

MINUTES

BUDGET WORK SESSION OF THE ALBEMARLE COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD Thursday, March 2, 2023

A Public Hearing of on the Proposed FY 2024 School Funding Request was held by the Albemarle County School Board on March 2, 2023 at 6:30 p.m. at the Albemarle County Office Building – 401 McIntire Road, Charlottesville, VA

BOARD MEMBERS: + Dr. Kate Acuff, Mr. Jonathan Alcaro, Dr. Rebecca Berlin, Chair Katrina Callsen, Ms. Judy Le, Ms. Ellen Osborne, Mr. Graham Paige, Student Representative Ms. Sanuthi Amarasinghe

ABSENT: None

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Dr. Matthew Haas, Superintendent; Ms. Debora Collins, Deputy Superintendent; Assistant Superintendent, Dr. Clare Keiser; Assistant Superintendent, Dr. Patrick McLaughlin; Assistant Superintendent, Dr. Daphne Keiser; Chief Operating Officer, Ms. Rosalyn Schmitt; School Board Attorney, Mr. Ross Holden; Chief Technology Officer, Dr. Christine Diggs; Public Affairs & Strategic Communications Officer, Mr. Phil Giaramita; Director of Budget and Planning, Ms. Maya Kumazawa; Interim Clerk to the School Board, Ms. Christine Thompson

Agenda Item No. 1.0 OPENING ACTIVITIES

Agenda Item No. 1.1 CLOSED MEETING (4:30 p.m.)

At 4:30 p.m., Ms. Ellen Osborne 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 3 for discussion or consideration of the acquisition of real property for a public purpose or the disposition of publicly held real property, where discussion in an open meeting would adversely affect the bargaining position or negotiating strategy of the public body; Subsection 7 for consultation with legal counsel and briefings by staff members or consultants pertaining to actual or probable litigation, where such consultation or briefing in open meeting would adversely affect the negotiating or litigating posture of the public body; and Subsection 8 for consultation with legal counsel employed or retained by the Albemarle County School Board regarding specific legal matters requiring the provision of legal advice by such counsel. Mr. Alcaro seconded the **motion**. **Roll was called and the motion passed by the following recorded votes:**

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Ms. Callsen

Motion carried by a 6:0:1 vote.

Agenda Item No. 1.3 CALL TO ORDER

At 6:30 p.m., Vice Chair Le called the Albemarle County School Board meeting back to order.

Agenda Item No. 1.2 CLOSED MEETING CERTIFICATION

At 6:30 p.m., Mr. Paige 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. Alcaro seconded the **motion**. **Roll was called and the motion passed by the following recorded votes:**

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

Motion carried by a 6:0:1 vote.

Dr. Acuff offered a **motion** to appoint Ms. Christine Thompson as the School Board Clerk. Mr. Alcaro seconded the **motion**. **Roll was called and the motion passed by the following recorded votes:**

AYES: Dr. Acuff, Ms. Osborne, Mr. Paige, Mr. Alcaro Dr. Berlin, Ms. Le, and Chair Callsen
NAYS: None
ABSENT: None

Motion carried by a 7:0 vote.

Chair Callsen attended the closed meeting, but was delayed getting back to the public meeting and arrived in the auditorium at 6:32 p.m.

Agenda Item No. 1.4 PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Agenda Item No. 1.5 MOMENT OF SILENCE

Agenda Item No. 2.0 APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mr. Paige offered a **motion** to approve the Agenda. Dr. Acuff seconded the **motion**. **Roll was called and the motion passed by the following recorded votes:**

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

Motion carried by a 7:0 vote.

3.0 PUBLIC HEARING

Agenda Item No. 3.1 PUBLIC HEARING ON THE PROPOSED FUNDING REQUEST

Ms. Heidi Gilman Bennet lives in the Samuel Miller district. She spoke about offering her support in the budget in reading and intervention. There are too many students struggling in reading and math. This has a negative impact on children of low-income families. These children need highly trained interventionists.

4.0 OTHER BUSINESS

Agenda Item No. 4.1 FY 24 BUDGET WORK SESSION #3

This is the third Budget Work Session in a series of three following the Draft Funding Request presentation. Staff will present more detailed information about the Funding Request.

