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Albemarle County School Board Regular Meeting, Thursday, May 14, 2026

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[00:00:01] It is my pleasure to call this meeting on May 14th of the Albemarle County School Board to order.

[00:00:20] Before we move forward with our roll call or our introductions, I just wanted to mention one thing for people who are used to the way our meetings work. Traditionally, we have a closed session at the beginning so i would call you i would open us up we would move into closed session and then we would come back we would make our announcement and then we would go forward with our meeting because today is a super busy and special day so many of the board members and cabinet members started out we were at ace academy or studio link doing the capstone presentations and then we had

[00:00:56] the honor of being at their their graduation ceremony and then now we are today we are celebrating all of the retirees we didn't want to do that closed session in the middle of all of those pomp and circumstances so the board chose we're doing it at the end there's no reason we're doing it at the end except that there was no way to do it before the retirement ceremony so just if anyone's listening is wondering why we're doing closed session at the end it is a planned to just preserve schedules and make sure we're honoring the retirees this

[00:01:32] afternoon. So with no further ado, we usually start our meetings with each of us introducing ourselves. So I am going to start with Jason Grant this morning. Jason Grant, communication officer. Daphne Kaiser, assistant superintendent for community engagement. Karen Stone, assistant division

counsel. Kate Acuff, Jack Jewett representative. Ellen Osborn, Scottsboro representative. Rebecca Berlin, Whitehall representative. Jim Dillenbeck, Ryo representative. Bob Beard and Samuel Miller representative Roslyn Schmidt chief operating officer Matthew Hawes superintendent Josiah Black chief legal officer Patrick McLaughlin assistant

[00:02:11] superintendent Christine Thompson clerk the school board and thank you to our officers who are here to protect us and protect us every day and we do have two school board members who are not able to attend tonight but we do have quorum so there's no reason that we can't move forward with our meeting we will begin with our pledge of allegiance please stand America and to the republic for which it stands, one nation, under God, indivisible, for the

[00:02:46] religion and justice for all. I now ask that we pause for a moment of silence and because we have so many graduates as well as retirees in the audience, I ask that you keep them and their safety and their joy in the coming months in your mind as we have this moment of silence.

[00:03:15] Thank you so much. And as someone who has dedicated her career to early childhood education, I couldn't be happier for the coups that are here. So please, whoever's child that is,

[00:03:54] please keep the coups coming. Do not think you have to step out. I may pick the child up if you need me to and do this meeting with him or her or them on my lap because I am honored that they are here in this meeting today. So before we move forward this evening, I want to take a moment to recognized the beginning of graduation season for Albemarle County Public Schools.

[00:04:16] Over the past couple of days, members of the board and division leadership have had the opportunity to already attend several celebrations honoring our students and their accomplishments. Yesterday evening, we celebrated with students at the KTEC completer ceremony at the MLK Performing Arts Center at Charlottesville High School.

[00:04:34] It was a wonderful event and a strong reminder of the value of career and technical education. These students are leaving with skills, experience, and confidence that will serve them well in whatever comes next. We also had the opportunity yesterday to attend community lab school's graduation at UVA's contemplative commons.

[00:04:52] That ceremony was thoughtful, personal, and very reflective of the spirit of community lab school. It was clear how much pride the students, the families, and the staff brought to that moment. Today, some members of the board and division leadership were able to attend the Albemarle Career Exploration Academy Senior Celebration at Seminole Place. This includes the Link Studio Capstone presentations. They were also recognized during the Link Studio Senior Completion Ceremony. These celebrations highlight the many different ways our students learn, they grow, and they prepare for their next steps. In the days ahead, we look forward to celebrating graduates across the division.

[00:05:30] Albemarle County High School will hold its graduation ceremony on Monday, May 18th at 6 p.m. at JPJ. Monticello High School will have its graduation ceremony at Tuesday at 6 p.m. at the same location. On Friday, Post High will celebrate its students at 1 o'clock at the Trailhead Learning Community. And then our final graduation is Western Albemarle High School, which holds its ceremony on Friday, May 22nd at 8 p.m. as I always say at sunset on the Western Albemarle High School turf field to all of our graduates and completers congratulations we are so proud of your hard work

[00:06:09] your persistence and the many different paths you are taking forward graduation is not just a ceremony it is the result of years of efforts by students their families their teachers their counselors our school staff administrators and our community partners on behalf of the school board congratulations to the class of 2026 we are so honored to celebrate with you point 2.0 on our agenda is the approval of our agenda. Do I have a motion for the approval to tonight's agenda?

[00:06:40] I move we adopt tonight's agenda. Moved by Dr. Acoff. Do I have a second? Second. Second by Mr. Dilibzik. All those in favor of tonight's agenda? Aye. Any opposed? We will move forward with today's agenda. So this is one of my favorite meetings of the year. I mean our budget meetings are fun, right but this is probably um so much more fun um no no offense roselyn and maya um but tonight we are going to do a few things um we are going to recognize our 25 26 student school board

[00:07:14] representatives and we are also going to recognize our 2026 retirees so the the school board members are going to start we each have a letter of thank you and recognition for each of the students who who have served us so well.

[00:07:29] Before I begin, I just wanted to say my personal thank you. This is such, these students, to sit on this diet as an adult is difficult. I can't imagine how difficult it is for our students to stay here, to look out at you, to look out at people who are sometimes friendly to their beliefs and sometimes who are not friendly to their beliefs.

[00:07:53] but they did it with such poise and such energy and such enthusiasm, I can't imagine doing it without you. I learned personally so much and many times when I was having a hard time in a meeting and trying to find strength, I looked over to you and you gave me strength.

[00:08:15] So I wanted to say thank you from the bottom of my heart for everything that you did, all the energy, all the thought you put into this work. And I also want to say that to your parents, thank you for being here. Thank you for raising these amazing children. Thank you for the family members, the aunties and the nanas who supported you along the way.

[00:08:35] So you have so many things to celebrate this week and next week. But it's so important to me to have you here. And I will always remember what you guys have taught me. So thank you so much. Mr. Beer, do you want to start?

