



MACHINE TRANSCRIPT • CORAGGIO CONSULTING

Albemarle County School Board Regular Meeting, Thursday, December 11, 2025

Date Thursday, December 11, 2025
Place Albemarle County Public Schools / School Board meeting, Virginia
Length 2h 13m (video)

- Official meeting video (YouTube): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P9HXgVsRv4w>

Machine transcript (speech-to-text) produced by Coraggio Consulting. Not an official county record. Names and numbers may be misspelled; check the video at the timestamp before quoting.

Speech-to-text: whisper.cpp, model large-v3-turbo. Produced 2026-10-14. Each paragraph starts with its time [HH:MM:SS] in the meeting video.

[00:00:03] Good evening, everyone. This December 11th school board meeting is now back in session, out of closed meeting. Do we have a motion? Yes, we do, Chair Acuff. I move 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.

[00:00:29] Do we have a second? I second. Motion made by Ms. Lee, seconded by Dr. Berlin. Lauren, can you please call the vote? Yes. Dr. Berlin? Yes. Ms. Pryor?

[00:00:44] Yes. Ms. Osborne? Yes. Ms. Lee? Yes. Mr. Page? Yes. Chair Acuff? Yes. And Ms. Lee, do we have a motion coming out of closed meeting? Yes, we do. I move we approve Christine Peterson as principal of Mountain View Primary School.

[00:01:01] Do we have a second? Motion made by Ms. Lee, seconded by Mr. Page. Any discussion? All those in favor, say aye. Aye. Opposed? Motion passes. Outstanding. With that, why don't we do a roll call, starting with Dr. Hayes.

[00:01:22] Dr. Hayes, Assistant Superintendent of Instruction. Rosalind Schmidt, Chief Operating Officer. Amy Long, Omaha High School Representative. Judy Lee, Rivanna District. Graham Page, Miller District. Kate Acuff, Jack Jewett District. Rebecca Berlin, Whitehall District.

[00:01:39] Ellen Osborne, Scottsville District. Let's look for our Ryo District. Matthew Hawes, Superintendent. Josiah Black, Chief Legal Officer. Lauren Crawford, Acting Clerk of the Board. Outstanding. And who do we have? Officer? Pat McLaughlin, Assistant Superintendent.

[00:01:56] Thank you. Now let us, if we can, stand for the Pledge of Allegiance.

[00:02:17] And now we will have a moment of silence. It's always a sad day when we have to recognize the passing of a staff or student. But on behalf of the school board, I'd like to dedicate this moment of silence to Savion J.C. Henderson, who we lost last month in a vehicle accident at age 17.

[00:02:40] Savion was a senior at Albemarle High School, where his mother also attended. He had a passion for football and a great sense of humor, and will be missed. Now, we have approval of the agenda.

[00:03:13] I move we approve tonight's agenda I second motion made by Ms Lee seconded by Dr Berlin any discussion all those in favor say aye aye opposed motion passes next item on the agenda is spotlight on education uh good evening uh school board members and others um assembled here thank

[00:03:52] You so much for having me to speak about the Albemarle Foundation for Education. Oh, I'm Natalia Sergi, the Executive Director of the Albemarle Foundation for Education, and it is a nonprofit that is exclusively focused on supporting Albemarle County Public Schools and is governed by a dedicated board of directors from varied backgrounds, but all who are committed to public education. Here you can see that the mission of the Albemarle

[00:04:26] Foundation for Education, which is to generate community commitment to ensure that each student in ACPS thrives, is in alignment with the goals, the mission, the vision, the strategic plan of the district. And our goals also align. They come right out of the strategic plan to eliminate opportunity goals, to enhance student well-being, and to support teacher development and retention. Our goal, one of our major focuses is really to supplement the funding

[00:05:05] that comes to the public schools so that we can meet the needs of all of our students, we can support our families, and we can also support our teachers as well. So you'll see as I move forward, we have some goals that we have decided to move forward on in all of those buckets. This is just overview of the foundation's development it was launched in 2022 so it is only three years old and just as our toddlers we are finding our legs finding our purpose and growing as we move through

[00:05:41] the years you can see that the first executive director was hired in 2023 the first grants that were given out were focused on supporting teacher innovation in schools and in classrooms there were grants that were focused on mental health, focused on science, and other areas that teachers were and other staff were working on. In 2024, the foundation integrated the Families Helping Families Fund. That was a fund that was set up for other families to support each other with needs that

[00:06:16] they have. And then the foundation most recently co-hosted the ACPS Back to School Bash, and we've supported the fall and winter mobile markets that just took place in November and December.

[00:06:32] So just a little bit about the fall and winter mobile markets. The fall mobile market was an opportunity for us to support families with food items that they might need. Our families who participated at the Lambs Lane campus were from all across the county.

[00:06:54] So that campus opened up and any families could come to that location. And we did have families that came from across the county. While at Woodbrook, families received the same items up

there, but they also received produce in their boxes.

[00:07:12] And out at Red Hill, they had a mobile market where community partners provided them with full Thanksgiving meals. AFE, so the Elmall Foundation for Education, we shortened it to AFE, supplied the 76 turkeys to Woodbrook.

[00:07:31] The whole mobile market was kind of organized and set up by our Communities in Schools program. And because Woodbrook didn't have a Communities in Schools staff yet, the foundation was able to step in and fill that gap and really work with their staff to support them in having the turkeys that they needed, also organizing, prepping, and distributing the food items to families.

[00:07:59] Overall, we were able to serve through this partnership. We were able to serve 263 families across our county, and we are thankful for the partnerships with communities and schools, the Blue Ridge Area Food Bank, Movement Church, Integrity Mentoring, and the Elks Club, who all helped with our fall mobile market. For the winter mobile market, in addition to food items, we were also able to add grocery store cards. The foundation received a gift through the Charlottesville Area Community Foundation, and we were able to offer over 500 store gift cards

[00:08:38] for families to be able to supplement. We also set aside a portion of those cards to get restaurant cards, so cards that families who are unhoused and are living in motels where they don't have the opportunity to cook, to be able to go and get some food for the short time that they are in their hotels until they can move into a more stable setting.

[00:09:06] The Communities in Schools program added to that a coat and winter wear drive, and we're able to provide those to families. And again, families who came to the Lambs Lane campus could come from across the county. We also, at the end of that event, we also had families that had not signed up, but their friends had told them that it was available and they were in need, and so that we were able to serve them as well.

[00:09:36] so i just wanted to share a little bit about some of the priorities and areas that the foundation is going to focus on we as a board came together and decided upon these priority areas last week so they are fairly new but you will be hearing more about them as we get up and going so under our eliminating opportunities gaps we want to continue to support the sustainability of the communities and schools programs i know that you have heard from them and you have seen their

[00:10:12] progress and the efforts that they are making and so we want to stand with you to support that and to grow that in our county we want to under enhancing student well-being we want to continue to support basic and essential needs such as food security and also we're moving into dental health through a partnership with the lambs lane campus dental task force we also want to expand the awareness of our families helping families fund it's not really well known so we want to continue to grow that so that families know that they can support their neighbor we are also looking

[00:10:49] at supporting teacher development and retention we've been doing that through teacher appreciation events supporting the grill and greets helping with donors choose projects from the classroom some gift certificates that were given out to teachers to allow them to either take care of themselves or many of them are taking care of their students with those gift certificates so we want to continue to do that kind of appreciation for teachers but expand our work into supporting them as they continue to be lifelong learners, while they are supporting their students to become lifetime learners.

[00:11:27] So we want to move into an initiative where we can give out scholarships to teachers and remove barriers for them getting their credentials, their licensing, and just support overall workforce development. So you'll be hearing more about that as we launch that and move forward.

[00:11:45] And then we want to continue to support community engagement and be a representative there. So continuing to work on the back to school bash, the mobile markets, partnering with the Lambs Lane Campus Dental Task Force and other community groups that are doing things that support our students or in areas that we want to move into.

[00:12:11] And then we are also working on just our growth as well. So building the awareness of the foundation, being new, that takes a lot of time to build up your reputation let people know what you're doing so we are continuing to do that through work such as being promoting more working on revamping our website connecting with other community organizations the the board member recruitment is an area that we will launch in february so if you can think of anyone who would be interested in this type of work and supporting

[00:12:48] the county in this way please when we put this out we will send you some information that you can send out to your networks partnership development just making introductions and sharing opportunities with us where we can get involved and then we definitely need to increase our resources so definitely increasing funding so we can do the things that we want to do to support the schools capacity building i'll have some interns from uva and vcu joining me we are open to volunteers that want to work with us as well and then of course building partnerships

[00:13:23] so in that uh qr code there is just the link to our website where you can learn more just note that it might be changing so you might look at it this month it might look different in january but our work and our commitment is the same to the county so thank you for giving me this opportunity to share more and i don't know if i can ask for questions does anyone have any questions i know dr berlin and i are on the board of the foundation but do any does anyone else have any questions yeah quick question um you mentioned that there were five locations for the winter

[00:14:03] market yes exactly where were they uh red hill woodbrook and then the three lambs laying schools came together, and they were outside of Journey. I have had requests from other, from actually families, from other schools for grocery cards. We do have a few left over, so I will work with different schools to make sure that families get those, and I had a family that actually called me from Elmore High School, so I was able to refer them to the communities and schools coordinators

[00:14:39] because they still had a few left over from the event thank you very much atalia thank you with that we move to school board and superintendent business and i would like to invite mr page down

[00:15:00] to the front with me i would like to invite ms prior down to the front with me as some of you

[00:15:34] know mr page is retiring after at the end at midnight december 31st this year from from the school board and I have a resolution honoring his service. Whereas Graham M. Page, a lifelong resident of Esmont, Virginia and proud graduate of Jackson P.