Tiered Supports – Interventionists

Ms. Le asked what schools use “other tiered services” – what would these services be? Some schools use them to provide some additional SEO support, or math specialists. -- Sometimes they use their PAL staffing in addition to their tiered services to really focus on K-1 reading intervention.

Mr. Paige asked if any of the schools have a slight decrease, will there be a loss of services to any of those schools? – We do not anticipate any of those schools will have a loss of services.

English Learners

Ms. Le stated that one thing that struck her was that this is a population that we have traditionally underserved our students. Are we able to track this service, can we put goals on this? -- One of the things we are doing is seeing that teachers can co-teach with the EL teachers and providing the scaffolding around this so the students can get that high quality instruction. – Staff agreed to track the EL students.

Chair Callsen stated that we would add the EL student goals-tracking to the Work Session list of topics.

Staff clarified that we are adding staff based on our current numbers. Dr. Berlin asked if we know where the EL positions will be added. We have some proposals of where those will be added, most will be in secondary.

Dr. Acuff asked how much flexibility to you have to move your EL teachers around. – We have some positions that are based out of the main EL office and others that are more mobile, therefore we are able to move them around. We are proposing to keeping that staffing consistent.

Special Education

Ms. Le – Abase (Autism Building Appropriate Supports with Evidence) I am wondering about the students outside of the BASE/needs programs and their outcomes. What are we doing for those students so their outcomes come up just as the other students. – We have utilized specialists, tiered supports, reading specialists, and behavior supports as well. And that is job embedded and ongoing. And working with our staff in instruction – and the best practices working with our general education instructors.

Ms. Le asked that we track this and set goals of where we are, where we have been and where we can get to. -- Dr. Haas clarified that we should go back to the logic models and look at the base lines is for this past school year and establish a target for next school year – where we would like to see the be in terms of math and reading.

Mr. Paige asked where the the four new classes would be – which schools? – They are elementary, but we have not ironed out the exact locations.

Dr. Berlin thanked the staff for putting the presentation together. Children with special needs have been even more impacted by the pandemic. With regard to the reverse inclusion program, which has been good, how have we been supporting these children in the Bright Stars program? – We are using all the resources we have; speech pathologists, itinerants, and even assistance, so we have some blended programs.

Mental Health Services

Dr. Acuff thanked the anonymous donor who helped our program. All of the school counselors who she has talked to believe in being proactive. Believes this in well worth funding.

Safety and Security

Dr. Acuff, Safety Coaches seem to have some overlap with the mental health staff. –The Coaches develop incredibly strong relationships with the students. They help the students get to the staff they need to get to.

Dr. Acuff asked what kind of PD do we offer the Coaches? – All of the Coaches are required to take the first phase investigative Title IX training, restorative practices, several different mental health training, first aid. They receive training throughout the year. – Staff will follow-up with the Board with a complete list of all the training. If there is something the Board thinks staff should be trained in, please let staff know.

Dr. Acuff added that if Dr. Turner could explain a little bit of the Title IX information... Dr. Turner explained that a parent would submit a complaint and staff would investigate the parents concerns.

Mr. Alcaro asked about the Title IX Coordinator position and Security Assistants – what qualifications do they need for consideration in the position. – for Title IX, they would need to know something about the legal system. A background in law would make the work easier to navigate. They would not necessarily do the investigations, but could. For the security assistants we are not looking for someone to be a guard, we are looking for someone who understands how to secure a school, supervising a campus, the doors, being able to work with young people who are experiencing problems, not losing their composure, someone who understands the mission of the division; trying to education our children and experience everything they need to experience;

being part of the learning process, not guards but build relationships. The emphasis should be placed on security, make sure the children are safe. Staff will share the job descriptions with the Board members.

Dr. Berlin spoke with Principal Sublette at Western and she was able to see that the security assistants knew the students by name and these positions were all about relationships.

Mr. Paige asked staff to confirm that the School Resource Officer will be assigned to Albemarle, Lakeside, Burley, and Journey. – Staff confirmed this and also confirmed that we would also require him/her to be available for all schools.

Ms. Le stated that she wanted to make decisions based on evidence and data. And based on a 2020 survey some students do feel safer with SRO's and some did not. There is a disparity with our students. We have not received a lot of data about our school discipline. There might be data I don't know about that I don't see. I'm looking for conclusive evidence – from the logic model I'm looking for that to acknowledge the disparities in race. I would like to see research around school safety. We all agree we want safe schools and not to fall on teachers and staff.