[00:08:54] Absolutely. We would like to recognize Mr. Layton Cox. On behalf of the Albemarle County School Board, we extend our sincere appreciation for your service as the 2025-26 Student School Board Representative for Community Lab School.

[00:09:11] Throughout your tenure, you've represented Community Lab School with sincerity, steady judgment, and a clear interest in how students experience school each day. You've brought a practical student perspective to the Board's work and help strengthen the connection between student voice and this and division level decision making your leadership has reflected the qualities you shared when you sought this role active involvement in your school community a willingness to participate fully and a desire to provide honest and practical insight into both the challenges and successes students experience

[00:09:50] across our school division in your application you identified mental health academic stress student understanding and teacher approachability as issues that matter deeply to students and your service this year has reflected that concern for the daily experiences of your peers you also have the opportunity this year to represent represent community lab and Albemarle County Public Schools beyond

the local level through your participation in the liftoff design sprint at Stanford University that experience which brought together

[00:10:25] students and adults to think deeply about the future of learning reflected the kind of curiosity, openness, and forward-looking leadership that student voice can bring to public education. Your reflections on that experience reminded the board that students are not only participants in education but also important contributors to how schools continue to grow and improve. As you conclude your service as a student school board representative, please know that your contributions have been valued and appreciated. You have helped elevate student voice in a way that was thoughtful, respectful, and grounded in care for your school community.

[00:11:06] As you return to Community Lab School for your senior year, we hope you carry forward the same curiosity, commitment, and sense of responsibility that you brought to the school board this year. Your voice has already made a difference and we are confident you will continue to be a positive presence in your school community. Thank you. Thank you so much. We'll each read one and then we will do pictures at the end. Masters, should we do pictures? We'll do pictures at the end.

[00:11:36] Does that work? Okay, perfect. Mr. Dillenbach. This is for Amy Wang. Dear Amy, on behalf of the Albemarle County School Board, we extend our sincere appreciation for your service as the 2025-26 student school board representative for Albemarle High School. Throughout your service, you came to the board prepared, informed, focused on the everyday experiences of students. You represented Albemarle High School with maturity and purpose and you helped connect the board's work to the realities students are living in our schools. Your leadership reflected the qualities you shared when you sought

[00:12:16] this role: commitment to community, advocacy for others, and a strong desire to translate student perspectives into meaningful change. In your application you describe your goal of bringing student beliefs to the school board and ensuring that student perspectives are protected and considered in discussions about school and division-wide policy. Your service this year showed that commitment and action. You spoke with clarity and care about issues that affect students daily experiences including overcrowding, access to support, multilingual student needs, school safety procedures, mental health

[00:12:54] supports class offerings and transparency and decision-making you also took care to highlight the positive experiences that make albemarle high school meaningful to students from service projects and athletic accomplishments to performing arts music and collaboration across programs your remarks to the board reflected not only your own perspective but also the voices of students you intentionally sought out and listened to directly whether sharing survey feedback student interviews or specific examples from daily school life, you help the board better understand how

[00:13:31] students experience their schools, what they value, and where they believe improvement is needed. As you graduate from Albemarle High School on Monday and conclude your service as a student board representative, please know that your contributions have been valued and appreciated.

[00:13:48] You helped to elevate student voice in a way that was thoughtful, respectful, well researched and grounded in care for your school community. We also congratulate you as you prepare to attend the University of Virginia, where you plan a major in biomedical engineering.

[00:14:05] That path reflects the same curiosity, discipline, and commitment to problem solving that you brought to your role with the board. It's a demanding and meaningful field and we are confident you will

bring to it the same care, intelligence, and purpose you have shown this year.

[00:14:22] We congratulate you on your graduation from Albemarle High School, and wish you continued success at the University of Virginia and beyond. We have every confidence that you will continue to lead with purpose, advocate with compassion, and make a meaningful difference wherever your path takes you with appreciation and best wishes.

[00:14:41] So this is for Claire Currie and I have all of you graduating this year. I forget that some of you have another year.

[00:14:56] We are excited for you guys to be here for another year and give some advice to our upcoming representatives that we will be choosing this month. So dear Clear, on behalf of the Albemarle County School Board, we extend our sincere appreciation for your service as the student school board representative for Western Albemarle High School.

[00:15:16] During your time as a student school board representative, you have brought a calm, thoughtful, and unifying presence to the board's work. You have represented Western Albemarle High School with care, and you have consistently emphasized the importance of listening across differences.

[00:15:32] Your leadership has reflected the qualities you shared you shot this role. Collaboration, inclusion, communication, and the willingness to listen carefully to the viewpoints and experiences of others. You spoke about the importance of listening as a key part of effective representation and your service this year has shown that commitment and action. You have spoken with honesty and courage about issues affecting students including school climate, belonging, discrimination, political division, and the need for students to feel safe enough to express themselves without fear. Your remarks to the board were a meaningful reminder

[00:16:09] that strong school communities are not built by avoiding disagreement, but by learning how to disagree without losing respect for one another. As you conclude your service as a student school board representative, please know that your contributions have been valued and appreciated.

[00:16:26] You have helped elevate student voice in a way that was thoughtful, respectful, and grounded in and care for your school community. As you return to Western Albemarle for your senior year, we hope you carry forward the same commitment to listening inclusion and thoughtful leadership that you brought to the board this year.

[00:16:44] Your voice has already made a difference, and we are confident you will continue to be a positive presence in your school community. Best wishes, the school board.

[00:17:00] - This is for Maximilian Koffler. Dear Maximilian, on behalf of the Albemarle County school board we extend our sincere appreciation for your service as a 2025 26 student school board representative for Monticello high school during your time as student school board representative you represented Monticello high school with confidence energy and an unmistakable willingness to speak up you brought a direct student perspective to the board's work and helped ensure that Monticello students had a voice in conversations affecting schools across

[00:17:37] the division. Your leadership reflected the qualities you shared when you sought this role: confidence in public speaking, goodwill towards others, and a belief that student ideas should be heard and taken seriously. In your application you wrote that Monticello High School needed a voice people

would listen to and you offered yourself as someone prepared to represent your classmates with purpose and conviction. Your service this year showed that commitment and action. You You spoke thoughtfully about issues that matter to students, including mental health,

[00:18:12] school community, student connection, and the importance of helping students feel supported as they move through different grade levels and expectations. You encouraged schools to make mental health resources more visible and approachable and to strengthen the sense of community that helps students feel that school is more than just a building they attend.

