

## MINUTES

### REGULAR MEETING OF THE ALBEMARLE COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD

Thursday, August 10, 2023

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

**BOARD MEMBERS** - Dr. Kate Acuff, Mr. Jonno Alcaro, Ms. Katrina Callsen, Ms. Judy Le, Ms. Ellen Osborne, Mr. Graham Paige, and Student Representative, Ms. Weining Ding.

**ABSENT** - Dr. Rebecca Berlin.

**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; 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 5:15 p.m., Dr. Acuff 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 the potential future resignation and/or assignments of School Board members; 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. The purpose of the item in the closed meeting is to discuss legal issues in connection with a resolution for public sector collective bargaining, the MOU with Albemarle County related to a school resource officer, and the VDOE's new model policy for the treatment of transgender students in public schools. Mr. Alcaro seconded the **motion**. **Roll was called, and the motion passed by the following recorded votes:**

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

**NAYS:** None.

**ABSENT:** Dr. Berlin.

**Motion carried by a 6:0:1 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., Dr. Acuff 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:** Mr. Paige, Dr. Acuff, Mr. Alcaro, Ms. Le, Ms. Osborne, and Chair Callsen

**NAYS:** None

**ABSENT:** Dr. Berlin

**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

## AGENDA ITEM NO. 3.0 APPROVAL OF AGENDA

**Agenda Item No. 3.1 Approval of Agenda** - Ms. Le offered a **motion** to approve the agenda. Mr. Paige seconded the **motion**. **Voice vote was called, and the motion passed with the following recorded votes:**

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

**NAYS:** None

**ABSENT:** Dr. Berlin

**Motion carried by a 6:0:1 vote.**

## AGENDA ITEM NO. 4.0 APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

Ms. Osborne offered a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Ms. Le **seconded the motion**. **Voice vote was called, and the motion passed with the following recorded votes:**

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

**NAYS:** None

**ABSENT:** Dr. Berlin

**Motion carried by a 6:0:1 vote.**

- 4.1 - Approval of Consent Agenda
- 4.2 - Approval of the Minutes
- 4.3 – Architectural Selection for Southern Feeder Pattern Elem School [Info Only]
- 4.4 – High School Center II
- 4.5 - For Information: Policy, Review and Revision
- 4.6 - For Action: Policy, Review and Revision
- 4.7 – Adoption of Middle and High School Instructional Resources
- 4.8 – School-Based Crisis Management Plan
- 4.9 – School Crisis Management Plan
- 4.10 – Exemption from Compulsory Attendance
- 4.11 – Religious Exemption
- 4.12 – Religious Exemption
- 4.13 – Religious Exemption
- 4.14 – Religious Exemption
- 4.15 – Personnel Action
- 4.16 – Personnel Action – Athletic Coaches
- 4.17 – School Naming Review

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

At 6:35 p.m., Chair Callsen announced that it was her desire to step down as the Chair of the Albemarle County School Board and turn the position over to the Vice Chair, Ms. Judy Le. Ms. Callsen will stay on as a School Board Member, representing the Rio district. She thanked her colleagues individually for their support and encouragement of her time as the Chair. She is positive that Ms. Le will do a fantastic job as the Chair and looking forward to her leadership.

Ms. Osborne offered a motion to nominate Dr. Kate Acuff as the Vice Chair of the School Board for the remainder of the 2023 calendar year. Mr. Alcaro **seconded the motion. Roll was called, and the motion passed with the following recorded votes:**

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

**Motion carried by a 5:0:1:1 vote.**

**AGENDA ITEM NO. 6.0 ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**Agenda Item No. 6.1 Spotlight on Education - Presented by Student Representative Weining Ding.**

Two years ago, this Board had the privilege of working with the University of Virginia's Equity Center on a new idea. The Center approached the school division about a program that, among other goals, would create a system of support for local youth from historically marginalized communities that can lead to admission to UVA or the college or career choice that

best meets a student's interests and needs. The Center proposed a pilot program that eventually involved Burley Middle School students, and which tested the concept that it was possible to bring to life the vision that, "All learners will believe in their power to embrace learning, to excel, and own their own future." Thus, was born the Equity Center's Starr Hill Pathways.

It was the perfect collaboration with strategic initiatives already underway in the school division, specifically around Career Learning Communities. Middle school is a formative time in the life of a youth; a time when career interests and passions begin to take clarity and when awareness and confidence sharpen.

The partnership between the Equity Center and ACPS has focused on energizing community-based organizations to improve student successes and mitigate opportunity gaps, to prepare local youth for post-secondary education, to ensure they are thriving socially and emotionally, and to provide access to a wide variety of enrichment opportunities and support networks. The old axiom that good news travels far and wide was much in evidence earlier this year.