[00:15:54] Burley High School has devoted his life to education, community service, and the students and families of Albemarle County. Whereas Mr. Page brought to his school board service the experience and wisdom of a 30-year teaching career including 25 years as a science teacher at Jack Jewett Middle School

and Western Albemarle High School where he inspired countless students through his passion for learning and belief in their potential.

[00:16:22] And whereas Mr. Page was first elected on November 2, 2015 to fill an unexpired term representing the Samuel Miller Magisterial District and for the past 10 years has served with dedication, humility, and an unwavering commitment to educational excellence for all students.

[00:16:42] Whereas throughout his tenure, Mr. Page championed the principle that all means all, working tirelessly to close the opportunity and achievement gaps, advance equity, and ensure that every student, regardless of background, circumstance, or school, receives the highest quality education that Albemarle County Public Schools can provide, whereas Mr. Page has been a steadfast advocate for attracting, developing and retaining excellent educators and for strengthening the partnerships between schools and the communities they serve, and whereas, this is long because he's been

[00:17:21] here 10 years, right? Whereas he represented Albemarle County with distinction at the state level, including his service on the Virginia School Boards Association Board of Directors as regional chairperson for the Central Region, whereas Mr. Page has enriched Albemarle County through his deep civic commitment, including service as a trustee, a Sunday school teacher, and musician at New Green Mountain Baptist Church, membership in 100 black men of Central Virginia, and the Grand United Order of Odd Fellows, service on multiple community boards, and decades of

[00:18:01] of mentoring and support for youth in the Samuel Miller District and beyond. And whereas, even as he completes his final term, here it is, December 31st, 2025, Mr. Page has expressed his continued determination to advance equity and improve outcomes for black students, affirming that his work does not end with his school board service.

[00:18:25] Now, therefore, be it resolved that the Albemarle County School Board expresses his profound gratitude for Graham M. Page for his decade of dedicated service, principal leadership, and unwavering belief in the potential of every child.

[00:18:42] And be it further resolved that the board honors Mr. Page's extraordinary contributions as an educator, mentor, advocate, and community leader and extends its heartfelt appreciation for the integrity, compassion, and steadfast commitment has brought to students staff and families of Albemarle County and be it finally resolved that this resolution be recorded in the minutes of Albemarle County School Board and presented to Mr. Page with the board sincere thanks and best wishes for continued success and fulfillment in the work he so

[00:19:18] passionately continues. Tonight we also recognize Ms. Leslie Pryor who has

[00:20:01] faithfully served the Rio Magisterial District since her appointment in January following the passing of our colleague Chuck Pace. Stepping into this role during a time of transition, Leslie brought the steady perspective of a lifelong Albemarle resident and the heart of a public servant. Her background in public safety, mental health services, and community support enriched our conversations and her commitment to ensuring that every child in our county has access to high quality inclusive education has been unmistakable. On On behalf of the board, we thank Leslie for her dedication, her thoughtful engagement, and the grace with which she has served this year.

[00:20:42] And thank you again, Mr. Page, and Ms. Pryor for your service.

[00:21:14] The next item, I believe that our student representative, Ms. Wong, has some information to share with us. Thank you, Chair Acuff. I believe all the board members should have, like, a chart that has student feedback on it.

[00:21:30] Miss Wong, can you make sure you're talking, sort of screaming into this thing? As the semester wraps up, students I've spoken with have reflected on their experience at AHS. From making sock monkeys donate to elementary schools and National Art Honor Society to fall sport season wins, to the production of Art Town by the drama department, to the jazz band dinner happening right at this moment, and that's a collaboration between culinary arts students and the jazz band.

[00:21:54] Students have celebrated successes, both personal and academic. With successes however come opportunities for improvement. As the board goes into budgeting season students have given feedback on investments the county has made and have given suggestions for further investments. Through a student survey, I've identified a few of these and have organized them into a chart with student testimonials and data.

[00:22:16] Without going too in-depth, I'll quickly recap some of the major topics students have mentioned. An issue the board is familiar with is a topic of overpopulation and this is something that students have brought up as well. As you'll see on the chart, 53.2% of students say that this was a major issue impacting them greatly.

[00:22:34] On the left of the chart, you'll see some symptoms of this concern, including cramped hallways, lack of parking space, lack of physical space at lunch times and other gatherings, and traffic preventing students from leaving school parking lots for sometimes up to half an hour. Students suggested solutions about possible investments to combat this issue can be seen on the right.

[00:22:52] Another concern regards safety and movement regulations. Students have provided feedback on the implementation of investments such as the modal detectors and the smart pass system. And while students appreciate their safety being taken into consideration, students have expressed that improvements could be made. Furthermore, students have regularly encountered issues with the smart pass system and have communicated stress over using these passes.

[00:23:13] Again, students suggested solutions are on the right of the turn. Other areas for investment that students have brought up for consideration are increased mental health support and increased writing classes. I'd love to add that throughout this survey, students have reached out to me, saying that they are more than willing to help and have asked how they could assist with creating positive impact after school.

[00:23:32] We hope our members can keep some concerns in mind when considering future actions. Thank you. Thank you, Ms. Wong. Have you made sure that our clerk has a copy of your survey to put into the record? Yes. Thank you. Anybody have any questions? Comments?

[00:23:52] Thank you for this work. As you know, one of our topics in the past couple of weeks has been overcapacity at our schools, particularly Albemarle. So your survey was quite timely. Thank you. The next item in business, Dr. Haas?

[00:24:13] Yes, Dr. Huff. Thank you. We just have a quick update from Dr. McLaughlin. Hey, good evening, board members. Pat McLaughlin, assistant superintendent for strategic planning. I'm here tonight

because the VDOE, at long last, has released this week the statewide results for the school performance and support framework.

[00:24:35] And I'd like to take a couple minutes to update you on those results. You should have before you are region 5 snapshot. A lot of the information that I'll speak about tonight comes from that report. So as you know, schools are expected to maintain a framework rating of 80 points or better.

[00:24:53] Those with a rating of 90 points or better are in a distinguished designation and those with a rating of 80 to 89 are considered on track. Schools with a rating of 65 to 79 are considered off track and below 65 are rated as needs intensive support.

[00:25:08] Schools listed as off-track or needs intensive support are eligible for grant funding to provide greater levels of service to help them improve and mastery growth and readiness. There are many bright spots in these results, as well as areas for continued growth for our division. So first, the bright spots.

[00:25:25] Two-thirds of all ACPS schools met or exceeded Virginia standards, on par with the statewide results of 66%. One-third of our schools received the distinguished designation, outpacing the state results of 23%. ACPS also ranks among the jurisdictions with the highest percentage of distinguished schools among those with populations above 100,000.

[00:25:47] At the regional level for Region 5, ACPS had the four highest scoring elementary schools. They are Brownsville, Murray, Ivy, and Stony Point. And Brownsville's score was the highest in the entire state of Virginia. Murray ranked highest in the region for mastery across reading, math, and science.

[00:26:05] Ivy and Brownsville were in the top five for each subject as well. Red Hill ranked at the top for growth and reading and Brownsville earned top honors for growth and math. Ivy led the region in readiness. At the middle school level Henley Middle School was our highest performer in the region and the only middle school in the region to earn a distinguished designation. Lakeside Middle was ranked as the third best performing middle school in the region.

[00:26:29] Henley was the top middle school in mastery of reading and science and second to Lakeside for mastery in math. Lakeside also ranked in the top five for Mastery of Reading and Science. Burley Middle was among the top schools for growth and reading and Lakeside for growth in math and English Learner of Progress. Journey Middle and Henley Middle both ranked among the top five regionally for chronic absenteeism. All of our high schools met or exceeded standards with Western Albemarle and Community Lab both receiving distinguished recognition and Monticello and Albemarle remaining on track.

[00:27:02] Western Albemarle's ranking placed them as the highest performer regionally and and Western also topped the list for Mastery in Reading and was second for Mastery of Science. Western Albemarle, Monticello, and Albemarle were the top three schools in the region for college enrollment readiness.

[00:27:18] While we're extremely proud of these bright spots, there's also room for improvement in our division. At the middle school level, Burley narrowly missed the 80-point standard with a framework score of 79.9, putting it off track, and four elementary schools fell below the standard, Agner, Scottsville, Greer, and Woodbrook.

[00:27:37] Additionally, because of the lower performance in some membership groups, such as economically disadvantaged students, English learners, students with disability, or students of color, some schools had their framework rating downsized or downgraded by one category. Specifically, Crozet, Stone Robinson, and Mountain View were downgraded from on-track to off-track, and Agner and Greer were downgraded from off-track to needs-intensive support.