[00:18:35] This year you also brought forward ideas about artificial intelligence and the future students are preparing to enter. Your presentation materials reflected both the rapid growth of AI and the importance of helping students understand how emerging technology may shape learning, work, and opportunity in the years ahead.

[00:18:56] As you graduate Monticello High School and conclude your service as student school board representative, we also want to recognize the exciting and ambitious path you are already building. You have been offered admission to the University of Virginia, a well-earned accomplishment and reflection of your hard work. Whether you begin at UVA this fall or choose to pursue a planned gap year first, you are clearly approaching your next chapter with purpose. During your gap year, you plan to continue your work with Rise Rain Rule, a coaching and consulting business,

[00:19:32] while also continuing your insure with Vandera, an AI startup focused on modernizing traditional vending machines. Your goal of bringing several Smart Mart units to the Charlottesville area as your own business reflects initiative, independence, and the kind of entrepreneurial thinking that turns ideas into action. In addition to your professional goals, your plans to serve as a ski race coach for Wintergreen Race Team show your willingness to mentor younger athletes and share your experience with others. Your upcoming hike of the

[00:20:09] Tour du Mont Blanc with your sister, along with your plans to visit friends around the country, also reflect a sense of adventure, curiosity, and confidence as you step into the next chapter. Please know that your contributions to the school board have been valued and appreciated.

[00:20:28] You helped elevate student voice with confidence, curiosity, and a practical understanding of the world that students are stepping into. We congratulate you on your graduation from Monticello High School and wish you continued success and all that comes next, whether that path begins at the University of Virginia this fall or through the gap year experiences you have thoughtfully planned. We have every confidence that you will continue to lead with confidence, think creatively, and make a meaningful difference in your community and beyond. We appreciate you

[00:21:03] and give you best wishes. And last but not least, by a long shot, this is for Maxwell Keyes. "Dear Maxwell, on behalf of the Albemarle County School Board, we extend our sincere appreciation for your service in the 2025-2026 student school board representative for Albemarle High School. Throughout your tenure, you have used your seat at the table to speak with courage, purpose, and and a clear sense of responsibility.

[00:21:41] You have represented Albemarle High School with maturity, while also keeping in mind that experiences of students, the experiences of students across Albemarle County Public Schools. Your advocacy reflected the qualities you identified when you sought this role.

[00:21:57] Persistence, compassion, determination, and a strong commitment to equity. In your application, you shared your desire to help make ACPS as a school division, where every student and educator can thrive, and your service this year showed us that commitment in action.

[00:22:15] You spoke with clarity about issues that matters to students, including belonging, school climate, student engagement, representation, and the importance of creating learning environments where all students feel safe, welcome, and able to succeed.

[00:22:32] Your remarks to the board were not only thoughtful, but also a reminder that student voice is strongest when it is honest, informed, and grounded in care for the whole community. As you graduate from Albemarle High School and conclude your service as a student school board representative, please know that your contributions have been valued and will be remembered.

[00:22:55] We are proud of the leadership you have shown, the example you have set, and the future that lies ahead of you. We also congratulate you as you prepare to continue your education at the University of Virginia, where you will pursue a Bachelor of Science in Education.

[00:23:12] I hope you'll come back here. It is especially meaningful to see a student school board representative carry this experience forward into the field of education. We wish you continued success at the University of Virginia and beyond.

[00:23:27] We have every confidence that you will continue to lead with purpose, speak with conviction, and make a meaningful difference wherever you go. Thank you so much.

[00:23:42] Before we take the required pictures, I have a few other thank yous to make on this. I want to offer a special thank you to Amber Roberts, our work and community-based learning coordinator, who has worked closely with our student representatives throughout the year. Amber has helped prepare them for meetings, supported them in understanding the work of the board, and guiding them as they develop their voices in this role.

[00:24:05] Her steady support has helped make this experience meaningful for our students and so valuable for the board. So thank you, Amber. And last but not least, to the families. We want to recognize their families who have supported them throughout this experience.

[00:24:22] Students do not reach moments like this alone, and we are glad to have family members with us. Tonight, we are recognizing Claire, and with her this evening are her parents, Jamie and Chris Curry. Leighton Cox, and thanking his parents, Abigail and Zeke Cox.

[00:24:40] Maxwell Keyes, thank you to his mother, Leilani Keyes. Maximilian Koffer, thank you so much to Adele and Joe Koffer, and also to Amy, with her parents, Huan Lin and Xunhao Wang.

[00:24:56] Thank you so much. So we'll have the students come forward and shake our hands, and then we will hand you your certificates, and then we will take a big picture at the end.

[00:25:12] Make sure you give the right ones to the right students. this is a test for the board members to make sure we match that their certificate with the student too short thank you so much appreciate it thank you

[00:25:57] you forgot to give you your certificate. Yep. Yep, we will. Yep. Sorry. Yes. Look at me.

[00:26:34] - Nobody has to come on this side. - We're out of balance.

[00:26:51] - We're out of balance.

[00:27:08] - Come on, Miss Anne, come on, come on. - Because I'm the shortest, is that the answer?

[00:27:27] - Thank you guys. - Good job, good job.

[00:27:58] - Great picture, aw. - Thanks y'all, appreciate it. - Thank you so much. We also have a cookie cake for the graduates, I just realized I was supposed to say. So to continue our celebration, it is my absolute honor to recognize, Actually, Dan is, you're standing in.

[00:28:20] That's what I thought, sorry, apologies. I'd like to recognize Daphne Kaiser, who is going to lead our recognition of retirees. - Thank you very much, Dr. Berlin. Good evening, everyone, and welcome.

