

MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING OF THE ALBEMARLE COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD
Thursday, June 8, 2023

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

BOARD MEMBERS - Dr. Kate Acuff, Dr. Rebecca Berlin, Ms. Katrina Callsen, Ms. Judy Le, Ms. Ellen Osborne, Mr. Graham Paige, and Student Representative Ms. Sanuthi Amarasinghe and Ms. Weining Ding

ABSENT - Mr. Jonno Alcaro

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE - Superintendent Matthew Haas; Albemarle County Attorney Anthony Bassette; Deputy Superintendent Debora Collins; Assistant Superintendent Clare Keiser; Assistant Superintendent Patrick McLaughlin; Assistant Superintendent Daphne Keiser; Chief Operating Officer Rosalyn Schmitt; Chief Technology Officer Christine Diggs; Public Affairs and Strategic Communications Officer Phil Giaramita; and Clerk of the School Board Christine Thompson

AGENDA ITEM NO. 1.0 CLOSED MEETING - At 5:01 p.m., Ms. 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 1 for the discussion, consideration, or interviews of prospective candidates for employment and the assignment, appointment, promotion, performance, demotion, salaries, disciplining, or resignation of specific public officers, appointees, or employees of any public body; 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; and Subsection 8 for consultation with legal counsel employed or retained by the School Board regarding specific legal matters requiring the provision of legal advice by such counsel. Mr. Paige seconded the **motion**.

Roll was called, and the motion passed by the following recorded votes:

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Mr. Alcaro, Dr. Berlin

Motion carried by a 5:0:2 vote.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 2.0 OPENING ACTIVITIES

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

Agenda Item No. 2.2 Closed Meeting Certification - At 6:31 p.m., Ms. Osborne 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: Dr. Acuff, Ms. Osborne, Mr. Paige, Dr. Berlin, Ms. Le, and Ms. Callsen
NAYS: None
ABSENT: Mr. Alcaro

Motion carried by a 6:0:1 vote.

At 6:33 p.m., Ms. Le offered a **motion** that the Albemarle County School Board provide notice to the Piedmont Regional Education Program Joint Board of Control by June 30, 2023, that we are terminating the lease and the operating agreement for Ivy Creek School on June 30, 2025. Dr. Acuff seconded the **motion. A voice vote was called, and the motion passed by the following recorded votes:**

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

Motion carried by a 6:0:1 vote.

At 6:37 p.m., Ms. Osborne offered a **motion** to direct staff to enter negotiations for the architect selections for the Southern Feeder Pattern Elementary School in the order presented. Ms. Le seconded the **motion. A voice vote was called, and the motion passed by the following recorded votes:**

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

Motion carried by a 6:0:1 vote.

At 6:39 p.m., Dr. Acuff offered a **motion** to direct staff to proceed with the design for High School Center II on the Lambs Lane Campus. Ms. Osborne seconded the **motion. A voice vote was called, and the motion passed by the following recorded votes:**

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

Motion carried by a 6:0:1 vote.

At 6:41 p.m., Dr. Berlin offered a **motion** to appoint Candidate A to Position A and Candidate B to Position B and appoint administrators as presented. Dr. Acuff seconded the **motion. A voice vote was called, and the motion passed by the following recorded votes:**

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Mr. Alcaro

Motion carried by a 6:0:1 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 Callsen asked those present and listening on the live stream to think about the family of Avis Key Morse, Budget Grant Analyst in our Fiscal Services Department, who passed away on May 28. A lifelong resident of Charlottesville and the Charlottesville area, Avis began working for ACPS on August 20, 1997, at Albemarle High School. A highly effective office support staff member, Avis put others first, especially children and their families. During her time with ACPS, Avis worked at AHS, Western Albemarle High School, Brownsville Elementary School, and Fiscal Services. A constant learner, Avis started as an Office Associate II and was promoted steadily to OA IV and eventually to a Management Analyst II position.