[00:28:01] The VDOE also identified Woodbrook as requiring comprehensive support and achievement for the school as a whole. Because this is a new state performance measuring system, we are still learning what types of adjustments we need to make. However, the new baseline measurement will allow us to identify where we're experiencing progress and where improvements need to be made going forward.

[00:28:22] Based on the data released by the VDOE, we believe we're well positioned as a leader in public education. Looking ahead, we will continue to focus on progress for students with disabilities, English learners, economically disadvantaged students, and students of color. This includes continued emphasis on consistent curriculum and assessments at the classroom level, expanding tutoring and intervention programs, and intensifying family and community engagement.

[00:28:46] As part of our data-driven decision-making approach, we will rely on this data and other critical findings to inform high-impact decision-making across classrooms and schools. Thank you for your time this evening. Thank you, Dr. McLaughlin.

[00:29:01] Anybody have any questions? I have a question. What types of supports is the state giving to the district, particularly for those schools that are considered off-track and needs intensive support? Are we getting additional funding? So it's somewhat unclear at this time. I can tell you what has happened historically is that schools with those federal designations have qualified for grant funding, and I think that was between \$50,000 and \$75,000 that they can use for additional hours for tutoring, can use for curriculum alignment things like that there's typically a state monitoring component where we work with the DOE and submit documentation of the

[00:29:41] work that the schools are doing to to work on improvement over the years we've tried to align our improvement documents like our school strategic planning documents and our 90-day planning documents to align with the video so that we so that we're already kind of doing that work regardless of their designation. But it doesn't sound like the state is providing any additional resources or funding. So again we should be eligible for some grant funding what we haven't since this is so new they haven't met with us yet to tell us exactly what that means or when we might see that. It is awfully late to get this information for this year and there's typically a sunset date for when we can

[00:30:20] use the grant funding by. So with each day that passes that becomes a little bit less effective. When would we typically have gotten this information? August, September at the latest, usually. It's pretty hard to run a school system when we get a data like this from the state so late. Thank you, Dr. McLaughlin.

[00:30:40] The next item on our agenda is public comment and Dr. Berlin will be managing that. Good evening, everyone. We welcome public input at our school board meetings. To sign up to speak during the public comment period, you can do so in several ways. Online sign up is available from 9 a.m. on the Monday of the meeting week until 2 p.m. on the meeting day. By phone you can call the school board clerk's office to sign up until 2 p.m. on the meeting day and in person sign up at the meeting is available from 6 p.m. until the public comment period for in-person meetings only. Please note that public comment is not received at

[00:31:18] special board meetings unless specified on the agenda. Each speaker will have three minutes to speak, but the chair with board consent may reduce this to two minutes where there are 14 or more speakers. This evening we have five speakers. Speakers should state their name, address, or voting district, address comments to the school board, limit comments to school board governance or school division operations, and provide written statements and supporting material to the clerk. The school board will use a time tracker to time each speaker's time. Once the time

[00:31:54] is up, speakers are asked to wrap up their comments. To maintain respect, please refrain from clapping or other audible forms of support. You may raise your hands instead. Debate with the school board is not allowed. And the projection system is for staff presentations only. As I mentioned, we have five speakers. Emily Mathon, Jimmy Ballou, Daisy Rojas, Christine Hofe, and

[00:32:21] Diantha McKeel. And just always remember, as I had to when I spoke there, to adjust the mic so it comes closer to your mouth. Thank you. My name is Emily Mathan, and I'm in the Rio District, and I'm speaking tonight on access to disability evaluations as an officer of Family Counsel. As you will hear tonight from the SEAC annual report, we conducted research as Family Counsel last year with families who had

[00:32:56] requested an evaluation of a potential disability for their child, and we wanted to share some of the examples of words directly from families about specifically the referral process. So I'm just going to be quoting families from our research.

[00:33:14] It has been our experience that ACPS makes the process of being approved for an evaluation very difficult. The next one. Process is not readily available or understood for parents. ACPS has many hurdles in place to try and not provide testing or services, including stressful and intimidating meeting environment instead of a supportive atmosphere. Getting your child the help they need shouldn't be so hard, not us versus them, but team effort in the best interest of the child. The next quote, there are no quick reference charts, explanations,

[00:33:51] step-by-step guidelines to walk someone through the process, which is extremely frustrating. You either have to have been through the process before, know someone who has, have a staff member explain it to you or fumble through it, which often leads to delays in the process and obtaining services for your child. Some parents don't understand, this is the next quote, some parents don't understand the process and need real help understanding it. I was left feeling like there was no help for my child. So again, you'll hear later tonight from the SEAC annual report some recommendations, and we encourage you all to follow the recommendations and make improvements

[00:34:31] to better serve kids with suspected disabilities. Thank you. Thank you very much. Our next speaker is Jimmy Ballou. Hello, I'm Jimmy Ballou, the Scottsville District.

[00:34:52] Just to follow up on the last speaker, I was not aware of that survey, but I do fall into that category. It is a tough process to get your kid any assistance to the county. I've been fighting for five years. I have a child with autism, and it has been a struggle.

[00:35:07] The county has not made it simple, but that's not why I'm here. I'm here today to, in case you haven't seen it, I filed a multi-million dollar civil complaint against the county school board, the principal and assistant principals of Stone Robinson Elementary. I've communicated with the council here back and forth.

[00:35:25] At the end of this, they made unsubstantiated claims to CPS. I see you two received awards. Your holiday season is great. Mine isn't. I have police show up in the middle of the night to my home just outside of Glenmore. I've had detectives come by.

[00:35:40] All of this could have been avoided But the principal, I'm sorry, the assistant principal at Stone Robinson just went on to make an unfounded allegation. So my question to you folks sitting here, at the end of the day, this was unfounded. Who is responsible? Who is going to make it right for me and my family?

[00:35:58] How am I to go next Thursday to Stone Robinson and go on a field trip with my student when the whole staff there knows that they made a false allegation of child neglect, abuse, whatever it was? So that's my question to you folks here, and I will give Ms. Osborne a word of credit.

[00:36:19] She is one of the only people here that will respond, pick up a call, or phone you back. That's my only question. I do have a copy of the civil complaint, if everyone would like a copy, if you have not seen it. I have enough for everyone. I was also promised footage from the transportation department, from the school system itself, but the attorney has seemed to back that statement up.

[00:36:42] he walked that back. They won't release the footage from the bus and I know it is readily available because I have seen it within the school system myself. Any takers on the formal complaint, it should have been served by the sheriff either yesterday or today. You may leave that with the clerk of the court. All right. Thank you so much. Our next speaker is Daisy Rojas.

[00:37:25] I'm sorry, but your time has finished. So I'd like to remind those of you who don't know that I was one of the two people that started the Families Helping Families Fund. And happy to share with you a little bit more about what I know about the special education process, as well as some of the quotes from the families that responded to the survey.

[00:37:49] We'll start with the quotes. On denials of external testing, we paid over \$5,000 to have her tested by an external organization. they provisionally diagnosed her with dyslexia. The school then told us that they wouldn't test her because the diagnosis was only provisional. On denials of parent input, my daughter's note taking in fourth grade is illegible to both her and everyone else. When I showed this to admin and the SPED team, I was told that our society is moving away from the written word and that she can just use voice to text and writing isn't important. On denials due to fuzzy academic thresholds, my child was not considered to be crashing and

[00:38:27] burning, words used by the school principal in my meeting. And our daughter was denied because we were told there was not enough academic impact. She would have to be more than two grade levels behind in order to do an evaluation. Another, we were told we had to stop all tutoring at home, and if she stops making any progress, then they would look into it further. So my child is already a year behind, and I'm told again to stop doing anything and let her continue to struggle. On behavior. I have heard tell that if a child is not a behavioral challenge in the classroom, it is hard to get them evaluated. I am lucky, their words, that my child has presented challenging

[00:39:04] behaviors in the classroom because teachers and staff are more proactive in requesting evaluations. Families are eager to partner with educators. Thank you for holding ACPS accountable for making changes. As many in this room know, I've had some experience working with Albemarle County Schools.

[00:39:21] Not only was I a student myself, but also a parent of four children who have gone through the schools. I've published articles on disparate treatment for special education students and students of color. I also have a Master of Education and served under Jono Alcaro as chair of the Long Range Planning Committee for the schools.