[00:28:36] Tonight is an incredibly special evening for Albemarle County Public Schools. As we gather to recognize and celebrate a remarkable group of individuals whose dedication, compassion and service have helped shape generations of students and strengthen our entire school community.

[00:28:56] Among those being honored this evening are teachers, administrators, support staff, transportation staff, operations personnel, and so many others whose daily work often happens quietly, faithfully, and without fanfare, yet whose impact has been immeasurable.

[00:29:21] For years, and in many cases, decades, these individuals have shown up for our students and for one another. They have celebrated successes, navigated challenges, adapted to change, solved problems, offered encouragement, and created places where children could learn, grow, and belong.

[00:29:44] The impact of their work lives on in the students they inspired the colleagues they supported, and the communities they strengthened. We also want to recognize and thank the families, friends, and loved ones who supported these retirees throughout their careers.

[00:30:04] Service and education is never done alone, and tonight we celebrate them and all who walked alongside them on this journey. Retirement is not simply the end of a career. It is the recognition of a lifetime of commitment, service, and care for others. As I reflected on what it means to reach this milestone, I hope I get there one day myself, I came across a poem that beautifully captures the shared experiences and lasting bonds created through years of working together in

[00:30:42] service to others. It seems it's been forever since the first time that we met. We've shared some days together that we just cannot forget. There was work and there was laughter. There were tears and triumphs too, successes and disasters, but somehow we came through. Yes, we worked to make things last, and yes, we had to strive. Our hearts and minds were fully in it, and we truly

[00:31:20] we felt alive. It's those moments we'll rely on. They bespeak the way we feel, for we started out as iron, but we ended up as steel. And now in days that yet will dawn, although we'll be apart, those memories we know will spawn a smile within our hearts. Now take our wishes with you for blessings in all you do, for happiness in all your days, and for love to see you through.

[00:32:01] Tonight, we honor not only years of service, but also the relationships built, the lives touched, and the enduring legacy each retiree leaves behind. As your name is called this evening, please come forward to the dais to receive your certificate and greet the school board and cabinet members. After receiving your certificate, we ask that you remain standing along the wall so that once all the retirees have been recognized, we may take a group photo with the school board.

[00:32:39] In the coming month, each retiree will also receive a letter in the mail with information about selecting a retirement service award. This small token is offered in appreciation for many years of dedication care and commitment you've given to albemarle county public schools it is now my privilege to recognize our retirees for their years of dedicated service to albemarle county

[00:33:10] public schools jane addison john apperson barbara barbara mark baron luther braxton jr breedon

[00:33:45] Carla Brown. Someone told me that Carla has dedicated 42 years of her life

[00:34:09] to her profession. That is absolutely amazing. Jack Carroll, Barbara Carswell, Kip Chatterton,

[00:35:22] Kathy Kaufman, Pacoia Connor, Latrice Cooper Simpson. Say next time we need some walk-up music

[00:36:38] for this. Thank you. Now we're going to change, Dr. Hahn. Thanks, guys. We appreciate you. No, thank you so much. We appreciate you. It is, yes. Congratulations. Glad to get to the end.

[00:37:01] Michelle Creasy, Cynthia Curtis, Christine Diggs, Laura Emery, Stacy England, Michael Farabaugh,

[00:39:07] Donna Ferrara, Lucy Gentry, Katherine Hamill, Lisa Harmon,

[00:41:00] Melissa Harrison, Karen Heathcock, Keith Heck,

[00:41:39] Amy Hepler, Michael Orani, Carol Janssens,

[00:42:22] Beth Collier, Joe Lavarro, Scott Lehman,

[00:42:29] Leach, Susan Lohr, Diane Maupin, Lisa Molinera,

[00:43:13] Is there one day apart?

[00:43:45] Doug Mullenix, Russell Napier, Kelly Ollier, Stephen Paso, Emily Pastorfield, Jeffrey Perlman, Michelle Prophet,

[00:44:14] Calvin Reed, Anthony Robinson, Cheryl Rush, Susan Schofield, Wesley Scott,

[00:46:16] Debbie Shaler. I just heard that so we one upped 42 years, I'm sorry, with 43

[00:47:07] years. Karen Shiflett, Debbie Spears, Carol Stutzman, Jen Sublett,

[00:47:23] Diane Simms, Jill Williams, Tammy Williams, and Yon-John. Yon-John Ratou. Please join me once

[00:47:49] again in congratulating and thanking our retirees. Retirees, years of service, dedication, compassion,

[00:48:25] and commitment have made a lasting difference in the lives of students, families, colleagues, and the entire community. While your careers with Albemarle County Public Schools may concluding the impact of your work will continue for many years to come congratulations on this well-earned retirement and we wish each of you joy fulfillment health and happiness in the chapters ahead would the audience please

[00:48:57] join me one final round of applause for our retirees at this time if our we invite our retirees and the school board members to gather up front for a group

[00:49:24] photo. So the taller people to the back, the medium-sized people to the front.

[00:50:20] Just for a second to let all of the retirees and their families continue the

[00:52:21] celebration outside. So we'll begin in a minute or two. To our student reps, you're welcome to stay. We would love to have you stay, but if you need to go home to do homework or enjoy your life thank you we totally understand so we will leave

[00:52:49] it up to you don't leave your cake yeah make sure you eat your cake item on our school board just well while people are continuing to exit is school board superintendent and committee updates I know we have one update by Keisha

[00:53:29] Lipscomb on summer programming but before she comes up I just wanted to see if any school board members have any announcements or updates I think yeah I think we covered all the graduations that we've been at we're not doing school visits because of testing so any other updates okay I just wanted to mention several of us were able to be at the center one ceremony today I just want to

[00:54:05] give a shout out to mr. Thomas who's done an outstanding job there I'm old school teacher and so that the things that the students are doing there at Center one just blew my mind and so it's fun to see the culmination of their hard work over the course of the year and again continued success there at Center one I'd like to ask dr. Keisha lipscomb executive director of pre-k 12 to come forward and provide an update about our summer programming thank you

[00:54:41] can you hear me can you hear me now bring it up just a teeny bit okay there you go all right thank you good evening board chair Dr. Berlin superintendent Dr. Haas and school board members I'm Dr. Keisha Lipscomb the executive director of K-12 administration and instruction and tonight I will present a brief overview of our summer initiatives our goal is to ensure student readiness and academic continuity across all grade levels schools use student data in reading and math to invite students to summer programs. Our pre-k through 8 summer programs and rising

[00:55:20] freshman programs for select students allow students to work on foundational literacy and numeracy skills. We will measure effectiveness by tracking the rate at which summer attendees are able to engage with grade level content at the beginning of the school year for pre-k through 8 programs and completion of courses for high schoolers who participate in credit recovery or or initial credit opportunities.