That's when the program received notice that the W.T. Grant Foundation together with such donors as the Bezos Family Foundation, was awarding Starr Hills Pathways a three-year grant of \$650,000 to, in the words of the application, "Bridge Institutions to Close Youth Opportunity Gaps., a co-written grant between our Department of Community Engagement and the Equity Center. Opportunity and achievement gaps long have challenged the mission of public education, undermined community support and confidence, discouraged the best and brightest from being valued contributors and severely limited the lifestyles of large groups of citizens and communities.

These gaps have undermined the potential of the free-market system and of a democratic society itself. Starr Hill promises a solution that has evaded communities for many years by demonstrating that people are not consigned to limits because of their life experiences, their culture or ethnicity, their countries of origin, their sex or gender. With us this evening to talk about the UVA-ACPS partnership is UVA's Equity Center Executive Director, Dr. Ben Allen, our school division's Equity Data Scientist, Dr. Russell Carlock and two very talented students.

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

Ms. Allison Spillman resides in the White Hall district. She spoke to the board about bus transportation. She asked that ACPS open schools earlier and keep them open later, expand EDEP and use more passenger vans. She also asked administrators to earn their CDL license to help with the transportation issue.

Ms. Kellie Washington lives in the Rio district. She is a former bus driver and came tonight to speak with the community. She asked how many drivers were lost due to discrimination and management issues. She stated that upper management is the problem.

Ms. Kira Sullivan is a White Hall resident. She spoke about her frustration with bus routes and the transportation system.

Ms. Megan Nabb lives in the Scottsville district. She also spoke about her frustration with bus routes and the transportation system.

Ms. Jen Turner Warren lives in the Rio district. She spoke about her frustration that only new SpEd teachers will receive a bonus and not all SpEd teachers.

Ms. Davisha Curry lives in the Samuel Miller district and spoke about the bus driver shortage and asked the board to find a better solution.

Ms. Lauri Tamberrino lives in the Scottsville district and spoke about the lack of bus routes for Walton Middle School.

Mr. Nathan Alderman lives in the White Hall district and spoke about support for the LGBTQ+ students and the current School Board Policy.

Ms. Crissy Knight is a White Hall district resident. She came to the board meeting to speak about the bus driver shortage.

Ms. Brittany Johnson lives in the Jack Jouett district and spoke about the bus transportation issues and elementary after-school care.

Mr. James Atkinson lives in the Scottsville district and spoke about the bus service shortage.

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

Assistant Superintendent for Organizational Development, Dr. Clare Keiser gave an update on the Human Resources Department.

We welcomed close to 215 new teachers to Albemarle County Public Schools during New Teacher Academy, which is being held this week. They have begun to build relationships with each other, meeting others from their own school and from across the division. During the four days they learned about their students and the school itself, and they spent time in their classrooms as they orient themselves to their new job. They have learned about our resources and about the support that exists for them as new teachers. Dr. Keiser thanked Ms. Callsen for her opening remarks to the group on Tuesday and Dr. Acuff for joining us for the opening session, she also thanked the departments of professional learning, community engagement, technology and human resources for their collaboration and leadership in making the Academy a success.

While hiring continues to be a challenge across all areas, we continue to be able to recruit and hire in many different areas. As of this morning, we have about 30 teachers to hire. This means that we have a teacher fill rate of about 98%. While this is comparable to where we started the school year last year, we are committed to not taking our foot off the gas. We continue to focus on diversifying our teaching staff. Today, of our teacher hires of about 25% are teachers of color. Last Friday Human Resources held a recruitment fair as we continue to work to fill non-teaching vacancies as well. We had 49 attempting to come in from that event to include the school-based support positions, IDEP, building services, child nutrition, transportation,

and other support areas. Transportation continues to be a concern, and we are pleased to share that we have been able to make job offers to four drivers who we met at the recruitment fair who are now going through the training process.

Chief Operating Officer, Ms. Rosalyn Schmitt, gave an update on the Transportation Department.

The Board of Supervisors approved an ordinance that will allow speed cameras in school zones. The police are planning a pilot of this program along Hydraulic Road, in front of Albemarle High School.