[00:39:41] As these quotes I've read demonstrate, our district continues to struggle with both identifying students in need of services and subsequently providing those services to bring about appropriate and equal access to education. I personally experienced a difference in identification for my students who are k-5 versus my students who are 5 to 12 12th grade there's a difference in the grant funding that's provided and therefore a difference in identification roadblocks to identification causes an expense to our community many parents hire legal services to press schools into providing IDEA mandates in the short term this means the school budget itself must pay for and maintain

[00:40:20] legal counsel as well as afford fines reimbursement and private school tuition in the long term students who are excluded and left out of education appropriate to their needs become a lost potential for our community thank you thank you christine hoff okay good evening albemarle county board members um to correct you on my last name it is half thank you very much I appreciate that um I

[00:40:59] represent lakeside middle school so correct me if I'm wrong with the magisterial district but I believe it's right if it's not right I apologize um I also this evening am speaking in regard to the access to disability evaluations for family council specifically the delays in getting a child tested for potential disabilities within Albemarle County the quotes there are months of delays and meetings it's like pulling teeth to get an evaluation another quote from a family member I feel that at every turn it seems like ACPS actively has tried to discourage or prevent

[00:41:38] me from having my child identified another quote I believe Albemarle County relies on those of us who can afford to pay for occupational therapy reading tutoring speech etc all out of pocket to fill in the gaps because the need is overwhelming a direct quote from a parent that says during one of the meetings for a 504 plan the school psychologist said okay so he probably won't become an author but that doesn't necessarily mean that he needs a 504 plan which then the

[00:42:10] parent explains to the staff that even if the child doesn't become an author the child still needed to be able to write in a way that gets his teachers to understand, and he ended up getting a 504 plan, and he is now in college. And that's thanks to the fantastic teachers in Albemarle County that made that child become a better writer. And another quote, I'm glad that we had resources to enroll her into a different school rather than going through the ISP process that in a way it shouldn't have been necessary, but it made me angry and upset and frustrated to know how my child

[00:42:49] needed help, but I couldn't get her what she needed. And I'm going to end very briefly. I have a child who has ADHD. She also has other specified trauma and stressor disorder. I as a parent had an IEP growing up through the school system. I'm very thankful for my teachers and my advocates that were right there by my side. But I too, when getting my daughter evaluated for her IEP, it was like pulling teeth and I did have to go to the superintendent and I sat in a meeting with him

[00:43:26] and I made sure that my daughter was evaluated for an IEP and it took years not just from when she was in kindergarten she finally got evaluated when she was in second grade and it was right at the end of second grade that they said you know what she has mild ADHD so thank you so much for

[00:43:45] time thank you so much and our last speaker today is diantha mckee good evening i am diantha mckee from the jack jewett district and i'm here as a citizen not representing the board of supervisors i wanted to present you all with two initiatives that i have been shepherding through with the

[00:44:22] school system for one for about six months and one for since 2024. In both cases Superintendent Haas and County Executive Jeff Richardson are aware of the initiatives and are appreciative of the work recognizing that I'm not asking for any money from the school division or county government. The first initiative initiative is the lambs lane campus dental task force and i left at your places the summary of our last 16 months of work so that you can read that at your leisure i do not have enough time tonight

[00:45:01] to go through it um but you will you'll see the summary report and um you'll also see a separate flyer that i've left for you that we use and on the flyer you'll list you'll see the list of the task force members. And as you notice, Eileen Gomez and Natalia Sergi, they are both members of our task force and they're in the audience tonight. So this is a good homecoming for the task force tonight. The bottom line is that I was over in 2024 on the Lamsland campus touring a

[00:45:37] couple of schools and asked the principals, if they had their druthers, what would they wish? And two of your principals said dental services for their children in the schools. So we started a task force, and we've been working to alleviate that problem.

[00:45:54] The other issue we discovered as we were going through this process was that part of the issue is a lack of dental hygienists in our community. And so the task force has been working with PVCC, and I'm happy to announce that Dr. Runyon believes that she's going to be able to have a dental hygienist program open in the spring of 2026.

[00:46:19] So we're coming up pretty quickly, and we're really happy about that. And maybe I misspoke. Maybe it's 27. You know, my brain is old, but it's spring of 27. As soon as I said that, I thought that's too fast. But anyway, good work. i'd love for you to see what we've been doing with the students in your school system and the second initiative is as you all are probably i'm almost out of time as you all are aware i've been doing artwork all through my district hydrants murals matter of fact i have two murals that your students at alma high school painted uh in my district so um trying to get

[00:46:57] another um art project planned i am right now we have permission from vdot to wrap in art those big metal boxes that have graffiti all over them that have the stoplight connections so we're going to be wrapping those and your students at center one are going to be doing the design and with that i'm almost through if you have any other questions let me know and i'll be happy to chat. Thank you very much. We appreciate. Thank you to everyone who made public

[00:47:35] comments today. We appreciate your civic expression of voice. Does that conclude? That concludes our public comment for this evening. The next item of business is approval of the consent agenda. I move we approve the consent agenda. I second. We have a motion by Ms. Lee, seconded by Dr. Berlin. All those in favor aye aye opposed motion passes and now we move on to school division business the first item of which is a special education advisory annual report and i know we have one

[00:48:12] person here in person and perhaps one one via phone and zoom i think voting some sort of thing who do we have up first good evening chair acuff school board members dr haas and cabinet members My name is Ashley Struzik and I am the director of special education. I'm here tonight to

introduce members of SEAC Which is the special education advisory committee This committee is a group of dedicated individuals composed primarily of parents of children with disabilities who represent the schools in our division

[00:48:49] Their primary responsibility is to inform the superintendent and school board on the needs of children with disabilities educated and served by ACPS. SEAC is valued by myself and the special education administrative team as they partner with us throughout the year to provide and share feedback and ideas that guide us to improve our division's special education services. Chris Seaman and Jessica Allen are the current co-chairs of SEAC and are here tonight to review with you the SEAC annual report. I'm going to turn it over to Chris who is actually the one that is on the phone or

[00:49:21] zoom or something okay great thank you uh good evening my name is chris seaman and i am one of the co-chairs of the special education advisory committee this year as well as the cac representative for henley middle school in person with you tonight are my cac colleagues who i'd like to ask to stand and be recognized for their contributions i regret that i'm unable to join you in person tonight due to a family medical issue all right go to the next slide as you may know each school

[00:49:58] division is required to have a SEAC under state law. SEAC's charge is to advise the school board and the local school division on the needs of education of children's disabilities and to participate in the development of priorities and strategies for meeting those needs. As part of that process, our SEAC submits an annual report to the school board which you received last month.

[00:50:20] This presentation is intended to discuss our identified issues and recommendations and to help answer any questions board members may have about them. All right, go to slide three. CIAC has taken a data-driven approach to identifying issues and making our recommendations.

[00:50:40] We have used a variety of data sources listed on this slide, including a survey of special education families here in Albemarle County, data from the state on standard of learning assessments, data from the school division's own annual reports, and a separate survey conducted by Family Council with the assistance of the Community Solutions Clinic at UVA School of Law.

[00:51:01] I'm first going to highlight some of the key findings from CEAC's Survey of Special Education Families. This is on slide four. This was the third consecutive year of administering this survey, and the second asking the same questions so that we could have a year-over-year comparison. We received a record number of responses this year, 374, representing 18.5% of students who receive special education services in ACPS.

[00:51:27] First, we asked families, this is slide five, who had a child with an IEP whether special education was helping them meet their academic goals in two key areas, literacy and math. For literacy, 69% of families responded positively.

[00:51:45] That's the green and blue section of the chart, up from 58% positive last year. For math, 56% of families responded positively, up from 52% last year. You can turn to slide six, please. Next, we asked families of all children receiving special education services, both IEPs and 504 plans, about whether the general education program was helping their child meet their academic goals.

[00:52:12] For literacy, 64% responded positively, which was about the same as last year, while 28% were negative or neutral. Similarly, for math, 59% of families responded positively, which was nearly identical to last year's figure, while 31% were negative or neutral.

[00:52:32] Go to slide 7, please. We also asked families about their satisfaction regarding how well their child's behavioral and social-emotional needs were being met at school. For behavioral needs, 72% of families responded positively, which is an increase of 6% compared to last year.

[00:52:51] For social-emotional needs, 72% again responded positively, a 4% increase over last year's survey. Okay, we can go to slide eight, please. Another question for families with a child who has an IEP were asked how often their child's special education teacher communicates with them.

[00:53:13] 44% responded either daily or weekly, while 39% responded monthly or quarterly. 10% said only once per year, and 7% said they never received the communication from their special ed teacher. Slide 9, please.

[00:53:29] For concerns regarding their child special education services, the vast majority of families, 86%, knew who to contact, and a similar number said they felt comfortable expressing their concerns. However, less than two-thirds of families said that they were satisfied with the response that they ultimately received.

[00:53:48] Could I turn to slide 10, please? CIEC also looked closely at results on the state standard of learning assessments conducted annually. One of the key things that stands out in this data are the large and persistent achievement gaps and pass rates between students with disabilities in ACPS and the total student population.

[00:54:09] For example, for English reading, that achievement gap has been about 30% for the past three years. Slide 11, please. Similarly, for math, students with disabilities have had a 27 to 28% achievement gap in pass rates compared to all ACPS students for the past three years.

[00:54:29] We are pleased that the pass rate for students' disabilities has increased a total of 6% over this time, but the pass rate for non-disabled students has also continued to increase so the gap persists. Slide 12, please. We also compare the performance of students' disabilities in ACPS to all students statewide with disabilities.

[00:54:51] The key finding here is that ACPS has been within a couple percentage points of the state average for all three years in these pass rates. For reading, last year ACPS was 2% above the state average which represented a slight improvement over the previous year. However, this is only a district-wide figure, and some of our schools are performing considerably worse than the state average for students with disabilities.