Dr. Turner replied that SRO's are not there to break up fights. They are not there just to be muscle, they are part of our school safety team.

Ms. Amarasinghe asked what type of training would the SRO have to have to make certain they would work well with students. – We work very closely with the Department of Criminal Justice in Richmond. There is a lot of training they have to go through before they can become an SRO. It is a highly specialized training.

Dr. Haas added that we have been working on our MOU with the ACPD and the Board would have input into what kind of additional training they would like to see added.

Chair Callsen thanked Dr. Turner's comments. She believes the SRO needs a lot of work and the position feels nebulous, not really clear, or what purpose, the police are always at our disposal. We have a great response time. You would think we would have an officer at Western. I want to make sure that what that officer is doing is clearly laid out and is actually producing results that we want. – Staff commented that we can never guarantee a quick response time.

Chair Callsen asked when we have an officer respond to an incident at our school, how often is it the same person. She would like to lean into the police department and offer trainings on how to deal with children versus training one individual who may not be a respondent for an incident in one of our schools. I would rather see a partnership in that way, over necessarily putting a body in a seat. She believes that a lot of the issues she has could be resolved with a deep dive into the MOU. It allows us minimal input, not necessarily decision-making capability. I want it to be done in a way that is effective in the goals were hoping to serve. I would not want to see the SRO in place until we are all comfortable with the MOU that we have. – The staff will work with the SB Attorney.

Filter Replacement Initiative

Dr. Acuff asked is this is the same system we would put in our new schools? – Yes, the MERV-13 is the system we would try to get for our new schools.

Other funding requests:

Ms. Osborne asked if the AFE cost included the finders fee? – We believe that is the correct amount funded but staff will look into the total cost and get back to the Board.

Agenda Item No. 4.2 OTHER BUSINESS BY BOARD MEMBERS/SUPERINTENDENT

Dr. Acuff offered a **motion** that the School Board of Albemarle County begin the Collective Bargaining process and further direct the Superintendent and division staff to draft a Collective Bargaining resolution for presentation. Ms. Osborne seconded the **motion**. **Roll was called and the motion passed by the following recorded votes:**

AYES: Dr. Berlin, Ms. Le, Ms. Osborne, Mr. Paige, and Chair Callsen

NAYS: Mr. Alcaro and Dr. Acuff

ABSENT: None

Motion carried by a 5:2:0 vote.

Dr. Haas and Dr. McLaughlin spoke to the Board for consensus on the *Profile of the VA Graduate – Waiver of the State Regulatory Codes*. The Division will need to go back to the State to request a waiver (first requested 5 years ago) again. We are hearing that the policy staff at the state level do not want to approve waivers for these waiver requests. We want our students to make their own choices. Is it worth it to the Board to go back to the State – we don't feel we will be given a fair chance. Dr. McLaughlin commented that he has had students tell him that they wished they could take an art class, but they can't because it would lower their GPA.

Dr. Acuff believes if the over-arching goal is to promote student choice and achievement, then let's go for it.

Mr. Alcaro asked how successful has this been over the last five years? –Unfortunately, we haven't gotten to see that yet. The pandemic stalled our hypothesis.

Chair Callsen, Mr. Paige and Dr. Berlin agree that we should take the easier route and not ask for the waiver.

Last week Ms. Le attended the MLK Awards at Woodbrook Elementary, and the pride on the students and families faces was wonderful. Thanks to Mr. Woodson and Principal Williams for a really touching event. She also touched in at the first annual ACPS HBCU Expo and College Planning Workshop, which hopefully we can hear more about at a Board level. I spoke with Mr. Irvin Johnson at Monticello and Dr. Weida Poe at Community Lab. I believe about 100 students attended and also to commend Dr. Turner on his work on the workshop.

Dr. Haas had a quick shout-out to Ms. Osborne we visited Walton Middle School on Monday. It was a great environment, it had great artwork on the walls, the kids were having a lot of fun.

Chair Callsen attended the Virginia School Board Association Networking and Region V Art Show on Wednesday. There was a great presentation and new information on how we can rethink career technical education.

Agenda Item No. 4.3 CLOSED MEETING - if needed - None

5.0 ADJOURNMENT

At 8:35 p.m., hearing no objections, Chair Callsen adjourned the meeting of the Albemarle County School Board.

Chair

Clerk