In reflecting on our experiences with Avis, Brownsville Principal Jason Crutchfield said that “Avis was a committed member of our staff, supporting teachers and students. As a parent, my children benefited from her dedicated service at WAHS, where students, staff, and community members were blessed to see her smile every day.”

Her most recent supervisor, School Finance Officer Jackson Zimmermann, said that “Avis was a proud and devoted mother of two outstanding young adults, Tory and Shemya, both ACPS graduates and wife of Tim. Avis was a valued member of the Fiscal Services staff, always early to work, quick with a smile, always ebullient and positive, and always willing to learn. She will be sorely missed.”

Dr. Haas was quoted as saying, “I know many of you had the pleasure of working with Avis over the past decades. For my part, I worked with Avis when she was an Office Associate at Albemarle High School, and I have cherished her integrity and friendship ever since. I loved working with Avis at AHS, and I am glad that our paths crossed again here at the central office. Our children attended school together, and I will miss hearing from her about how her children are doing as grownups. She was very proud of them.”

Agenda Item No. 2.6 - Spotlight on Education I, [2023 Retiree Recognition](#)

The School Board recognized all the retirees for the 2023 school year with a reception prior to the meeting and presented each with a plaque.

Chair Callsen read a letter of recognition to Student Representative Ms. Amarasinghe.

Congratulations to the longest-serving student representative on the Albemarle County School Board!

It was a pleasure these six months to count you as a valued colleague and more importantly, it was extraordinarily helpful to have you broaden our understanding of student needs and perspectives.

When our Board established the position of student representative in December of 2019, our objective was to create a direct link between students and the elected body that governs their learning experience. We also wanted to provide a rewarding opportunity for a dedicated, thoughtful, public-service-oriented student leader. We wanted to expand opportunities for students to learn more about representative government and to enhance our decisions relevant to the best academic, social, and emotional interests of all students.

You easily proved to be an ideal selection for this responsibility. This does not, of course, come as a surprise. As an example of your influence, we got a glimpse of your leadership skills from the television news coverage of the solar kiln student project at Community Lab School. School administrators and staff describe you as being instrumental in making this innovative environmental success story possible. Even more impressive than your collaboration skills are the way in which you often take a step back to allow other classmates to showcase their talents.

As you complete your junior year, please accept our heartfelt gratitude for contributing to our deliberations over the past six months. We hope you will not hesitate to share your insight with us during the next school year on significant issues and opportunities for impacting students.

We offer our best wishes for a healthy, happy, and rewarding summer and an exceptional senior year in 2023-24.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 3.0 APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Agenda Item No. 3.1 Approval of Agenda - Ms. Osborne offered a **motion** to approve the Agenda. Dr. Berlin seconded the **motion. A voice vote was called, and the motion passed by the following recorded votes:**

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Mr. Alcaro

Motion carried by a 6:0:1 vote.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 4.0 APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA - Mr. Paige offered a **motion** to approve the Consent Agenda. Ms. Le seconded the **motion**. **A voice vote was called, and the motion passed by the following recorded votes:**

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Mr. Alcaro

Motion carried by a 6:0:1 vote.

- 4.1 Approval of Consent Agenda
- 4.2 2023-2024 Federal Programs Grant Application - Approval
- 4.3 Policy, Review, and Revision - Information
- 4.4 Policy, Review, and Revision - Action
- 4.5 COVID-19 Status Update
- 4.6 Approval of the Minutes
- 4.7 Donations and Reimbursements to School Division FY 2022-23-3rd Quarter
- 4.8 Authorization to Sign in the Absence of the Superintendent - VDOE
- 4.9 Personnel Action
- 4.10 Science Learning Resources K-8
- 4.11 FY 2023-24 Fee Schedule

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 II

[Honoring Retiree Deputy Superintendent Debora Collins](#)

AGENDA ITEM NO. 7.0 SCHOOL BOARD / SUPERINTENDENT BUSINESS

Dr. Eric Irizarry spoke about Pride Month and Juneteenth Recognition

Pride Month helps raise awareness about the ongoing challenges faced by LGBTQ+ individuals and to celebrate the humanity and accomplishments of LGBTQ+ individuals. It is a time to advocate for equal rights, combat discrimination, promote understanding and acceptance, and celebrate the excellence and accomplishments of the LGBTQ+ community. Through various events and initiatives, Pride Month fosters dialogue, educates the public, and encourages allies to show support for LGBTQ+ rights.

