

MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING OF THE ALBEMARLE COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD
ALBEMARLE COUNTY
Thursday, February 9, 2023 (5:00 PM)

A Regular Board Meeting of the Albemarle County School Board was held on February 9, 2023 at 6:30 p.m. at the Albemarle County Office Building – 401 McIntire Road, Charlottesville, VA

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

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

ABSENT: Dr. Kate Acuff

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; Assistant Director for Technology Integration, Mr. Kley Todd; Local Government Information Technology, Mr. Jason Inofuentes; Interim Clerk to the School Board, Ms. Christine Thompson

Agenda Item No. 1.0 CLOSED MEETING

At 5:00 p.m., Ms. Le offered a motion that the 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: 1. 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; 2. 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 3. Subsection 8 for the consideration with legal counsel employed or retained by a public body 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, Ms. Le, and Ms. Callsen.

NAYS: None.

Absent: Dr. Acuff

Motion carried by a 6:0:1 vote.

Agenda Item No. 2.0 OPENING ACTIVITIES

Agenda Item No. 2.1 Closed Meeting Certification

At 6:30 p.m., Ms. Le 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: Ms. Osborne, Mr. Paige, Mr. Alcaro, Dr. Berlin, Ms. Le, and Ms. Callsen.

NAYS: None.

Absent: Dr. Acuff

Motion carried by a 6:0:1 vote.

Agenda Item No. 2.2 Call to Order

At 6:32 p.m., Chair Callsen called the Albemarle County School Board back to order.

Agenda Item No. 2.3 Pledge of Allegiance

Agenda Item No. 2.4 Moment of Silence

Agenda Item No. 3.0 APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Agenda Item No. 3.1 Approval of Agenda

Mr. Paige offered a **motion** to approve the agenda. **Dr. Berlin** seconded the motion. By consensus, **the motion passed by the following votes:**

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

NAYS: None.

Absent: Dr. Acuff

Motion carried by a 6:0:1 vote.

Agenda Item No. 4.0 APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

- 4.1 Approval of Consent Agenda
- 4.2 Donations and Reimbursements to School Division FY 2022-23 – 2nd Quarter
- 4.3 FY 22-23 Carry Forward of Fund Balances
- 4.4 Adoption of AP Calculus Textbook
- 4.5 Personnel Action
- 4.6 EVAAC 1/23/2023 Meeting Minutes
- 4.7 COVID-19 Status Update

Ms. Osborne offered a **motion** approve the consent agenda. Mr. Paige **seconded** the motion. By consensus, **the motion passed by the following votes:**

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Dr. Acuff

Motion carried by a 6:0:1 vote.

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

February is designated as School Board Appreciation Month, and Student Representative to the Board, Ms. Sanuthi Amarasinghe honored the School Board with the Spotlight on Education introduction.

I had the opportunity the other day to do a little research and I discovered that during 2022, there were 34 meetings of this Board. This estimate, of course, is only a snapshot of the dedication of School Board members

who dedicate many hours serving on important committees, visit our schools, attend community forums and conversations, interact with myriad government officials on behalf of our students, families and employees, respond to constituents and participate in such important events as graduations and other celebrations at many of our schools.

February is School Board Appreciation Month and the theme this year is *Rising to the Challenge*.

These words and the responsibilities they embrace could not be a more fitting description of the leadership, courage and focus of this Board. Each of you has made standing up for the equity, excellence, families and communities and wellness values in our strategic plan, each of you has made this standard operating procedure. Despite appearances, this is never as easy as it sounds.

Here's how the Virginia School Board Association characterizes this month--- "An opportunity for your school division and community to build a stronger understanding of the crucial role school boards assume in a representative democracy." As the student representative on this Board, I have a unique vantage point with which to view this crucial role. I am certain that there is no one in our audience this evening, in person or at home, whose life has been un-lifted by the work of this Board.

One of our schools took to heart the meaningfulness of this occasion. They made this Board their own study of democracy. Fourth and fifth graders at Red Hill Elementary School researched the role of School Boards and thoughtfully considered how you have changed their lives. In the spirit of representative democracy, I would suggest they speak for students across every one of our schools in expressing what your service has meant to them. Red Hill's outstanding principal, Nancy McCullen, is with us this evening and she has some very special guests with her. I would like to ask Principal McCullen and her guests to join us at the podium and share with us, their own insight and maybe a gift that say Thank You much more forcefully than I can.

VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION – HISTORY AND SOCIAL SCIENCE STANDARDS

Resolution read into the record by Vice Chair Le

WHEREAS, every seven years, as provided for in the Code of Virginia, the state Department of Education is required to review and approve the history and social science standards for all public school divisions in the Commonwealth; and,

WHEREAS, these standards directly impact student discovery, understanding and learning about the historical events, influences and developments that have shaped our state and nation, resulting in a better informed and responsible citizenry, committed to equality and justice under the law and the prosperity of all communities, and,

WHEREAS, these standards at their most optimum, must advance, within each student, the knowledge and skills required to strengthen our democratic institutions, including the constitutional rights and privileges and protections of all, and the guarantee of equality and justice for all, and,

WHEREAS, these standards offer the opportunity for all Albemarle County students to realize the promise of our strategic plan, that all graduates possess such vital and cherished civic, personal and professional competencies as adaptability, anti-racism, creativity, critical thinking, empathy and social justice and inclusion,

WHEREAS, the process by which these outcomes are best achieved is a collaborative one, in which all voices are heard and respected, governed by the wisdom, experience and judgement of those closest to the classroom, whose professional insight and student relationships provide them with a unique perspective on how to engage students in serious matters of study, and,

WHEREAS, WHEREAS just such a group of social studies teachers from across the Commonwealth came together over the course of an extended period of time to develop recommendations on standards that are responsive to the learning needs and the academic development of students in 2023 and beyond, and,

WHEREAS, this research and collective input were conducted at the behest of the state Department of Education in 2020 but unilaterally rejected by the state Department of Education in 2022, and,

WHEREAS, these actions have been described by the National Council for Social Studies, the Virginia Social Studies Leaders Consortium, the American Historical Association and the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development as a “breach of the public trust,” and,

WHEREAS, the department of education has put forth a set of standards, using an approach described by the above professional organizations as “lacking transparency and developed in isolation,” and,

WHEREAS, this new version would return students to the rote learning that ill prepared students for lifelong learning and success, contrary to the commitment of this Board to all Albemarle County public school students and families, and

WHEREAS, these new standards contain such serious factual inaccuracies as describing the founding of the NAACP in the early 20th century as a part of the reconstruction that took place just after the Civil War, and,

WHEREAS, the proposed new standards for the next seven years conflict with the goals of the Albemarle County Public Schools social studies curriculum, which emphasizes project-based learning, student-initiated research, the use by students of primary sources, the promotion of critical thinking skills, the exploration and examination of the experiences and perspectives of all who comprise the history of Virginia and that of the United States, goals which we believe will prepare all students to be valued contributors to the success of their families, communities and organizations, and,

WHEREAS, the state Board of Education will be conducting a public hearing on the department of education’s revised draft standards of learning for social studies at Piedmont Virginia Community College on Wednesday, March 15 beginning at 7 p.m.,

BE IT RESOLVED that the Albemarle County School Board calls upon the state Board of Education to “constructively construct a curriculum framework” consistent with the established collaborative process that governed the development of learning standards for many years, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the state Board of Education revise the proposed standards now before it to incorporate the recommendations of leading educators from across the Commonwealth with a strong emphasis on standards that are wholly truthful, inclusive and inquiry-based, and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that all interested parties be urged to attend and submit comments to the state Board of Education during the public hearing that will be conducted at Piedmont Virginia Community College next month prior to the Board’s decision on the new standards that is expected to be finalized on April 20.

Ms. Osborne offered a **motion** to submit a **resolution** to be forwarded to the Virginia Department of Education on the review and approval of the history and social science standards for all public school divisions. Mr. Paige seconded the **motion**. **By consensus, the motion passed by the following votes:**

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Dr. Acuff

Motion carried by a 6:0:1 vote.