[00:55:48] Programs integrate English learners and special education students. Extended school year support is also available for eligible students. The document before you provide the details of our pre-K through 12 programs, as well as information on summer site dates and locations.

[00:56:06] If parents have any questions about the summer programs, they should contact their child's school. Are there any questions? Just remind me, are we providing food during the summer for students either in the program or outside of those?

[00:56:24] Can I take that one? Because I have a little more information on that one as well. No. Go ahead. Thank you. So we offer breakfast and lunch at our summer school programs through two different USDA

programs, the National School Lunch Program and the Summer Food Service Program, which we call the SFSP.

[00:56:39] At our SFSP-designated sites, meals are not only available to summer school attendees, also to all children 18 and younger within the surrounding school community so this summer those locations include agner woodbrook greer journey burley red hill and walton and then to better serve our families we applied for an additional grant this summer for a what's called a hybrid non-congregate model so at greer walton and red hill these only schools that qualify on thursdays we will be able to prepare and send home breakfast and lunch for friday saturday and sunday again that's open to the community in those schools so we just were recently informed that our grant was

[00:57:18] approved so we will now plan our broader community communication plan around that thank you that is wonderful thank you so much thank you for your continued support just i do have a how many children how many students are we anticipating in summer school that number is still being determined because we're still enrolling students and um of course in the high school we're still waiting to see what some of our scores are going to pan out to be and students are still registering for the initial um courses just remind me approximately how many we had last summer

[00:57:52] that i do not know ah thank you i will find out we can figure it out yes yes ma'am thank you and we'll dr acuff will provide a follow-up report so you know thank you do we have any other um announcements updates seeing no other we will move to public comment and i've asked mr de la limit to chair, um, oversee. I'll let you chair it. I'll let you oversee it. Public comment.

[00:58:20] 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. One, online signup 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's, school board clerk's office at 434-972-4055 to sign up until 2 p.m. on the meeting day or 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 special

[00:58:58] 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 should there be 14 or more speakers. The maximum number of people or groups that may speak at a meeting is 20.

[00:59:14] If there are more than 20 people or groups who wish to speak at a particular meeting, each speaker will be assigned a number and numbers will be drawn to determine which people or groups will have the opportunity to speak those who do not have the opportunity to speak at a particular meeting may sign up to speak at a subsequent meeting and or may submit written comments for the school board's consideration speakers should number one state their name address or voting district number two address comments to the school board as a whole limit comments to school board governance or school division operations comments may not be directed

[00:59:50] to individual board members division leadership or to staff provide written statements and supporting materials to the clerk the school board will use a timer to track each speaker's time once the time 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 hand instead debate with the school board is not allowed the projection system is for staff presentations only and this evening we have eight

[01:00:22] people who've signed up for public comment so we'll start with uh tom paranese and on deck will be janna bailey this good hi my name is tom panaris i live in the ravanna district i am an english teacher at albemarle high school i am also the parent of a graduate of albemarle high school the class of 2025. i'm here tonight to talk about the grading policy during the public comment at

[01:01:00] the april 23rd meeting my colleague jen mcdonald spoke to you about the impact our current grading policy has had. She talked about the issues that have come with the lack of consequences for late work, how grades have been inflated by giving 50 percent credit for missing work, and how students can avoid major assignments and still pass a course. I stand by everything she said because over the past five years I have also seen these effects firsthand. This policy is not serving our students very well. In fact, I've had students tell me that they need the structure and rigor that the grading policy diluted, and that includes accountability through consequences when they

[01:01:39] do not meet the expectations we set. Even my own child, Brett, who graduated last year and was an AP student at AHS, told me, quote, retakes made it feel like the first attempt at anything didn't matter, and this coupled with the lack of deadlines made it easy to not take assignments seriously and then brush them off. When the policy was adopted, my colleagues and I felt that we didn't have much of a voice. And during these past five years, teachers have come to public comment and raise the same concerns I've expressed tonight. And we've also seen outcry from students, teachers, parents on social media, as well as publications such as the AHS Revolution and the Crozet Gazette.

[01:02:17] These voices are allowed. They want change. I was very glad to see that a grading policy governance committee was being formed, and I think that's a very good start. Teachers in the community deserve to have a say and say in how schools are run teachers have deserve to have a say in how our classrooms are run any committee that's forms truly needs to address our concerns it should not be a way to pay lip service it should nor should it be a rubber stamp you are gathering a group of experienced teaching professionals then that group should be a leading voice

[01:02:53] for change so I ask you to please take the work of that or any committee form regarding the grading policy seriously listen to the voice of the teachers follow our suggestions give us the chance to do our work we all want our students to succeed changing harmful policies through giving those who are affected a real voice will help that when we have a say we feel valued and that creates a better learning culture and a stronger community thank you thank you next up

[01:03:26] Jana Bailey and Christina Ra is on deck. Good evening. My name is Jana Bailey. I am the librarian at Greer Elementary and I reside in the Jack Jewett District. I'm here tonight to advocate for my colleagues, the families of Greer, and most importantly the students of Greer. Our leader of the past seven years, Dr. Steve Saunders, is leaving at the end of this school year. I cannot