Pride Month is also crucial in supporting LGBTQ+ youth who may be struggling with their identity or facing social stigma. It sends a powerful message of acceptance and provides a safe space for young people to explore their sexual orientation or gender identity and/or expression. Visibility, positive representation, and affirmation during Pride significantly impact the mental health and well-being of our LGBTQ+ youth. We want ACPS to be a place where we celebrate & value our LGBTQ+ staff, students, and community and encourage them to be open about their identities and allowed to be their true authentic selves.

Juneteenth - Locally, it is important to note that while liberation came to Charlottesville with the arrival of Union Troops on March 3, 1865, for many enslaved people in our area including at the University of Virginia, emancipation would come only after the official end of the war in April 1865.

Events: Juneteenth Day Celebrations at The Jefferson School from 9-3 pm on June 17th include a parade, concerts, and more.

On Saturday, June 24th Preservation Piedmont Organization is sponsoring a tour to learn more about the African American history in our Scottsville Community. Also on Sunday, June 25th at Simpson Park the Albemarle County Parks and Recreation Division and the Office of Equity and Inclusion are sponsoring a Sunday Brunch celebratory event recognizing the contributions of Mr. James Elias Simpson, the park's namesake.

Dr. Berlin offered a **motion** that the Albemarle County School Board adopt the Albemarle Board of Supervisors LGBTQ Pride Month and Juneteenth Proclamations. Ms. Le seconded the **motion. A voice vote was called, and the motion passed by the following recorded votes:**

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

Motion carried by a 6:0:1 vote.

Proclamation Celebrating LGBTQ Pride Month

WHEREAS, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Pride Month (LGBT Pride Month) is celebrated annually in June to commemorate the catalyst event of the 1969 Stonewall riots and works to achieve equal justice and equal opportunity for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and questioning (LGBTQ) Americans; and

WHEREAS, on April 11, 2020, the Virginia Values Act was signed into law, making Virginia the first state in the South to protect LGBTQ people from discrimination in their daily lives, including discrimination in housing, public and private employment, public accommodations, and access to credit; and

WHEREAS, Albemarle County's stated mission is to enhance the well-being and quality of life for all citizens through the provision of the highest level of public service consistent with the prudent use of public funds; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Supervisors is committed to supporting through its actions and its partnerships the promotion of an equitable and inclusive Albemarle County that allows all members of our community to grow and thrive; and

WHEREAS, LGBTQ individuals have shaped, advanced, and enriched the fabric of Albemarle County and our nation by making immense contributions to all areas of life, including government, business, arts and sciences, medicine, law enforcement, technology, and the military.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT PROCLAIMED, that we, the Albemarle County Board of Supervisors, continue to affirm our commitment to our stated mission to enhance the well-being and quality of life of all the members of our community, and recognize with pride the rich cultural diversity and contributions of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and questioning (LGBTQ) residents to the vibrancy of Albemarle County.

Proclamation Celebrating Juneteenth

WHEREAS, on June 19, 1865, more than two years after the Emancipation Proclamation was signed to free all enslaved people, enslaved Americans in Galveston, Texas, were finally told that they were free from the bondage of slavery and were, for the first time, recognized as citizens of our Nation; and

WHEREAS, Black Americans came to commemorate this day as Juneteenth with celebrations across the country, building new lives and a new tradition that we honor today; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Supervisors recognizes the cultural and historical significance of emancipation and the universally cherished values of liberty and justice; and

WHEREAS, the County of Albemarle, in keeping with the core principles of the United States of America, believes that all persons are created equal and possess unalienable rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT PROCLAIMED, that we, the Albemarle County Board of Supervisors, do hereby recognize June 19, 2023, as Juneteenth to celebrate freedom, the centuries of struggle and progress for civil rights, and to commit towards ensuring an equitable, inclusive community for all.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 8.0 PUBLIC COMMENT

Ms. Christine Putnam lives in the Scottsville district. She is a member of the Albemarle County Solid Waste Alternative Advisory Committee and spoke to recognize several schools for their participation in lunchroom composting of food waste.

