 4.2 Approval of the Minutes
- 4.3 Religious Exemption
- 4.4 Religious Exemption
- 4.5 Religious Exemption
- 4.6 Religious Exemption
- 4.7 Religious Exemption
- 4.8 For Information: Policy, Review and Revision
- 4.9 For Action: Policy, Review and Revision
- 4.10 Personnel Action
- 4.11 Personnel Action – Athletic Coaches
- 4.12 Adoption of Middle and High School Instructional Resources
- 4.13 AHS Second Floor Connector Design – RFP Selection Committee
- 4.14 Donations & Reimbursements to School Division FY 22-23 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter

**AGENDA ITEM NO. 5.0 ITEMS PULLED FROM CONSENT AGENDA – None.**

#### **AGENDA ITEM NO. 6.0 ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**Agenda Item No. 6.1 [Spotlight on Education](#)** - Presented by Student Representative Opal Kendall.

#### **AGENDA ITEM NO. 7.0 PUBLIC COMMENT**

Mr. Paul McArtor lives in the Scottsville district and has children who attend Albemarle County Schools. He came to speak to the Board to present a petition to request the Board not renew the Superintendent's contract.

Mr. Bellamy Brown came to speak about collective bargaining and in support of the Albemarle Education Association.

MS. Catherine Lochner lives in the Rio district. She spoke about restraint and seclusion, and inappropriate use of CPS to silence parents. She also spoke about the PREP-Ivy Creek School, ending 45 years of service to high needs and low incidence special education students.

Ms. Mary McIntyre is an Albemarle Journey Middle School teacher, and lives in the Rio district. Ms. McIntyre asked the Board to trust the teachers and staff. She also spoke about her support of collective bargaining and the Albemarle Education Association.

Mr. Vernon Liechti is the President of the Albemarle Education Association and a teacher at Albemarle High School.

Ms. Liz Koenig spoke to the Board about what she believes are broken promises.

Mr. John Cason resides in the Rio district and offered his support on collective bargaining.

Ms. Susan Carter lives in the Rio district and spoke about her experience as a bus driver and spoke about collective bargaining.

Ms. Arilana Zlotnick is a school counselor at Red Hill Elementary School. She spoke about her support of collective bargaining.

Ms. Jennifer Turner spoke to the Board about supporting collective bargaining and thanking the stakeholders.

Ms. Amy Gaertner lives in the White Hall district and spoke in support of collective bargaining.

Mr. Adam Florence spoke in favor of collective bargaining.

Mr. Tim Klobuchar lives in the White Hall district and is a teacher at Monticello High School. He is a member of the Albemarle Education Association and spoke in support of collective bargaining.

Ms. Michelle de Stefano lives in the Rivanna district. She spoke about the bus transportation issue and is running as a write-in candidate for the School Board in the Rivanna district.

Ms. Kate Selmer lives in the White Hall district and came to the board meeting to speak in support of collective bargaining.

Ms. Catherine Thomas resides in the Rivanna district. She spoke about driving her grandson to school every day from the Kettle Run subdivision. It is costly and she encouraged the board to make better arrangements for the students.

Ms. Sally Hudson spoke in support of collective bargaining.

Ms. Heiddi Gilman Bennett lives in the Samuel Miller district and is a parent of two students who attend Albemarle County Schools. She spoke on the need for better resources for at-risk elementary readers.

## **AGENDA ITEM NO. 8.0 SCHOOL BOARD / SUPERINTENDENT BUSINESS**

Ms. Callsen announced her intention to resign from her position as the School Board representative from the Rio Magisterial District. She wanted to make this announcement now, so the community will know what to expect and are able to engage in the process of selecting her replacement. She noted the many important things on the agenda in the coming school year; continue and finish with collective bargaining, focus on reading recovery, selecting a new reading curriculum, and ensuring it's implemented with fidelity and the resources needed to tackle our pandemic learning loss. She asked that the Board continue to support the work of our groundbreaking anti-racism policy to protect the learning environment of all our students and make sure that they feel welcome. She personally believes we need to begin an audit of our instructional coaching model, and make sure we continue to engage in good self-governance through the evaluation process. She asked that staff continue with diversity recruitment so that more of our students experience a mentor or teacher who reflects their identity.