[01:04:02] adequately express how unsettling disorienting and stressful this change has been for my school community. Strong and consistent leadership in title one schools is critical for success. According to the Learning Policy Institute principles are essential to improving student achievement and narrowing persistent achievement gaps between students in underserved communities and their economically advantaged peers. The Wallace Foundation states effective principles have measurable effects on student absenteeism and chronic

[01:04:41] absenteeism, lowering teacher turnover in high poverty schools and student achievement in both math and reading. Brookings Institution reports that principal turnover is associated with lower test

scores, school proficiency rates and teacher retention. And the disruption from the turnover event itself contributes to a decline in several school outcomes. I'm here tonight to ask for transparency. Where are we

[01:05:13] in the search for a principal for Greer? We want to know. I'm here tonight to ask for an open dialogue. Do we have additional candidates? How many? When are they being interviewed? Will Greer staff members be on this panel. What is the timetable for making a leadership decision? I'm here tonight to ask that we remember and embrace and honor the core values of ACPS, specifically equity.

[01:05:49] We will provide every student with the level of support necessary to thrive and the core value family and community. We will engage with and share the responsibility for student success with families and community partners. In closing, my heart aches for Greer.

[01:06:16] Excuse me. Had the best leadership. We continue to deserve that. Excuse me. I invite you to come to our school, reassure our staff members and families that everything possible is being done to ensure that the individual who replaces Dr. Saunders will either be equal to his high caliber or somehow exceed it. Thank you so much for your... Greer matters to us. Please show us that it

[01:06:51] matters to you. Thank you, Ms. Baylor. I ask that you not clap. You may wave your hands, but please follow the guidelines of Virginia code. Next Christina Ra and on deck Holly Odom. Good evening I'm Christina Ra. I am in the Ravonna district at Baker Butler and I have three children in attendance there. I'm also the Baker Butler rep for the family council and I'm here tonight alongside other parents and staff because our school is about to hire its third principal

[01:07:26] in three years. We're now the largest elementary school in Albemarle County and we're incredibly diverse and right now we're a community that needs stability trust and a leader who is chosen with us not for us in the past despite this community offering clear feedback the hiring processes within the hiring processes the county has made decisions without us to be especially blunt the community's recommendations were completely ignored repeatedly the consequences are severe teachers have been assaulted behavioral issues are rampant and disciplinary actions have been inconsistent

[01:08:02] that creates chaos for students, staff, and families. Our amazing teachers have left in droves already and more will be gone by next year. This instability is deeply upsetting to our special education families who are watching incredible sped teachers and aides leave due to the administration's attitude over the past three years. An example is that one family reported that a crucial part of their IEP, which is early access to know their teacher and visit the school before open house, has been unfulfilled by the administration for two years. Even after personal promises the family was ignored this is what poor leadership looks like we cannot afford

[01:08:39] to repeat this the school year starts in three months this community is taking matters into its own hands we are not waiting to be asked we're gathering data through our own survey to define what we which is the community need at baker and baker butler's next leader the county may do a fine job in evaluating candidates on paper but only we know what this incredible community needs everyone here holds responsibility to this community whether directly or indirectly and we expect you to ensure that our voices are heard. We'll do our part, we'll deliver the data and we expect

[01:09:14] it to be used. We expect the priorities of our teachers and our families to be reflected in the candidates you screen and we expect to be involved in the hiring process and to have a principal in August

who was chosen with us. Baker Butler has an incredibly passionate community that does not have what is needed to thrive and the systemic impacts of this show up daily. I'll leave you with this. We are organized, we are paying attention, and we will be back next week with

[01:09:48] data. Thank you. Special thanks to Dr. Kaiser for showing up to engage with us earlier this week and we'll have the data for you in a few days. Thank you. Thank you. Next up, Holly Odom and on deck Deborah Kidd. Hi my name is Holly Odom and I reside in the Jack Jewett district with students at Greer and Journey. I came today in solidarity with the Baker Butler community and to share my experience as a mother of a

[01:10:24] dyslexic student in ACPS. Journalist Emily Hanford of the podcast Soul to Story states reading doesn't come naturally we have to learn to read and there's something about the brains of people with dyslexia that makes learning to read really hard. It's just that many people with dyslexia don't get past the beginning reader stage unless they get the right kind of help. When they don't get that help, school can be torture. Knowing many Greer educators are leaving this year, I want to use this last public opportunity to amplify those who have helped us navigate literacy in the IEP process. To the Greer Reading Intervention

[01:11:03] Team, thank you Miss Palmer now at Mountain View who is the first to help us. To Ms. Ray, Ms. DeBoer, Ms. Abercombie, Ms. LaBello, Ms. LaPlante, and Ms. Craddock. They are miracle workers. Thank you to our incredible SPED case manager, Ms. Lawrence.

[01:11:18] To our classroom teachers, Ms. Morris, Ms. Gonyer. To Ms. Mutzabaugh, Ms. Chainbacon, Ms. Buckles, Ms. Wolfe, and Ms. Lamb, who are literal magicians teaching my children to read. To Coach Lacrone, Ms. Bailey, Ms. Lee, Ms. Henry, Ms. Newberry, and Ms. Irvin, who've wrapped around their support.

[01:11:38] And to Principal Saunders, I will never forget his kindness and listening ear in our first SBIT meeting many years ago. My husband, Bo, and I are grateful that our IEP team created space, so our meetings were curious spaces, hopeful, strength-focused, and always a place of being known.

[01:11:57] Also, it's not lost on me that we are the privileged few that can pay to supplement with not, excuse me, but necessary after-school tutoring. Shout out to Emerson Health Learning downtown who helps our kids soar. School Board, I entrust to you this: that the next principal of Greer is of that same high caliber of Principal Saunders with fortitude to patiently come alongside our families navigating disabilities and learning differences. Lastly, I echo Oh, sorry, I echo the call from the Baker Butler community.

[01:12:32] I am so sad to hear this pattern repeating. School board members, two things can be true, that it is not your job to hire and move principals, and it is your job to manage the superintendent who does. Greer, Baker Butler, we will continue on building bridges and inviting you into our distinct school communities so you can know us better and make decisions with us.