SCHOOL BOARD CLERK APPRECIATION WEEK

Mr. Alcaro presented the following resolution --

WHEREAS, the Virginia School Board Association has designated next week, February 12-17 as School Board Clerk Appreciation Week throughout the Commonwealth, and,

WHEREAS, the clerk of the School Board here in Albemarle County is faithful to the fulfillment of the most important duties and responsibilities of this Board, and,

WHEREAS, the responsible discharge of these duties and responsibilities are fundamental to the most sacred of public trusts, that of fair, inclusive and responsive representation of the public interest and of those who elect them to office, and,

WHEREAS, the members of this School Board and the interests of Albemarle County community are best served by public participation on matters of primary public interest, and

WHEREAS, there can be no higher responsibility than the education of children and no greater benefit to a community or country than a well-educated populace, and

WHEREAS, Christine Thompson, as the Clerk of this Board, has supported, with great determination, skill and adaptability, Board members and the public on these matters of primary public interest, including the facilitation of public participation with School Board members, and,

WHEREAS, Ms. Thompson has made a difficult transition seamless through the exercise of these outstanding professional qualities,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the third week in February, 2023 be designated as School Board Clerk Appreciation Week in Albemarle County Public Schools, and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the members of the Albemarle County School Board offer their deepest gratitude and appreciation to Ms. Thompson for the exemplary manner in which she has served this Board, this school division and this county as a valued employee of our school division.

Ms. Le offered a **motion** to add into the record the recognition and resolution of School Board Clerk Appreciation Week. Mr. Paige seconded the **motion**. **By consensus, the motion passed by the following votes:**

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Dr. Acuff

Motion carried by a 6:0:1 vote.

LEADERSHIP OF FORMER CHAIR GRAHAM PAIGE – RECOGNITION. Resolution read by Chair Callsen

WHEREAS, on January 12, 2023, our own Gentleman Scholar, Graham Paige, completed his service as Chair of this Board, which dates back to July of 2020, and,

WHEREAS, Mr. Paige’s leadership of this Board was instrumental in guiding our school division through such transformational challenges as the one-in-a-hundred-year occurrence of a global pandemic, the adoption of a new strategic plan, *Learning for All*, the continued implementation of one of the first anti-racism policies of any K-12 school division in our nation, a strengthened partnership with our Albemarle County government partners and new strategies for recruiting and developing world class education professionals, and,

WHEREAS, these accomplishments promoted the goals that Mr. Paige shared with constituents when he first became a candidate for the School Board—to support improvements in the quality of education provided to students; to consistently work towards and achieve parity in the quality of education delivered to all students and to ensure that the school division attracts, develops and maintains excellent teachers and partnerships between schools and the communities they serve, and,

WHEREAS, Mr. Paige as Board Chair, brought an extraordinary degree of trust, collaboration, respect, thoughtfulness and decency to the deliberations and decisions of this Board, presiding over what has to be the largest number of unanimous votes in the history of the Albemarle County School Board, and,

WHEREAS, Mr. Paige’s long and distinguished record of public service includes his representation of the residents of the Samuel Miller Magisterial District for seven years and a nearly quarter century supporting students as a science teacher at Journey Middle School and Western Albemarle High School, and,

WHEREAS, the determination and accountability that Mr. Paige has urged upon all of us, to close achievement gaps, now the focus of a division-wide audit; to expand student choice in selecting fields of study that align with career interests, which will happen in August and to increase mental health services for students, which has resulted in an increase in social and emotional counselors, and,

WHEREAS, Mr. Paige will continue to be the conscience of this Board, as the representative for the Samuel Miller Magisterial District,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the members of the Albemarle County Public School Board express its deepest gratitude for the contributions that Graham Paige has made to the thousands of employees who he so highly values, the many thousands of students whose lives he has influenced and the countless members of the Albemarle County community who benefit from a high-performance school division so vital to their future prosperity.

The Board presented Mr. Paige with a gift of an engraved gavel.

Ms. Le offered a **motion** to add into the record the recognition and resolution of Mr. Graham Paige for his leadership as previous Chair of the Albemarle County School Board. Mr. Alcaro seconded the **motion**. **By consensus, the motion passed by the following votes:**

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Dr. Acuff

Motion carried by a 6:0:1 vote.

Agenda Item No. 7.0 PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Tim Klobuchar lives in the White Hall district. He came to the hearing to provide his support to collective bargaining and the resolution submitted by the Albemarle Education Association.

Ms. Sarah Harris lives in the White Hall district. She voiced her support of collective bargaining.

Mr. Vernon Liechti, President of the AEA, submitted a resolution to the School Board to begin the process of collaborating with the organization on collective bargaining.