Ms. Allison Spillman lives in the White Hall district. Ms. Spillman spoke about the Bellwether Report. She felt ACPS is failing our black and brown students and are not learning to grow and thrive. She also stated that ACPS is not effectively communicating with parents of color.

Ms. Heidi Gillman-Bennett lives in the Samuel Miller district. She spoke about the instructional audit. She believes we have systematic racism in our schools with hidden structures and rules, and this is a system failure. She advised that we need expert guidance and project management and need to add key initiatives for reading.

Ms. Mary McIntyre lives in the Rio District. Ms. McIntyre spoke about the Bellwether Report and asked central office leadership to take accountability.

Ms. Marie Scott lives in the Jack Jouett district. Ms. Scott is a substitute teacher and was disappointed to see the disparaging economic gaps between the schools and academic success.

ITEM NO. 9.0 SCHOOL DIVISION BUSINESS

Agenda Item No. 9.1 3rd Quarter FY 2022-23 Financial Report - [Staff Presentation](#)

Ms. Osborne offered a **motion** that the Albemarle County School Board receive the 3rd Quarter FY 2022-23 Financial Report. Ms. Le seconded the motion. A voice vote was called, and the **motion passed by the following recorded votes:**

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Mr. Alcaro

Motion carried by a 6:0:1 vote.

Agenda Item No. 9.2 - The Board took a break from 7:37 p.m. to 7:50 p.m.

Agenda Item No. 9.3 - Bellwether Report of Instructional Audit

- [Combined Report](#)
- [Holistic Experiences of Students of Color](#)
- [Classroom Level Experiences of Students of Color](#)
- [Role of Systems & Structures](#)
- [Root Causes and Recommendations](#)

Dr. Acuff noted that this was a lot to digest and thanked the group for their diagnostic approach and pointing us in the direction where we needed to be going. She admitted that this has been a challenge for us and we have worked with our strategic plan and our anti racism policies that we were clearly aware that was necessary but insufficient. And this provides us with a tool for going forward. She asked for more information on the theory of change.

Ms. Le stated that she was impressed and grateful that the team was able to get with families and students we have not been able to engage with, and to really be candid. There are things that we've always thought and known, but we have it now in these reports from their mouths with the numbers. She stated that right now we're just at the moment of taking it in, understanding it and verifying and validating what we've thought, but it's much more than that and giving us direction.

Dr. Berlin reflected that she has worked with a lot of school districts and a lot of States and organizations in general who wouldn't have the guts to first do this RFP and engage with such a high-quality organization. And then sit and have this put out publicly. She gave a huge thank you to Dr. Haas's leadership for doing that, for knowing that we have some issues and for saying we are going to face those issues, we are going to make them public, and we are going to take the first step. She thanked Bellwether for the comprehensive nature and for not being focused on just one thing, but for looking at all the levels. She thinks one of the things we need to think about as a board and as a division are kind of what are those next steps. The task force has started this, but she would like the task force and the board to sit down and spend time going into this. There are some listening sessions that are happening tonight, but what over the next, two to three months are those listening and discussion sessions at all levels in an accessible way like. What is the cost of implementation and what are those things that we need to think about now and what are those things that we need to budget for in the future? And what is the long-term plan that keeps us accountable.

Mr. Paige asked about the report stating brown students were being guided into technical jobs, and not into going to college. What would that be related to? -- There is significant value to career and technical education. What we saw, were that Black and Hispanic students were disproportionately enrolled in those classes. It raised the question for us about expectations for those students and their post-secondary pathways relative to other students. Another important metric to look at is that Black and Hispanic students are disproportionately taking algebra. One in 9th grade compared to their white and Asian peers who disproportionately take it in the middle grade years. That again speaks to both

expectations. But then how those expectations result in the course taking of students as early as elementary school to inform them the secondary math.

