

MINUTES
WORK SESSION OF THE ALBEMARLE COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD
Thursday, May 25, 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. Sanuthi Amarasinghe

ABSENT - None

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE - Superintendent Matthew Haas; School Board Attorney Ross Holden; 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 5:00 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 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 4 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. Dr. Acuff seconded the **motion. A voice vote 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.

*Ms. Callsen arrived at 5:15 p.m.

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 6:30 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: 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.

Agenda Item No. 2.3 - Roll Call

Agenda Item No. 2.4 - Pledge of Allegiance

Agenda Item No. 2.5 - Moment of Silence

At 6:32 p.m., Mr. Paige offered a **motion** to appoint Employee A into an administrative position as recommended. 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, Mr. Alcaro, Dr. Berlin, and Chair Callsen
NAYS: None
ABSENT: None

Motion carried by a 7:0 vote.

At 6:33 p.m., Dr. Acuff offered a **motion** to approve the employee list of appointments as recommended. Mr. Alcaro 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, Mr. Alcaro, and Chair Callsen
NAYS: None
ABSENT: None

Motion carried by a 7:0 vote.

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. Dr. Acuff seconded the **motion**. **A voice vote was called, and the motion passed by the following recorded votes:**

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

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. Alcaro 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, Mr. Alcaro, and Chair Callsen

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

Motion carried by a 7:0 vote.

- 4.1 Approval of Consent Agenda
- 4.2 Approval of Minutes
- 4.3 COVID-19 Status Update
- 4.4 Personnel Action
- 4.5 Personnel Action - Athletic Coaches
- 4.6 Policy, Review, and Revision - Action
- 4.7 Policy, Review, and Revision - Information
- 4.8 Approval of K-5 Learning Resources to Support Social Studies
- 4.9 2023-2024 Federal Programs Grant Applications - Review

AGENDA ITEM NO. 5.0 ITEMS PULLED FROM CONSENT AGENDA - None.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 6.0 PUBLIC COMMENT

Ms. Samantha Fischbeck lives in the White Hall district. Ms. Fischbeck spoke about the PE curriculum and the effect it has on students with eating disorders. She explained that ED is not a choice; it is a psychological disease that has life-long consequences. Administrators tell students who give them letters from doctors that their “hands are tied” when they ask to be excused from PE classes. This approach is beyond dangerous and could be fatal. This is a disorder that cannot be controlled, this is a matter of life or death.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 7.0 ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. Alcaro offered a **motion** to appoint Ms. Katie Walker to the Long-Range Planning Advisory Committee. Dr. Acuff seconded the **motion. A voice vote was called, and the motion passed by the following recorded votes:**

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

Motion carried by a 7:0 vote.

On Friday, Mr. Alcaro attended the Community Action Projects (CAP) presentations at Monticello High School. Some of the topics included sex trafficking, recycling, mental health issues, gun violence, the homeless crisis, water cleanup in Charlottesville, speed limits, and providing helpful resources. It was extremely worthwhile.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 80 SCHOOL BOARD / SUPERINTENDENT BUSINESS

Chair Callsen announced that during tomorrow's pre-agenda meeting she is planning to map out the rest of our sessions for the remainder of the year. She will also add our working document to the June 8 Agenda during Other Business. She asked the board to go to the documents and if they have any suggestions for sessions, they want to see this year, this is the time to get those in. She also commended the board for meeting our goal and visiting every school in our system this year.

Dr. Berlin shared that she was approached by bus drivers who recommended the board should take a bus ride in the upcoming year. It would be a great way to get out and visit schools.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 9.0 SCHOOL DIVISION WORK SESSION

English Learners comprise approximately 11% of the students in ACPS. ACPS has students who speak 81 languages from 96 different countries. This presentation provided an overview of demographic and language data as well as a deep conversation about the achievement and language acquisition of EIs. School board members participated in work groups to understand the programming for a particular school. Presenters – Deputy Superintendent Ms. Debora Collins, Assistant Director of ESOL Ms. Lauren McLean, International Recue Committee Mr. Monte Hackney, Burley MS Ms. Laura Lewis, Monticello HS Ms. Jennifer Timms, Greer ES Ms. Hannah Handrich. [EL Presentation](#)

Agenda Item No. 9.1 English Language Learners (ELL)

Dr. Acuff asked about measuring progress and how we operated during COVID. -- In some ways it's a reflection of VDOE pausing the proficiency requirements, but we think this really speaks to the amount of hard work our teachers are putting in.

Dr. Berlin stated that before we announced the Algebra I scores, she was looking at them and thought it was amazing and it also made her think about what are the things that were doing that we continue to do for that group? "That's tremendously so proud and the students. You're building connections, you're building relationships."