[00:55:13] For instance, in data released this week by VDOE, only 19% of students of the disabilities at Woodbrook Elementary passed the reading SOL last year. Indeed, five out of six Title I elementary schools in the division fell below the state average for students with disabilities on English pass rates.

[00:55:31] Slide 13, please. Similarly for math, ACPS has been close to the state median of students with disabilities and pass rates with a slight upward trend. Last year, ACPS was 2% above the state average.

[00:55:47] Again, however, there is a lot of variability based upon the particular school. For example, students with disabilities at Brownville had an 87% SOL pass rate, which is over 40 percentage points better than the state average. But students with disabilities performed significantly below the state average at most of our Title one elementary schools including Mountain View Elementary which had a pass rate of 19% and Scottsville at 20%. In particular I want to flag that six schools in our division were marked down

the level on the Virginia school performance results released this week based upon federal accountability metrics specifically due to the need for improvement of education for students

[00:56:26] with disabilities. I am now pleased to turn the presentation over to my colleague and CI co-chair Dr. Jessica Allen. Can everybody hear me okay? wonderful thank you mr. Seaman I know we're all very thankful you volunteered your time and expertise to lead SEAC again this year and thanks for joining us tonight it is very daunting time to be a parent whose student depends solely on special education in the current federal landscape before we proceed with our suggestions for ways to make improvements I first just want to take a minute to thank the school board and dr. Haas and the central office for your

[00:57:05] continued commitment to our disability community well it's always appreciated this year feels especially impactful that we continue to stand together to change the outcome for all of our learners. So you've heard Mr. Seaman share the disparity in SOL scores and the achievement gaps, and following me you'll hear Dr. Evans share about the disproportionality and discipline. While each of these parameters is obviously multifaceted and complex, one budget item that does have the potential to improve both is the addition of two positions: a second learning specialist and a second behavior specialist. While we know budget

[00:57:43] constraints are still in place, this is the third year we've asked for these positions and respectfully our teachers and learners can't afford to wait another year. We've heard from a teacher who had requested support in August from the singular learning specialist in reading instruction for student in CBASE and as of mid-November over three months later that student and teacher were still waiting for that support. As you all know we have over 2,000 special education students and 133 special education teachers. That's broken down as 55 generalists, 35 teachers

[00:58:18] for A base, 17 for B base, and 26 for C base. It's hard to imagine, no matter how good these specialists are, that one learning specialist and one behavior specialist is enough when those 133 teachers reach out to get help for their students. These two positions also have the capability uniquely to serve our general education teachers, and they also serve all students in special educations, whether they have a 504 or an IEP.

[00:58:50] We'd also like to request again this year that special education TAs be given compensated time to communicate with teachers and take part in the planned learning communities. The feedback when we requested this last year, and I'm paraphrasing, was that there simply wasn't staff coverage for this because the TAs were needed to be with the student.

[00:59:09] You could say that in fact proves the point we're trying to make. SPED TAs are so critical to our students that we have to find a way to provide additional communication time for them to share their input and their expertise with other members of the co-teaching team. And I'm honored I get to introduce our next speaker, a developmental cognitive neuroscientist, as well as a SIAC community representative, Dr. Tanya Evans.

[00:59:33] Thank you, Dr. Allen. Good evening. Can everyone hear me? Tonight, I'm here to present data from the 23-24 and 24-25 academic school years on the issue of exclusionary discipline as it pertains to the special education community here in Albemarle County.

[01:00:01] The quote here was pulled from a report issued by the Institute for Education Sciences, or IES, which is the nation's leading resource for rigorous, independent education research, evaluation, and

statistics. It states research reveals that the use of exclusionary discipline policies and practices involving in and out of school suspension and expulsion could lead to long-term harmful outcomes for students who are frequently excluded from learning environments.

[01:00:34] Exclusionary discipline increases the risk of academic failure, school dropout, and socio-emotional and mental health problems. Sorry. No? Is it just the, what's the, where's the clicker? Just the, sorry.

[01:00:57] Oh, that one. Sorry, I was going up and down, back and forth. Sorry, guys. Okay, so highlighted in the 23-24 equity table here via red circle in the bottom row of the disparity in exclusionary discipline for students with disabilities.

[01:01:14] The left column in blue shows that the total count of pre-K students or pre-K to 12 students in the division with disabilities was 1,930, which comprises 14% of the total students. As you can see in orange in the second column, students with disabilities accounted for 138 or 34% of out-of-school suspensions.

[01:01:38] And in the third column, 253 or 40% of total incidents of out-of-school suspensions. As shown here in the 24-25 equity table in the bottom row first column, the total number of students with disabilities in the division went up to 2,044.

[01:01:58] The percentage of students with disabilities remain the same at 14%. Shown in the second column in orange, the total number of students with disabilities receiving out-of-school suspensions went up to 153, with the percentage going down slightly to 32%.

[01:02:15] In the third column, you can see that the total incidence of out-of-school suspensions went up to 329, and the percentage of those incidents occurring for students with disabilities remain the same at 40%. Shown in this bar chart, in 23-24, students with disabilities accounted for 7.2%, the left bar, of out-of-school suspensions, compared to 2.2% in non-disabled students, right bar.

[01:02:47] In 24-25, students with disabilities accounted for 7.5% of out-of-school suspensions, compared to 2.7% in non-disabled students. Even though there is slightly less disproportionality across these two academic years, the total number of suspensions has increased over this time.

[01:03:08] This includes both the number of students suspended as well as the total number of suspensions. This applies to students across the board and students with disabilities. The large disparity between students with disabilities relative to non-disabled students remains.

[01:03:27] Our recommendations to address the ongoing issue of disproportionality in school discipline are as follows. Number one, a comprehensive legal and policy audit of student discipline policies and practices.

[01:03:45] Number two, a strengthening of data transparency and monitoring. Number three, full sustained implementation of division-wide restorative practices. Our recommendations regarding training and transparency of data regarding SROs are as follows.

[01:04:05] Number one, mandatory training for dealing with students with disabilities in the MOU. We are grateful that this has been heard and included in the MOU, which was released after the submission of our SEAC report to the school board. Thank you.

[01:04:21] Number two, advanced training for identifying and responding to students with disabilities and or students with mental health needs. In our SEAC report, we have identified specific research-backed, high-quality training programs that we recommend for this advanced training.

[01:04:40] Number three, greater transparency via monthly SRO incident and outcome reports. We request that these reports contain data on the demographics of students receiving disciplinary action, including data specific to students with disabilities.

[01:04:56] We, SEAC and Family Council, look forward to reviewing this data on a regular basis with ACPS and ACPD. Thank you. Greetings. I am Heidi Gilman Bennett, a volunteer leader of Family Council.

[01:05:21] When you are the parent of a child who is really struggling consistently in school and have no experience with disabilities, you feel very vulnerable. Imagine going to your classroom teacher to ask, can I have my child tested, evaluated?

[01:05:38] This section is about access to disability valuations, the very beginning of the special education process. Over the last school year, Family Counsel collaborated with SEAC, leveraging a consulting partnership with the UVA Law Clinic led by Professor Sarah Scholf.

[01:05:56] The law students supported us in understanding federal child find requirements and helped with qualitative and quantitative research. Detailed results are included in the SEAC report and the survey data plus the family quotes, some of which you heard in public comment, were sent to you separately from family counsel.

[01:06:20] Together, we identified three problem areas. Number one, an unclear referral procedure. The process for actually making an official request is massively unclear. There is no form. The policy manual is 15 years out of date. The majority of families we surveyed say they receive zero resources from ACPS. And families report receiving inaccurate information

[01:06:52] from staff. Number two issue, delays. There are delays in the process of getting evaluated for potential disability. This comes in two parts. First, the initial response, as per families surveyed, is most often delayed well beyond the three-day mandated timeline. Not surprisingly, families report significant dissatisfaction. Second, before providing an evaluation, federal

[01:07:26] guidance says students may receive intervention, but these interventions must be short-term and intensive. Instead, many ACPS families report getting stuck in an endless loop of school-based interventions, often known locally as SBIT. The third problem is denials. By this, I mean denials to evaluate which become inherently a denial of services for many students acps

[01:08:01] seems to use inconsistent and often inappropriate criteria for denying an evaluation two grade levels behind must show behavior problems parent observations not considered families want very sincerely to work in partnership with teachers and staff, but the denials and delays can lead to inequitable practices such as families with a financial means paying significant amounts for private tutors and services and paid professional

[01:08:36] advocates while other families cannot. Our recommendations are these: improving these processes is possible and changes are necessary both to improve student outcomes and to comply with federal child find requirements. Our recommendations are number one establish a task force that

includes family and staff representatives to design a clear consistent process for special education evaluations and referral procedures. Number two

[01:09:12] because the intervention and SBIT are outside of the special education department within the instruction group in ACPS. We request a second, separate task force working in parallel to standardize school-based intervention, SBIT, practices across schools, again including both families and staff. Number three, obviously, update the 2010 ACPS special education policy manual to reflect current law and and propose reforms from the task forces.