Ms. Callsen explained that she recently won the Democratic primary for the House of Delegates and is gearing up to hopefully serve in that role. Becoming an effective leader in that position, which is different than school board, also needs her full attention to be done well. And she believes that acknowledging her time constraints is the best step for the organization, for her colleagues, and our community. She encouraged the community to look to your friends, your neighbors and yourself perhaps, and encourage people to apply to fill her role. It is a wonderful opportunity to give to your community and to affect change by being an advocate for public education. She stated “It has been a joy, and an honor to serve. And although my resignation feels very tough personally, I am so optimistic because I’ve witnessed the passion and energy that new board members bring to this role and infuse into our leadership. And I know that will be a benefit to all of you and our students. And two, it means since I’m stepping down, that someone else will be able to do this very meaningful work and serve. And the more people that we have invested in public education, whether it’s here at this table or it’s in Richmond, the better for all of us. So please be on the lookout for the application process. I hope we get tons of applicants. And thank you. Thank you very much.”

#### **Agenda Item No. 8.1 [Transportation Update](#) – Rosalyn Schmitt**

Dr. Acuff asked how long it would be before the trainees would be finished with their training. -- We have some that will be done as early as two weeks. Others could take as long as the end of October or beyond. They’re all coming in at different points with different CDL experience and some with none.

Mr. Paige asked if the parents are notified of how much longer it might be before their students would be without a bus? -- We have not shared specifics. We are training them as fast as possible, but it’s not a guarantee. We don’t want to give them a date and not be able to fill them. We’re not. We notify them as soon as we have a firm date, so they know what to expect.

Ms. Le asked if we have a sense of when the consolidation and route reconfiguration might happen? -- That’s going to take a couple weeks. It’s a lot of analysis and moving parts. Our priority right now is to get these new drivers on routes as quickly as possible.

Ms. Callsen asked if we had done any troubleshooting with our parents. -- At the direction of the board last week, we made sure that we contacted all, attempted to make contact with all families who did not have a ride. Schools have done amazing work with the resources they have. We have some schools that are using the van to pick up kids daily. They’ve offered early drop off, facilitated carpools. We know we’re not meeting all the needs, but we’ve done what we can with the resources we have.

### **AGENDA ITEM NO. 9.0 SCHOOL DIVISION BUSINESS**

**Agenda Item No. 9.1 [Building Services Update: Summer 2023 Project Updates](#)** - The Building Services Department will provide an overview of 2023 construction and maintenance projects. The presentation will also highlight successes from the first summer with ACPS providing project management from design through construction.

Dr. Acuff asked; before we brought the project managers in house. How did this work? -- Prior to this past fiscal year, some of the work was handled in house and annual flooring and painting for example, was handled in house with building services staff. The larger capital projects had been outsourced to local government employees. But one of the major benefits to having our own team has been that increased communication.

Mr. Paige asked if the installation of the security film has been completed at all of our schools. -- We just finished up the last two this past week. It's not every window around the school, it's all entrances and sidelights around entrances and then glass that we deem to be in a more of a risky location or someplace where it was at the higher risk for entry.

Dr. Acuff noted that the trailers were removed from Brownsville. And asked if we repurpose those, sell them, how do we get rid of them? -- It depends on the location. We do own some of the eight classroom pods that went in over the pandemic.

Ms. Le stated that every year she is reminded about how every single person who works with the division is part of our students' achievement. She really appreciated the work and thanked staff for their support and time.

Mr. Alcaro commented that the team has done some terrific work over the summer and throughout the year. He loves walking around the schools in the summertime and just watching it all happen. And it's impressive every single year.

**Agenda Item No. 9.2 [Human Resources Hiring Update](#)** - The Human Resources staff provided a hiring update for the 2023-2024 school year, focusing on both teachers and support staff.

Ms. Osborne asked what percentage are provisionally licensed in SPED and how can we make sure we support them. -- We don't have the direct numbers right now. We can get that for you and follow up. We're in collaboration with the special education department with instructional coaches for a number of our provisional and licensed teachers. They're currently in classes at UVA, which provides robust mentoring and a lot of support. Special Ed coordinators are also providing critical support.

Dr. Acuff thanked staff for a wonderful presentation, adding she liked how they infused, throughout, data about our diversity hires. That's been something that's been a consistent ask and she feels like staff were very upfront during this presentation. Thank you for doing that.

Mr. Alcaro asked Dr. Sears what he sees as the key to hiring more employees of color? -- Dr. Sears believes outreach is one way, building relationships with all of our partners having the opportunity to be on campuses where they are. Historically black colleges and universities, starting those type of opportunities. One of the things that we're going to be trying to do is build

our recognition. Among all universities we're working on presentations to have folks learn about what we're doing here. Our desire to have our teaching force look like and mirror our community.