[01:12:57] with us. Thank you again for your time and your service and your care for students. Thanks. Thank you. Next up, Deborah Kidd and on deck, Lizzie Batman. Good evening. My name is Deborah Kidd and I reside in the Rivanna District. I have three children who attended or attended Baker Butler and a fourth starting this coming school year. When my oldest first started school, we felt welcome. The front office was peaceful. The principal, Steve Saunders, often answered the

[01:13:33] and knew everybody by name. Teachers who weren't my kids' teachers knew my kids' names. It was a smaller school. Our school is now bigger. COVID happened. Our school got even bigger, and even after redistricting, our school is going to get even bigger with the proposed plans and increases to NGIC and DIA nearby. This is not the proving ground for anyone. This is not where people should learn how to do a job, even if the school wasn't in crisis. What we can all agree on is that we all want what's best. What we can't agree on is what is best. Let's look at our most pressing issues. There is disciplinary chaos. There is no consistency in

[01:14:12] providing disciplinary action or disciplinary support. Teachers are getting physically assaulted every single day. There is limited instructional time because teachers do not have admin support to deal with behavioral issues. Teachers and teachers and front office staff are having to apologize to parents because there is a disconnect and breakdown in communication and action between school leadership and parents.

[01:14:35] Teacher retention is at an all time low. Last year, there was almost a complete turnover of fifth grade teachers. Out of six teachers, we have six. Only one stayed on the team and we're about to do that again.

[01:14:51] We're about to lose almost all of our special education staff. This is a school that is in absolute crisis and recent admin appointments have not helped it thrive. In another life, I was an engineer. I worked in a lab. I did cutting-edge research, making decisions based on evidence and produced by experiments.

[01:15:11] I quit all of that to make my family and raising children my full-time job. And now I'm making it my very, very personal mission to make sure that this board does right by our community because I tried to do this your way.

[01:15:26] I tried to do this by following policies and procedures. I tried to do it by supporting teachers and supporting the PTO. I served on the PTO board for two years. I did everything the school and the PTO asked me to do, and it was not enough. But most of all, I tried to do it by sitting on your selection committees where we spent hours and days interviewing candidates only to have Dr. Haas choose someone that the group unanimously decided was not qualified and not fit for our community, or just choose someone out of left field that was not even in our candidate field.

[01:16:05] So I'm begging you, please do this right. Listen to our community and consider how your decisions affect our whole community, please. Because we are a school in crisis and we are gonna be a squeaky wheel, a thorn in your shoe until you do right by us.

[01:16:21] We appreciate it. - Thank you. Next up is Lizzie Batman and on deck Michelle Drago. Hello, and thank you for your time this evening.

[01:16:41] My name is Lizzie Batman. I'm in the Jack Jewett District and shocking to everyone here, I have kids at Greer. I'm the mother of two girls there. Outside of being a mother of two girls at Greer, I'm co-chair for family council. I'm a member of the Talent Development Committee, and you could say I'm a fairly involved parent.

[01:17:02] I know you've heard a lot about Greer in our school in recent months, and will continue to do so until we have a new principal in place. I've been assured that the candidates for this role have Title I

backgrounds, and while I truly appreciate that fact, I need to remind you that not all Title I schools have the same needs.

[01:17:25] Greer has a large portion of international students, particularly centered on Iranian, Afghan, and Latinx communities. I work at the School of Engineering, and many of our foreign students, international students, have their children at Greer, including my daughter's best friend.

[01:17:41] We need a principal who can inspire these students to come to school every day because, as is repeated, Greer geckos come to school every day. But we are in a time of strife and stress for these families in an administration that is pushing back against international families.

[01:17:59] having these students come to school with a principal as they do now is incredible and unheard of across the nation we have that trust and we need someone who is going to build that trust quickly or greer scores will continue to go down they have been going up because people have been showing up but it will change so now i'm going to get off that soapbox and on to another why are there so many elementary principal openings in this county greer baker butler stony point stone robinson agner just got a new one y'all made a great choice i'm being serious with

[01:18:38] that so good job um but what's happening what is happening in our county how can we support our students faculty and staff as families but also as a board i'd like more clarity i'd like to know if there's a way that more information can be communicated.

[01:18:56] I'm all ears. Thank you. - Thank you. Next up, Michelle Drago and on deck, Megan Jackson. - Hi, I'm Michelle Drago. I live in the Rivanna district. I'm a teacher at Baker Butler and also a Baker Butler parent.

[01:19:14] I wanted to speak tonight about my concerns about the administration issue at our school. This is my 17th year as a teacher here in Charlottesville and it's my fifth year at Baker Butler. In those five years, we are gearing up to hire our fourth principal. I have deep concerns about this and the hiring process that we've had in the past.

[01:19:30] Last year when we were searching for a principal, there were several teachers and family members on the interview committee. They were assured their voices would be heard and taken into consideration. However, the principal who was hired was not even interviewed by the committee. So there is no way their opinions were taken into consideration at all.

[01:19:46] This is not an indictment of the principal, but an indictment on the hiring process and the trust that we feel we can have in that process going forward. It was a waste of the committee members' time and energy and it was highly disrespectful to them. Staff and families have the greatest knowledge about the needs of our school and our students, and we are not willing to have this happen again.