[01:09:47] Number four, require staff training on revised procedures for eligibility determinations by the start of the next school year. Thank you. - I'm Caitlin Foley, the SEAC representative for Mountain View Elementary and a registered nurse.

[01:10:09] Accessibility, we as a committee appreciate the completion and submission of the accessibility and inclusion audit done for all the schools and school grounds. 300 issues were found in total and broken down into three categories.

[01:10:26] Barriers or fixed obstacles that prevent access, major and minor challenges which relate to operative issues. Examples of these issues include access to playground, stage access, ADA bathrooms, curb cuts, sinks, furniture, and signage.

[01:10:46] We support increased state and local funding to make sure that all county school facilities are accessible to all students. We are recommending that ACPS give an update regarding resolution of the barriers and challenges listed in the report by the end of the school year.

[01:11:05] We recognize and appreciate that with the school board's leadership, the special education TA pay rate was increased last year. Thank you. In a continuing effort to fully support special education services, both now and on pace with projected growth in countywide enrollment, we have identified areas where additional resources are needed.

[01:11:35] School-based psychologists are a vital part of the special education team. They do comprehensive psychoeducational evaluations relating to eligibility and IEP decisions. They help design and monitor behavioral and academic interventions.

[01:11:52] and they collaborate with the rest of the team including teachers and families to ensure an inclusive supportive learning environment since specialized graduate training and licensure is required for psychologists competitive compensation is needed to not only attract but retain qualified professionals acps currently has three vacancies for school-based psychologists including one One position that has been opened for over a year.

[01:12:25] In addition, our division's growth has outpaced current staffing levels due to increased enrollment of students with disabilities and increasingly intensive needs of students in special education. Our recommendations are that HR conduct a compensation and job description review for for school-based psychologists' positions to ensure competitiveness, and that ACPS plan for increase in special education staffing needs in the budget for the next school year.

[01:13:01] We as SEAC members happily volunteer our time and talents towards this important work. We appreciate ACPS's offer for on-site child care during the monthly SEAC meetings.

[01:13:17] Unfortunately, on-site child care is not universally adequate for current and or prospective committee members and their families. We have children that may need assistance with feeding and toileting, children with various sensory triggers, children with intense emotional regulation struggles, children with mobility and medical needs, nonverbal children, and so on.

[01:13:44] The drop-in style of on-site child care at any event is just not a viable option for many of our kids. Therefore, we end up paying out-of-pocket for child care during the monthly SEAC meetings. This creates a barrier to participation.

[01:13:59] We are currently without SEAC representatives from six schools, including three Title I elementary schools. In an effort to increase SEAC representativeness, we are recommending reimbursement of reasonable child care expenses acquired during monthly SEAC meetings for SEAC members.

[01:14:20] Thank you. Thank you, and thanks to all of the members of SEAC who presented tonight. I am particularly pleased that Chris Siemens' voice came through and we were able to fix that hurdle.

[01:14:39] Do any of my colleagues have any questions for the... SEAC team you you gave quite a comprehensive review and um we will we will continue to look at it and and continue to work with you well thank you so much also i'd say they always invite us to their meetings and i think there's a rotating schedule we do appreciate coming to your meetings and i think i'll be there in february march remind everybody when the meetings are please it's usually the second tuesday but it's posted on the division-wide school calendar as well

[01:15:18] okay and we're happy to send you a reminder when those meetings are as well that would be great thank you appreciate it we appreciate the invitation yeah and we always appreciate it when you guys are able to attend as well thank you any further comments again thank you um we have on our agenda a break what do my colleagues wish to do have a 10-minute break okay let's come

[01:15:43] back at about two minutes until eight o'clock. Thank you, everyone. The next item on our agenda

[01:27:12] is a school health advisory board update by Ms. Eileen Gomez. Everybody left before my turn.

[01:27:32] They didn't leave because of you, Ms. Gomez. Good evening. I'm Eileen Gomez. I'm the school health services coordinator for Albemarle County Public Schools and a member of the school health advisory board which i've been a member of that for a long time so i want to talk briefly about

[01:28:01] center mode down at the bottom oh sorry that's all you need okay all hands on deck yes thank you

[01:28:33] everybody team effort so i'm going to talk briefly about the history of the school health advisory Board. In the 1990s, Virginia law mandated that all school divisions establish a School Health Advisory Board consisting of representation from parents, students, health professionals, educators, and others. In 2012, they removed that mandate, but Albemarle County Public Schools determined that the input from the School Health Advisory Board was valuable

[01:29:09] enough that we kept the board intact. The school health advisory board assists with the development of health policy in the school division and the evaluation of school health services, health education, the health environment, and the health services that the nurses deliver. These are the current

members of the school health advisory board and you can see that we have a very good cross section of the community. We have several physicians, pediatricians, a family practice doctor, an endocrinologist. We have representation from the Health

[01:29:48] Department, from UVA Health System, from Martha Jefferson Hospital, and a very impressive collection of school employees. We have students and now we have a recent graduate who's a UVA student who wants to remain on our board.

[01:30:06] We do have a few vacancies. Let me go back to this magisterial district. The appointments to the School Health Advisory Board can be by your appointments, the school board appointments, as well as superintendent's appointments and school employees.

[01:30:27] So, the vacancies for the magisterial appointments are Ryo, Samuel Miller, and Scottsville. And the application is posted on the Albemarle County Public Schools website, and I believe it is also being advertised. So, some of the topics we discussed this year include Stop the Bleed.

[01:30:48] And if you're not familiar with it, Stop the Bleed is a national campaign to encourage bystanders to become trained, equipped and empowered to help in a bleeding emergency before professional help arrives. The Stop the Bleed was a program developed by trauma physicians and Army medical professionals because they wanted to combat the hemorrhaging as one of the leading causes of preventative deaths,

[01:31:19] preventable deaths. So establishing this program helps people in the field prevent loss of life from bleeding by acting quickly and being able to administer the important first aid.

[01:31:39] So House Bill 1700 requires each school board to implement a bleeding control program and requires that all schools staff bleeding control kits in easily accessible locations and they also mandate that the kits get checked annually and restocked as the supplies are used we have all those bleeding we have one at least one in each school right now this School Health Advisory

[01:32:13] Board recommends that the Albemarle County Public Schools considers adding a stop the bleed component to the curriculum for 10th grade health along with first aid. The students have actually asked that we add that to the to the health education curriculum. They all, the Health Advisory Board also recommends that each school have multiple kits and stop the bleed kits in places where people congregate such as the auditoriums, cafeterias, and gymnasiums, in addition to the nurses offices, in evacuation go bags and

[01:32:51] athletic training supplies. And they also recommend offering Stop the Bleed training to school personnel who are interested in taking those courses. We also discussed the Cardiac Arrest Response Plan. The House Bill 1695 requires each public school to develop a Cardiac Emergency Response Plan or an athletic emergency action plan to include creating a team of school personnel to respond to incidents involving sudden cardiac arrest or similar life-threatening emergencies. So we already have athletic cardiac

[01:33:28] response plans in our high schools. We have a draft cardiac response plan for schools that has been reviewed by pediatric cardiology as well as EMT professionals and Mountain View Elementary School piloted a program called project adam that i'll speak about in a minute the health advisory board recommends that every school have a cardiac response plan as required and consider it following a model such as the one piloted at mountain view they also recommend additional cpr aed training for

[01:34:03] school personnel and they recommend that any plans that we develop be practiced repeatedly so personnel are familiar with them. Let's talk a little about Project ADAM. Project ADAM is a program, or a framework, for schools to follow a kind of a recipe to develop a cardiac response team with every team member having very specific, defined responsibilities.

[01:34:33] And running through the drills in this outlined manner is a pretty effective way to get everybody working together in a crisis situation. So the next item is self-carry of rescue seizure medication.

[01:34:52] So in 2025, this last legislative session, they added to the law that school divisions allow students to self-carry and self-administer emergency medicines including inhale medication for asthma epinephrine for severe allergic reactions glucagon for diabetes emergencies and seizure rescue medication but seizure rescue medication is a little different than the other

[01:35:30] medications as it's the the medication is a diazepam a valium medication and it's typically typically prescribed for seizures lasting greater than three to five minutes and it's usually the seizures that are sometimes known as convulsive seizures or tonic-clonic seizures so students having these seizures will not be able to self-administer the medication the A medication is a controlled substance and there is a chain of custody requirements for this controlled substance that is different than other medications.

[01:36:07] It also has abuse potential and could harm students if it's consumed in a manner not prescribed and that could be compounded if students also consumed other substances. So the school board recommends that we do not allow students to self-carry this medication.

[01:36:24] will consider revisiting this this practice if we learn about other school divisions who have who have allowed students to carry that and see how that works out for them opioid overdose response training we've discussed this nearly every year but this last year the Health Advisory Board endorses the partnership that we have with UVA's Department of Anesthesiology Office of Pay Management Opioid Stewardship.

[01:36:54] We have their team come out to our schools, well, out to our professional development. They came out to the Making Connections Day that we had. They offered several courses for teachers, and it's always a course that teachers are interested in taking.