Mr. Alcaro – There was a big drop off in the numbers from year one to year two. Is that because the numbers were so high? -- It's a combination of the numbers being particularly high for immigrant youth last year, but also the numbers were especially low the two years prior due to border closures, due to the pandemic.

Mr. Paige - Given all the languages that so many students have, especially the ones from Afghanistan; when they first come to your classroom, is there anybody there that's able to speak any of those native languages? -- We don't always have teachers that speak their native language. This year, we hired a TA who speaks five of those languages presented from Afghanistan.

Ms. Osborne – Asked about the Stepping Out program, how it is implemented in Greer and other schools. -- It started with some of our Bright Stars teachers, and they expanded it out to the whole school. This year we kicked off our culturally responsive teaching and professional development for the staff at Stepping Out. We do a lot of learning about how to partner with families and then apply that to the rest of the year of our CRT work. We do two days of professional development about how to center around the comfort of the family. When you go into a family's home, and we do a lot of work around strategies you can use to make that experience comfortable. We have two teachers together: a resource teacher and a general ed teacher.

Chair Callsen commented that she likes the asset-based thinking approach referring to English learners. She asked - How do we achieve parity between schools? How do we make sure that all our schools are doing the best approach to English Language Learners and making sure that they're taking the curriculum? How do we decide which models we're going to follow, which ones are best practice, and making sure that it's not quite as dependent on having motivated people making all those choices? How does EL work with Mountain View and our dual language schools and what are we doing there? -- The conversation around our language instruction education programs does depend sometimes on the demographics of each of our schools. We've met with the school leaders to talk through their programming for next year. And then we also made a big effort to get this data out to everybody as quickly as possible so that they have it for making their class list and for doing scheduling for next year so it can be a focus for us in figuring that out. One thing we've seen is a focus on coaching. We've really been pushing to make sure that more of our English learners are getting taught classes,

and that's what we see at Greer and at Burley, and that's where we see our long-term ELs. If you're in a dual language program, the road to your biliteracy takes a little longer.

Ms. Osborne asked, "If you could ask the Board for anything what would it be?" -- One is making sure that we have time to do professional development and professional learning with all of our teachers. Making sure we're talking to our school leaders, especially as we have school leaders who move between different schools. Talking to school leaders and talking to their general education teachers about how to support all their learners. And the second is that we are always thinking about how we can reach our youngest learners earlier. We would love to just continue to think about how we're supporting them because we know that the younger you start learning the language the easier it is for you.

Dr. Acuff asked how we staff ESL teachers. – It's a separate allocation. It's based on a percentage, but also the level of the student.

Agenda Item No. 9.2 The Board took a break from 7:42 p.m. to 7:53 p.m.

Agenda Item No. 9.3 Empowering our English Learners

Ms. Le commented about transportation for EL families and how much our transportation issues throughout the year affected our families. They don't quite understand the communication. She also wondered how we can break down silos by getting all teachers, all of our instructors to get PD for teaching EL.

Ms. Osborne talked about more staff being trained. We know that it's an intensive training, but wondered if perhaps we should set some goals around that and maybe have a test site. We also talked about the need to create a unified curriculum similar to the one at Monticello. Ms. Osborne loves these work sessions because they give her more insight to what's going on, but does hope that something actionable comes out.

Mr. Paige noted that he is concerned about professional development in the program. He hopes that it will be worked in because he believes it would have a fantastic effect. He was impressed with the dedication of the staff at Monticello. He heard a lot about professional development for the EL teachers when they would push into content area and help instructors learn how to work with English language learners. He wants these teachers to also be on the receiving end of professional development and not always be the ones who are helping other teachers.

Dr. Haas commended Ms. McLean stating "You are an amazing change agent. I want to salute our teachers and teacher leaders. They are often unrecognized and behind the scenes and have tremendous success with students. Also recognizing you have harnessed all that energy and brought some innovative practices to our schools. You're like a person from the future. You are, you have worked in other places, you brought with you practices you know, but you've also not used the cooker cookie cutter approach to apply them. And so that's why our pace is quickening in terms of helping students at the

same time our ELL population is growing.” Dr. Haas also mentioned that he was remiss in announcing that Dr. Cassandra Blount from Burley Middle School was in the audience.

Ms. Le commented “I also want to thank you from an English learner. The asset-based language is not what I grew up with. I appreciate what you are doing.”

AGENDA ITEM NO. 10.0 OTHER BUSINESS

Agenda Item No. 10.1 Closed Meeting – None.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 11.0 ADJOURNMENT - At 8:41 p.m., hearing no objections, Chair Callsen adjourned the meeting of the Albemarle County School Board.

Clerk

Chair