Ms. Cheryl Knight, a teacher at Murray Elementary School asked the Board to work together as a team on collective bargaining.

Ms. Mary McIntire lives in the RIO district. She read a statement from Mr. Bill Mack, a former bus driver with ACPS. In support of collective bargaining.

Mr. Kellen Squire lives in the Rivanna district and is a part time nurse. Spoke of working in support of ACPS staff through the pandemic and is in support of the collective bargaining resolution.

Ms. Melissa Brown is an AHS teacher and lives in the White Hall district. Spoke in support of collective bargaining.

Mr. Chris Seaman is a parent and lives in the White Hall district. He spoke in support of collective bargaining. Stated that it strengthens public schools and is good public policy.

Ms. Elizabeth Nicholson asked for employees to have a seat at the table in their employment and is in support of collective bargaining.

Ms. Sally Duncan is a parent and substitute for ACPS. She asked the Board to partner with staff on collective bargaining.

Ms. Amy Laufer is a teacher in ACPS. Stated teachers are asking for the support of the School Board.

Ms. Meg Bryce is a teacher at Meriwether Lewis Elementary School and lives in the Samuel Miller district. She spoke on the renaming of school's process. Stated there needs to be transparency.

Ms. Jami Bogdanich lives in the Samuel Miller district. She stated that trust, transparency and mutual respect was needed in the school renaming process.

Ms Arilana Zlotnick is a school counselor and lives in the Red Hill district. She spoke in support of collective bargaining.

Ms. Jessica Taylor is with the Albemarle Education Association and lives in the Samuel Miller district. She spoke in support of collective bargaining.

Mr. John Keys lives in the Rivanna district. He spoke about an incident that happened at his home after he spoke at a previous meeting, and thanked the Board for their service to the community.

Mr. Brian Vanyo lives in the Samuel Miller district. He spoke about the Burley Middle School community events and the Board response. He asked about the transgender policy and the walkout relating to that policy.

Agenda Item No. 8.0 SCHOOL BOARD/SUPERINTENDENT BUSINESS

Agenda Item No. 8.1 Local Government Broadband Connectivity Update

Albemarle County's Broadband office, Mr. Jason Inofuentes, provided an update on their efforts to connect county residents to the Internet and shared the digital equity work they are doing. Mr. Kley Todd with ACPS Department of Technology shared how they are supporting the county's work.

Dr. Berlin asked which school were most proportionately affected? -- the hot spots are the schools towards the mountains.

Ms. Osborne asked about the English, Spanish translation services for other languages – how will this be addressed? Low income families? – by 2025 fiber optics to homes and affordable.

Dr. Acuff asked about programs – how do they “lock” rates for these families? – The Department of Social Services has been brought in to partnership with the companies. Providers have to commit to providing a low option.

Agenda Item No. 8.2 Transportation Mid-Year Update

In response to the ongoing bus driver shortage, the Board has requested regular updates from the Transportation Department. The Board received a presentation at the beginning of the year and have received updates on the consent agenda in every year prior. This presentation provided a mid-year update on student ridership, staffing, arrival data, and work underway to address current challenges.

Ms. Le asked about the 30% vacancy rate and the long-term medical absences. --Ms. White replied that we have a 98% on-time goal this year and we are hitting recruitment with everything we've got.

Mr. Paige asked about recent resignations. -- Ms. White explained that some are personnel issues that they cannot discuss. Some are life decisions and some are due to illness.

Dr. Berlin asked if type A4 buses were available without wheelchair access. Staff will get back to the Board on this information.

Ms. Le asked how popular the 8-hour shift has been. – Ms. White responded that there has not been a lot of movement in those positions.

Ms. Callsen asked when we would get another update to keep parents in the loop. – Ms. White responded that we would provide more information at the next meeting and would provide more information in the next Bright Arrow message.

Mr. Paige commented that he has seen the commercial recently put out by transportation and thinks it will be effective and hopes we will get some momentum going with new drivers.

Ms. Callsen thanked Ms. White for her presentation – she can see that she is pivoting and her staff is working very hard to overcome the obstacles.

Agenda Item No. 9.0 SCHOOL DIVISION BUSINESS

None

Agenda Item No. 10.0 OTHER BUSINESS

None

Agenda Item No. 11.0 ADJOURNMENT

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

Chair

Clerk