[01:37:10] They also have gone out and spoke to some parent groups, like, I think, Albemarle's PTO. And they would like to offer these training to interested students. students have asked us if we could figure out how to incorporate that into the school day.

[01:37:27] Other recommendations include the pediatricians particularly recommend that we encourage all students to get flu vaccines and to encourage parents to discuss other recommended vaccines with their doctor. And now I can open it to any questions.

[01:37:53] You made a comment about the recommendation for the potential to include staff lead training and first aid in 10th grade health, and that students have come forward asking for that. What would be the next step in something like that?

[01:38:11] To incorporate that into it, I think we would work with the LEED Health and PE and see if we can -- we do have trainers that have a couple different sources that would love to come into the schools,

and they do this with other school divisions. So we would see if we could get them to come to one of their health classes and teach that.

[01:38:28] It's not a very long class. It's maybe an hour. Okay, with the cardiac response plan, is that going to be expanded to the other schools or? Yes, it's required for all schools.

[01:38:46] So it started at Mountain View with the pilot. Well, yeah, Mountain View piloted it, but all the schools are required to have some form of a cardiac response plan. How do we handle training of personnel in these various things?

[01:39:03] I mean, how do we train, say, the coaches? What kind of training do the personnel at sporting events, for example, have among these things you've talked about? The coach training is getting really long.

[01:39:19] They have to train in recognizing sudden cardiac arrest and warning signs for that. training concussion, heat, excessive heat, cold. We have not yet trained them and stopped the bleed but before they start their season they have these trainings that they have to do. For school staff we do incorporate them into the professional development days and some of these things are available training online so people can do that during their time in the summer because they can get professional development points for these trainings. What about

[01:39:57] say our principals and some of the administrators? Well on the Making Connection days they can go into some of these things and I've been in with I think most of them came into the opioid overdose. But it's an elective, yes. Basically. Any other questions? Ms. Wong, do you have any? Thank you so much. Thank you.

[01:40:20] Next on our agenda is item 8.4 and 8.5 which is Jackson Zimmerman with a fourth quarter financial report and the first quarter of FY 26 good evening I have for the board's consideration the fourth quarter financial report on the page the

[01:40:58] fourth quarter represents the end of the fiscal year for the school division and it is a summary of the total expenditures and total revenues received by the school division. Overall, revenues were received were good. We received some additional revenues because we got some additional students. We also received some additional revenues because there was an infusion of cash into our fund for the health insurance fund balance to increase the fund balance associated with the health insurance fund. So revenues were slightly greater than

[01:41:37] originally anticipated expenses expenses were less than anticipated mainly because staff had planned for reductions throughout the year there was a significant change particularly in health insurance for last year and staff needed to make plans associated with that there were some very large operational fund changes associated with that we were very careful regarding our compensation and benefits but we also reduced expenditures and things like furniture replacement and other continued other replacement funds that were out there for this fiscal year so overall expenses

[01:42:16] were slightly less than we had originally anticipated from the third quarter financial report um the big uh information is associated with fund balance so if we take a look at fund balance for for the prior years we did increase our available fund balance for the end of the current fiscal year so right now we have if we ended June 30th

[01:42:51] we would have just over 5.1 million dollars in available fund balance but if we take a look at that that's not the entire amount we have appropriated some use of fund balance in the current year as part of the original budget and then And we had carry forward for POs, POs that were not complete in the fiscal year, and therefore we needed to bring those POs forward and the revenues associated with those POs forward from 25.

[01:43:24] Therefore, we have just under \$4.5 million in available fund balance in FY26. So we did have very good financial performance for the prior fiscal year as of this, for the upcoming FY26 fiscal year. If you remember looking at this last year, that number was significantly lower last year, and I was up here sweating bullets. This year, we had very good financial performance. We planned very hard throughout the year. Roslyn and I met regularly

[01:44:03] planning for this, and we didn't end up having good financial performance for the year. Well, if you were sweating bullets last year, so were we, and this does look much better than last year. I would ask the board to approve the fourth quarter financial report, receive and approve the financial report. Do we have a motion? I move. We accept the fourth quarter financial balance as presented by Mr. Zimmerman. Second. Motion made by Ms. Osborne, seconded by Ms. Pryor

[01:44:41] and Ms. Lee. Any further discussion? All those in favor say aye. Aye. Opposed? Motion passes. And now we move on to first quarter 25-26. The first quarter report, again, this is just a snapshot in time.

[01:44:59] The thing that we need to keep in mind for the first quarter, we started this fiscal year earlier than we have ever started any fiscal year. So in this particular fiscal year, because we started in mid-August, we incurred payroll expenses and things like that that accelerate our payments in this process.

[01:45:26] So if you're looking at our overall financial report, the dollars that are available, those dollars are greater in this quarter than they have been in prior quarters. And also, we're implementing a new financial system, so we're reporting and things like that are all improved or changed a bit from prior fiscal year.

[01:45:47] Overall, in this quarter, we are seeing very consistent and plausible expenses throughout this quarter. We don't see a significant change in terms of revenues or expenditures. We are slightly down in terms of our overall enrollment for the current year.

[01:46:06] So we may end up receiving a little bit less money from the state than we had originally anticipated. But again, that's also very much up in the air because there will be a caboose budget being brought forward that will change these numbers again in the December time period.

[01:46:25] So right now, staff is not seeing anything significant to point out, but we just wanted to point out that we started the year earlier than we ever had. A question. Could you remind me what is in the expenditure type other wages?

[01:46:47] That's a place that there's a difference kind of prior year to original budget. Yes. So other wages would include things like part-time wages, sub-wages, temporary wages, things that are not associated with a permanently employed person running through our organization.

[01:47:14] It may also include stipends. There may be parts of that in there, too. Why might that be lower? I'm just trying to think about a lot lower compared to budget this year. What was the question?

[01:47:35] So if you look at just other wages, kind of. So let me bring that particular. We really worked on that a lot, but we had a lot of conversations about other wages because some of them we actually fund from the central office.

[01:47:52] And so the school doesn't have it actually sitting in their budget. And so one of the things that Jackson has been really working on, particularly this year and a lot of last year, was just having conversations with principals about the other wages, such as overtime, things like that, to try to bring them within the constraints.

[01:48:13] But also understanding that if a particular school is using a lot of overtime wages, we also want to talk to the principal there about the staffing and see, Are they staffed right? And how does that impact our staffing standards? The other portion of that is a lot of the other wages are associated with paying people for doing extra duties.

[01:48:36] And so many of those extra duties come towards the end of the fiscal year or after you have done assessments and you're providing additional resources for students during that time period. And this doesn't really capture that particular time period well.

[01:48:51] Many of those resources are applied towards the end of the fiscal year. Thank you very much. Any other questions? Do you need anything from us with this initial report? No, ma'am.

[01:49:08] If you would just approve this report, then that would be wonderful. Do we have a motion to approve the first quarter of FY26? I move we accept Mr. Dimmons' report on FY26.

[01:49:27] Motion made by Ms. Osborne, seconded by Mr. Page. Any further discussion? All those in favor say aye. Aye. Opposed? Motion passes. Thank you, Mr. Zimmerman. Thank you. Thank you. And next on the agenda is the FY27 budget development update by Ms. Kumazawa.

[01:49:49] Good evening. My name is Maya Kumazawa, Director of Budget and Planning. And this evening, I will provide an update to the FY27 budget development process.

[01:50:16] It's a fairly short presentation, so please feel free to jump in in any of the slides and don't wait until the end. Our strategic plan guides our budget process, and the purpose of our budget process is to provide equitable and transformative resources.

[01:50:36] This aligns with Goal 3 of our strategic plan. Before I jump in, I wanted to give you an update or an overview of the overall timeline. The draft funding request is scheduled to be presented to you on February 12th.

[01:50:52] There will be three budget work sessions following that draft funding request presentation, and you are scheduled to approve a funding request on March 12th. So I'll start with some revenue updates. About three-quarters of our budget is funded by local government.

[01:51:12] And when they presented their five-year forecast recently, they projected a 5.5% growth next year, and that's just an average of historical increases this is just a preliminary estimate and it is going to change based on city county revenue sharing and updated real estate assessments that will be provided in January so a more final number will be presented alongside the funding request presentation in February about one quarter of our budget is funded by state revenues good

[01:51:46] news this year, our local composite index is decreasing from 0.6904 to 0.6429. This decrease means we can anticipate more revenue from the state, more revenue than we've received in the last two

years. We don't know yet what those revenues will be, but that will be released with the governor's budget in late December. Here's a little bit more information about the local composite index. And this is a calculation by the state that determines a school division's

[01:52:20] ability to pay for our education costs using local funds. So for example, if we staffed ACPS at our SOQs or standards of quality and paid our staff the prevailing salaries and benefits that are determined by the state, then in theory with an LCI of a 0.7, the state would pay 30% and we would pay 70%. So if the LCI goes down, that means the state would pay more. The table on this slide shows the main variables that are used in a fairly complex calculation. Two years ago, our LCI went

[01:52:57] up because we saw a significant shift in adjusted gross income in base year 2021. So the LCI update is based on base year 2023. And in 2023, it looks like that adjusted gross income decreased when you would expect to see typically an increase from year over year. And that's what the rest of the state saw. Any questions on this? All right. I'll jump into expenditures. When building our

[01:53:32] budget, I like to think of it as a pyramid where we build from the base and we build up. And the base is the largest expense. And then as you go up the pyramid, those expenses do get smaller. So I'll cover each of these areas that include baseline, non-discretionary and contractual, opening to new schools, and implementing a collective bargaining agreement, and new proposals.