Ms. Le pointed out some of the ways that we've tried to remove barriers have been passive. And the report is more active. We've removed some barriers to taking advanced classes in secondary, but we haven't pushed the kids from first through all the way to get there.

Dr. Acuff remarked that she liked the part of the report that talked about educating adults, which is clearly more than the teachers and it includes educating the school board as well. But also, with respect to math. That goes with getting the information out to families, and the guidance counselors and the people who help select those courses and explain that what's available, and why it's important and how it can impact your further choices.

Mr. Paige asked about examples of Theory of Change. -- Bellwether will aggregate some and send them on to the division.

Dr. Berlin asked about the disproportionate suspensions and what they found. -- This is not a problem that is just at ACPS, this is a problem that's across the country. There's no, ill intention, but when you have a student population at a school that is a majority African American, majority Hispanic population of teachers is 80% women. But there is a gap of understanding. There are some places where learning can happen to grow. How do we understand the needs of those students? And supports. And sometimes the support that we have at your disposal may not be enough. So, what do you do? You send them home; you send them to ISS. There's just figuring out what are the issues of dealing with and how do we invest more. Is it hiring more male teachers of color? What is the investment to support not just students but also support the adults in learning how to navigate when students misbehave or disengage? If they're engaged, they behave. If they're engaged in rigorous material, they behave.

Chair Callsen talked about next steps. She commented that we're coalescing around the idea that we need to develop the theory of change, which would be a tangible next step. -- Putting together some materials for teachers to be able to view their understanding of these four reports and their recommendations. Having those conversations across the division, but also in the community in authentic and accessible places. Bellwether cautioned the Division about trying to do all of this work and doing it quickly. This is thoughtful, intentional work. There's research that says it takes two to three years for a teacher to internalize a new curriculum and for that internalization to show up in their practice. There are no quick fixes, this as a multi-year plan. It's important to build the capacity of adults to support teachers in schools. It is that reading specialists, interventionist instructional coaches and equity specialist are really trusted as experts in both the curriculum resources as well as instructional practices so that they can provide that job and then it's support for the teachers who are interacting with content and students. Add one more piece is around the family engagement. We can't do this work without families.

Dr. Acuff asked about our instructional coaches. Bellwether mentioned that our model for our instructional coaches is an optional model. How would you change that? – Make it not optional.

Dr. Haas announced that there would be a video presented to all the school staff to gain input. What do they see as initial first steps.

Agenda Item No. 9.4 Equity Updates - [Staff Presentation](#)

Dr. Acuff asked for more details about the Anonymous Reports app. -- There was a disconnect between the reporting. There are a larger number of anonymous reports of racism than there were verified that were not recorded in power school for us to pull that data. So, the tech department has put in an extra step to track that data.

Mr. Paige asked how the A-bar tool will be used in the science curriculum. -- It's using that A-bar bar lens, that anti racist, anti-bias lens. Working with teachers is the proposal to bring the experts into the room to figure out how we can make that science curriculum more accessible and reflect our diversity among our students. Very similar to reframing the narrative when students see themselves and they're actively engaged in inquiry-based learning we see a higher engagement with students and applying that to science in a very similar way was where the committee wanted to go with that work.

Chair Callsen commented on policy ACC, regarding metrics, student achievement, gifted identification, and the annual report about disparities that still exist. She was happy to hear about the reporting tool and stated that they get frequent emails that allege racially motivated incidents that she doesn't think we have a good handle on. She would like next year's report diving into some of those other areas that the policy touches on.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 10.0 OTHER BUSINESS - None.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 11.0 ADJOURNMENT - At 9:28 p.m., hearing no objections, Chair Callsen adjourned the meeting of the Albemarle County School Board.

Chair

Clerk