We continue to experience a bus driver shortage. We've spent the last several months on various strategies that would put us in a much better position than last year. We have actively recruited and currently have the highest salary in the region for bus drivers. We created an 8-hour position, advertised for aids to monitor students, and support our drivers, and we attempted to recruit from existing non driving staff, increase walk zones, create increased stacked routes, and bus stops to maximize resources. We currently can serve about 8600 students. - about 90% of students who registered for transportation. We prioritize routes with a higher percentage of students at risk of lower academic achievement and we now have a flex driver pool which will serve short term absences. Last year we were challenged by late buses and calling families in the morning about delays. This should be mitigated this year. Unfortunately, as you heard from public comment, it's not all good news. Despite all efforts, we still need 12 drivers, and we notified our families of nearly 1000 students that we did not have a driver at this time. We understand the incredible impact this has on families. We are grateful to our school principals who are thinking creatively and trying to staff early drop off to accommodate working families. We are working with families if they want to pursue an alternate stop. We will be actively monitoring ridership and consolidating routes where possible. Last year, our average daily ridership was less than 6000 students. That means there's a huge gap between those that registered and those who ride. We will continue to emphasize the message to all our families that if you do not need transportation, please let us know. Lastly and most importantly, we're continuing to hire drivers and we are pleased to say we're seeing progress there. As a reminder, once a new hire passes background checks and other higher requirement training takes. 6 to 12 weeks. The other good news on the hiring front is we are seeing an increase in applicants that have a CDL already, which helps that training timeline.

Ms. Callsen asked about parents asking for alternate routes. - Yes, parents can find an alternate route that they are able to get their student to in the mornings and pick up from in the afternoon, and we have space on the bus, we can assign that child to the bus.

This year we made it, so you had to opt in for a bus route, and we ended up with the same number of people signing up with their kids on buses. We ask that if you have signed up for a bus, and your student is not in need, please contact your school and let the office know you are no longer in need of transportation.

Dr. Acuff asked about absenteeism data from last year. – Last year absenteeism was monitored by the schools, and we had a hard time tracking that. This year we are having bus drivers monitor ridership. After ten consecutive absences, students will be dropped from the rolls.

Ms. Osborne inquired about the schools that will open early and stay open late – how this will affect their budget. – They will receive staffing, materials, and snacks, that’s in addition to what they would regularly have.

Ms. Callsen, who was not feeling well, left at 7:48 p.m.

## AGENDA ITEM NO. 9.0 – SCHOOL DIVISION BUSINESS

### Agenda Item No. 9.1 – Sustainability Program Update + ACES Annual Report – Lindsay Snoddy

ACPS has historically been a leader in sustainability initiatives. This presentation reviewed past initiatives, current initiatives, and the first annual report from the Advisory Committee for Environmental Sustainability (ACES).

- [ACPS Sustainability Update Presentation \(2022-2023\)](#)
- [Advisory Committee for Environmental Sustainability Annual Report](#)
- [Draft Policy FECBA - Sustainable Construction](#)

Mr. Alcaro asked how often the dashboard was updated – monthly.

### Agenda Item No. 9.2 – Fall 2023 – Redistricting Study Proposed Scope – Rosalyn Schmitt

At the July 13, 2023, Board meeting, staff presented a proposed scope for a redistricting study of the northern feeder pattern. Tonight, staff recapped the scope and provided additional information requested by the Board about high school capacity.

- [Proposed Redistricting Study - Fall 2023 \[Presentation\]](#)
- [Fall 2023 Redistricting Study \[Overview\]](#)

Dr. Acuff asked if we think we can fill all the redistricting committee spots that we are looking for. – We think the challenge is going to be getting a diverse group. There will have to be some proactive outreach, but we acknowledge that it will be significant.

Dr. Acuff offered a motion to adopt the Fall 2023 Redistricting Study proposed scope as presented. Ms. Osborne **seconded the motion. Roll was called, and the motion passed with the following recorded votes:**

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

**NAYS:** None

**ABSENT:** Dr. Berlin, Ms. Callsen

**Motion carried by a 5:0:2 vote.**

Dr. Acuff offered a motion to offer a show of support for School Board Member, Mr. Graham Paige to run for the Chair of the Central Virginia Regional District. Mr. Alcaro

seconded the motion. Roll was called, and the motion passed with the following recorded votes:

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

Motion carried by a 5:0:2 vote.

**No. 10.0 OTHER BUSINESS**

Dr. Acuff shared that herself, Supervisor Diantha McKeel, and Lindsay Snoddy met with representatives of the Ben Hair Foundation. The Foundation is interested in putting a swimming pool on the Lambs Lane Campus. It is challenging, but they are very focused on making sure our students know how to swim. It would be done for the donation of about an acre of land. It would not be a competition pool for a swim team, it would be for all kids to learn to swim. Dr. Acuff will keep the Board posted.

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

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

**AGENDA ITEM NO. 11.0 ADJOURNMENT** - At 8:28 p.m., hearing no objections, Chair Le adjourned the meeting of the Albemarle County School Board.

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Chair

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Clerk