[01:53:56] We'll start with the baseline budget. Here are just some of the items that are considered when developing our baseline budget. Our current employee data is updated for turnover, and it reflects current positions and vacancies.

[01:54:14] Teacher and teaching assistant average costs are updated. And employee costs are updated for current compensation levels that include current salaries, updated health care, so using actual calendar year 2026 rates, that's information we didn't have when we developed the budget, and current VRS contributions and costs.

[01:54:37] There are also several technical adjustments, including updates to staffing standards, changes in enrollment and demographics. Next, a lapsed budget is determined. So looking at historical lapse, so how much savings did we see in vacancies, we update a projection for next year. We also want to continue previous year budget proposals. And then lastly, one-time expenditures from 26 are eliminated and deferred expenditures are included.

[01:55:06] The next category is called non-discretionary and contractual, and this is the area in previous years we saw fairly significant changes in projected health care rates.

[01:55:22] So in this budget item, we will update budget health rates for projected calendar year 2027 rates. Now, that doesn't set the rate for calendar year 2027. It's a projection at this time. We also are anticipating changes in the VRS rate structure, so that will also come out with the governor's budget in late December.

[01:55:44] We have several contractual increases, and we have inflationary increases. Right now, we're looking at some fairly significant increases in our costs for utilities, so the costs require us to keep our schools up and running. And then we also will see some increases in maintaining services and replacement cycles as they relate to technology and fleet maintenance.

[01:56:12] So next is opening new schools. These are just example new positions and costs that are being considered as we develop the budgets for these schools. So I'll start with Mountain View Upper Elementary.

[01:56:28] Some example positions include principal, art, music, and PE based on our current standards, support positions such as mental health support specialists, counselor, talent, media, nurse, custodians, and then utilities, as I mentioned. It's a brand new building and we'll have to operate the electricity, sewer, trash, and all that. Those will be brand new costs.

[01:56:55] Similarly, with Ace Academy at Lambs Lane, the needs at the high school level are a little bit different, so the list differs slightly. These are not finalized at this point. These are just some of the positions that are being considered, among others, to give you an idea of why new costs will need to be incurred.

[01:57:15] We also have added transportation to Ace Academy at Lambs Lane, which is different from Mountain View. Any questions? All right. The next piece was the collective bargaining agreement. The Albemarle Education Association is expected to ratify the agreement during January. And we will come back in February for the school board's approval. That date for approval should actually say February 12th. That will coincide with the draft funding request presentation and the beginning of the budget work sessions.

[01:57:55] The effective date for the collective bargaining agreement will be July 1st, 2026. On the slide are bargaining topics that were included as part of this process, and what is ratified and approved will be included as part of the budget process.

[01:58:12] So no details around these specific areas, but you can get a sense of what will be included as part of the budget process. Turning over to compensation, as you saw in the previous slide, compensation is one of the bargaining topics, but we thought it would be helpful for you to get a sense of the adopted competitive market. This is a chart that shows our teacher step scales with master's degrees on the

[01:58:46] left and bachelor's degree on the right. For master's salaries, which is the majority of our workforce, ACPS salaries are about 1.7 percent higher than the top 60th percentile market on average. However, compared to nearby Charlottesville, ACPS salaries are lower at all experience levels ranging from 0.4% to 4.4% lower. This shows that ACPS is competitive broadly but

[01:59:16] lags behind some neighboring districts. This is another snapshot and another way to look at the data. This is just a one-year snapshot of average salary increases provided for the current year.

[01:59:33] ACPS provided a 3% salary increase, and the average provided was 3% to 4% for the current year, with a low of 1% and a high of 6%. So that leaves our discussion for new proposals, and this is where I would like to turn it over to you so we can get some input on what your priorities are as we look to the beginning of the budget process.

[02:00:02] So some questions for consideration. What are your priorities for new funding or maintaining services? What program area should we review for efficiencies or reductions? And then do you have any feedback for how to facilitate your discussions moving into the budget work sessions as it relates to the first two questions or otherwise?

[02:00:24] I know you shouldn't answer a question with a question, but I do have a question. Could you remind us, there were things that we had to defer to this budget, I think. One was soft furniture, one was technology, but there was a price, there was a budget cut that we took, and then there was a price of deferred.

[02:00:45] Do you happen to have that, or could you bring that to the next board meeting? Because to me, when I think about what my priorities are, one of them is going back to look at what we had talked about that we deferred that we need to pick up this year.

[02:01:03] Yes, I can get back to you on that, but that's good feedback. For you, that's a priority. I guess it's just free talk. I was really struck by, in the SEAC presentation, how intersectional a lot of the issues were, that the disproportionate discipline, exclusionary discipline, was actually worse in our black population than specifically in the special needs, special education population,

[02:01:40] and also about on par with our socioeconomically challenged students. I think those were around about the same, so it is quite intersectional. So my priority has always been, since I've been on the board, anything that will close our opportunity gaps, our achievement gaps, anything that can be proven to work with doing those things.

[02:02:11] One of the other things the SEAC group talked about in the report is those two positions. One of the things we know is that when children with delays and disabilities are educated in classrooms with their typical age peers, they do better particularly in math and reading just because of what they're exposed to.

[02:02:35] However, in my mind, it's not just the training that the special ed teachers need to do, but it's more actually so that the training and the support that the regular ed teachers get. So those positions I think are important to me. I heard my colleague mention that as well.

[02:02:54] There's two positions CX has been asking for for a couple of years. I guess, I mean, when Dr. McLaughlin presented his data, I mean, I am still very interested in, I mean, it would be fabulous if we get grants to do interventions with our at-risk schools, but I think we need to plan to do something whether or not we get that grant funding.

[02:03:28] I was yeah that's I said what I said and I think the main the maintenance of our what we have done with our reading specialists across elementary middle and high school as well as our mental health and social emotional support kind of maintaining what we we had done I would like to have a look at what we review for efficiencies and reductions, kind of looking at any reviews that have been done.

[02:04:04] I know every time you give a budget, there is a review process in which we're looking at, we should be looking at that data. So that would be definitely something I would want to see. Any of those new initiatives in the last three years, what data do we have to make sure investments that we have made, like substitutes or the mental health dissociation, mostly just making sure those are making the intended outcomes I guess the other issue is we cut a lot of positions last year including what 10 different instructional

[02:04:38] coaches and we focus those instructional coaches only on our new teachers or new to I think only new to a CPS I guess I'd want to look and see if our current staffing for that is sufficient and if how painful those cuts were I know they were painful but and we also well that's really my focus on this question is about the instructional coaches and particularly maybe how they might be

[02:05:13] directed to our more struggling schools with respect to how destruction structure the upcoming budget work sessions I think you've done a lovely job the past several years I'm not sure what I would change in terms of I mean the way you have categorized the different sections of the budget that has been pretty useful and probably would be good for me to have that that that baseline of understanding to continue that structure I know one of the things you do is bring

[02:05:52] forward the additional proposals and it seems like we know what they are I do think we would like or at least I would like feedback or as you're showing us those that in that first meeting for us to be able to make recommendations as a board which we'd like to see first second or third because that would be just because of timing sometimes there we say we're going to talk about these two these two these two for some of those newer proposals I think that we might like to have some input about the the timing of when they are shared with us that makes sense I think the new thing in this budget as well is going to be the

[02:06:29] costs of collective bargaining proposals there are quite a few in there and And that's going to be new into our budget considerations, how those, just to lay them out. Because all, not every single one, but most of them have a budgetary impact.

[02:06:51] And to see, I mean, we may have to make some trade-offs and work with, you know, work with our union on that. Our plan for those is to present them like a new proposal so that you're looking at that with a non-collective bargaining new cost.

[02:07:10] And so I wonder if there's a way on February 12th when we present the budget, you'll have a list and you can get feedback on what you want to hear about first. I would personally love to be able to do that. Okay. Because I just feel like at the end of the year, there are some things we talked about later that I think we said had we had a discussion about it earlier, it might have been easier for us.

[02:07:29] And we gave you feedback that wound up, you wound up having to do some late night changes. I think it was just because of the timing when things were shared and discussed. For the March 12th approval, though, it remains a funding request and it doesn't necessarily need to be balanced.

[02:07:48] Right. You might be thinking about when we had to make those balancing decisions, but yeah, we'll work on that. That's always a good reminder. Do you have enough from us to go forward? Yes, that was very helpful.

[02:08:06] you, Ms. Kumizawa. With that, is there any other business by board members or staff? Well, with that, I'd like to again thank Ms. Pryor for her service, and of course Mr. Page for his. This is their last official meeting with us, and you have both added great value to the work that we do.

[02:08:37] Thank you so much. And with that, we're adjourned.



Coraggio Consulting · aguyonx.com