**Agenda Item No. 9.3 Break** – the Board took a break from 8:54 p.m. to 9:07 p.m.

**Agenda Item No. 9.4 [Family Life Education Review & Update](#)** - The Board of Education guidelines are written to assure that families have opportunities to review the FLE program annually and to opt their children out of all or part of the program.

During the 2022-23 school year, teachers collected feedback from families. This summer, teachers met to review the feedback. Recommendations to the current Opt-Out Forms were considered and updated. In addition, teachers worked to develop lessons that would increase the engagement of students. The updated Opt-Out Forms and lessons were shared during this presentation.

The board asked for links to the old material for comparison to the new material.

Dr Berlin was curious about what level of this is being dictated by Code and legislation. And had concerns about the conversations and how they went. Her issue with the teen pregnancy slide, there's one slide for contraception and three of the bullet points are about abstinence and then one slide saying there could be other methods and it doesn't list them, give any information on them and then some stats around teen pregnancy. – The state standards is around that particular guideline. Teachers have lots of similar feelings.

Ms. Callsen commented that she thought this information was 'terrible'. She felt like we "are going backwards" and that she's read articles that when abstinence is the only sex education increases pregnancy rates. She does not think we should be telling high school students, who some of them are going to have sex, that abstinence is the only method, and we provide them no other information. She believes that seems like bad public policy.

Ms. Osborne asked if these forms are posted in Spanish as well as English. – Yes.

Dr. Berlin asked for the numbers of students who opted out of the program.

**Agenda Item No. 9.5 [Virginia Literacy Act Resource Selection Process](#)** - In alignment with the Virginia Literacy Act, the Department of Instruction will update the School Board on the selection process of an elementary (K-3) literacy program based on the Science of Reading.

Dr. Acuff asked about the coming years and support for students that have not had these programs. -- We have a tiered support system. Currently under that system we use something called SIPS, which is explicit instruction in phonics and phonemic awareness.

Who are the community members of your working group? -- We have a combination. We have parents we've reached out to, to see if we can get someone from UVA. To want to join us in this work. And then we have community members that don't have students in the school but are interested in literacy work. So, it's a combination.

Dr. Berlin thanked the staff for putting the special item of English learning teachers at the same level. She asked if it would be possible to put any teaching assistance on that team. -- Teaching assistants are certainly going to be in the schools with the programs for the month of November.

Dr. Berlin asked about the total cost of ownership? – Staff will give updates as they go.

**Agenda Item No. 9.6 Assessment and Accreditation Update – [2022-2023 Data Review](#)** The mission of Learning for All, the strategic plan for Albemarle County Public Schools, states, “Working together as a team, we will end the predictive value of race, class, gender, and special capacities for our children’s success through high-quality teaching and learning for all. We seek to build relationships with families and communities to ensure that every student succeeds. We will know every student.” School and division assessment and accreditation results are a key indicator of our progress in achieving this mission.

Dr. Acuff asked if staff anticipated that we’d see a similar adoption process for secondary math and algebra? -- Bellwether had a process looking at math that went out through the summer of 2025. Our instructional team that works with math started over the summer that’s primarily focused on our high school Algebra I courses. They felt like they needed a better diagnostic tool, and they are developing something for that. And then following the use of that diagnostic tool, having additional resources that are there. While we don’t have all the specific details of what those resources are, we know that that is in progress and that team’s working together right now with it. It’s got some step by steps through summer 2025 that includes things like summer bridge programs and additional supports.

Dr. Berlin asked if any of the intensive tutoring funding from the state permits us to focus on just math? -- It is designed both for reading and math.

Ms. Le commented that she vaguely recalled that at some point last year, we set target goals for what we wanted to see with this SOL data, and we laid it out. She would appreciate a slide or an update on where we hit the goals, where we didn’t hit the goals. Like a table getting filled in so that we can see, we wanted to improve. Bellwether talked about creating like a comprehensive kind of theory of change and tasking so we can see what is being effective towards changing that. I’d like to see that in the ideal, but just in the short term.

## **Agenda Item No. 10.0 OTHER BUSINESS**

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

**Agenda Item No. 10.2 Closed Meeting Certification – None.**



**AGENDA ITEM NO. 11.0 ADJOURNMENT** - At 10:01 p.m., hearing no objections, Chair Le adjourned the meeting of the Albemarle County School Board.

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Clerk

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Chair