[01:20:04] There are a lot of qualities we need in our incoming principal, but one that we need with urgency is an administrator who has a deep knowledge and understanding of the world of special education. My youngest child, who currently attends Baker Butler, has multiple disabilities and complex needs. He was served this year by an incredible, knowledgeable, caring, passionate team of special education teachers and assistants. However, the impact of our continual administrative turnover has wreaked havoc on our special education program and on the level of support that our special education staff receives. Having so many different leadership styles, communication difficulties, changing protocols and expectations has led to a chaotic school environment which is lacking the support that those

[01:20:44] staff members and students need. This year alone we are losing nearly three quarters of our entire special education staff. They are not leaving the profession and they are not leaving the county. The overwhelming majority of them are leaving Baker Butler to go work at other schools within Admiral County where they have more stable leadership and where they have people who are experts in supporting special education. We currently have seven full-time special education teachers, only two are returning. The five leaving have been long-time members at Baker Butler and they didn't make their decision to leave lightly. In the special education teaching assistants who are leaving we need to acknowledge that our incoming administration has to make

[01:21:21] hiring retaining and supporting our sped staff and students one of their highest priorities our students with disabilities are our most vulnerable students and Baker Butler has the largest sped population of any elementary school in the county any incoming administrator has to have clear plans on how to retain our special education staff in the future because we're losing a huge portion of them this year they are most hard-working and most dedicated staff members and they are going to other schools where they will get the support they need them leaving makes it so that our students with special needs are the ones who pay the price so it's vital that we are

[01:21:57] absolutely transparent in the hiring process and seriously take the input of staff and families we need to hire a strong leader with a deep understanding of sped who wants to stay at baker butler for the long term to put us on the right path uh megan jackson hi my name is megan Jackson and I'm speaking tonight through a dual lens as a parent of two Baker Butler students and as a member of the school staff. First I want to sincerely thank Dr. Kaiser and Dr. Sears for the recent transparency and willingness to

[01:22:33] engage with our community. That openness deeply was was deeply appreciated. However, I'm here to advocate for leadership selection that goes beyond and beyond administrative competence and addresses the heart of our school's current challenge, the need for cultural and relational stability. The impact of our leadership and stability is best illustrated by my own children. My daughters, Elise and Emma, are preparing to enter fourth and third grade under their fourth elementary school principal. And for children in their most

[01:23:09] formative years, leadership shouldn't be a revolving door. It should be a steady for your presence. When a child who doesn't know who is leading their school, they lose a vital layer of security. When leadership changes frequently, we really can see that evidently in our school-wide behavior and the environment. Relationships are the foundation of effective discipline, and without a consistent leader to build those bonds, model expectations, and reinforce

[01:23:47] them daily, students lose their sense of what is normal. Our students don't just need a principal, they need a culture builder. Someone who knows their names, celebrates their growth, and provides a predictable, safe routine. That instability has also taken a heavy toll on staff morale. There is palpable turnover fatigue in our hallways. We know that a teacher's working environment is a student's learning environment and to have a thriving school we need a leader

[01:24:23] who prioritizes authentic relationships staff someone who listens to our expertise values our history and understands that supporting teacher morale is the most direct way to support the students success given the high number of vacancies across the division we fear the process may be stretched too thin and Baker Butler cannot afford another temporary solution. In closing, the Baker Butler

community is full of incredible families and students and a very resilient staff, but resilience shouldn't be a

[01:25:01] requirement of elementary school. We are ready to move past starting over and begin building up. We need a leader who is committed to staying, listening, and and bringing a renewed sense of pride joy and most importantly connection back to our building thank you and thank you all for your comments this evening the next item on our agenda is the approval of our consent agenda do i have a motion on this i move we approve tonight's consent agenda

[01:25:38] moved by ms osborne do i have a second second second by uh mr beard all those in favor all right aye any opposed um is it possible to pull an item from the consent agenda at this point it was like 30 seconds yeah we you can ask we you can ask for um uh if miss osborne would uh i'm gonna use the word repeal i'm looking at josh that's not that would would repeat would take away her remove her motion and if mr beer i withdraw my thank you thank you miss thank you

[01:26:18] repeal sorry it's been a long day undo the last 60 seconds thank you i i i did want to pull one item from the consent agenda and that is uh the last item on the agenda 5.7 information uh the achievement gap advisory committee the charter we had discussed several weeks ago and i'm curious to know what we need to do to advance this to the next stage uh what i know there was some discussion about um uh requesting some professional development for those of us uh on the board

[01:26:58] and especially on the committee um i'm just wondering aloud if it's possible to advance a vote on the charter so that we can continue down the path mission do you want to i give an up your mr house you want to give an update on or on on the professional development i know we're looking i had reached out and um that you guys were looking into one of the requests from a number of board members or to do some to have some professional development for the board as part of that and i know you're looking into um timing um and the uh the staff or or consultants who would

[01:27:36] do that so could you provide an update on that so we've had um meetings with uh gene cash about Conducting professional development and we're we're ready to but we've got another meeting scheduled with him So at the direction of the board we can start working on scheduling that and when I say we I mean Dr. Kaiser and myself so we're poised to launch get that scheduled and start working on it actually we have invited Jean and the council and the alliance of Virginia to come to

[01:28:14] speak and give an update on their current work in the division in June. So we were scheduled to brief the board about CAVA. How about this? Since all of that can happen without this happening and because several of us are missing tonight, I know have quorum and we can do whatever, Can we do the consent agenda with the exception of pool 5.7 and revisit that next time?

[01:28:50] That's great. Is that all right? Yeah. So my motion is to approve the consent agenda with the exception of 5.7, and we will hold that until more of us are here. Thank you for that. Sounds good. Do I have a second on that motion with the amendment?

[01:29:07] I'll second that motion. Thank you, Mr. Dillenbach. So moved by Ms. Osborne, seconded by Mr. Dillenbach. All those in favor of the consent agenda with the removal of 5.7? Aye. Aye. Any opposed? Consent agenda 5.051 through 5.6 moves forward, and then we are removing 5.7.

[01:29:32] And, Ms. Thompson, we will put that on for action for information next. Say that again? For our May 28th meeting. Okay.

[01:30:06] So, too. The next item on our agenda is 7.0 school division business, and the first piece is our third quarter financial report. Mr. Jackson Zimmerman, our school finance officer, will be doing that for us.

[01:30:25] And that is for action, correct? And we will be taking a vote on that. That is correct. Good evening, school board members. I'm Jackson Zimmerman. I'm your school finance officer. I'm here to present the third quarter financial report. Much of this report is very similar to our second quarter we are still having good financial performance there have been a wide range of items discussed that would impact the current year's budget from reallocation of some resources to meet existing needs in the current budget

[01:30:59] along with bonuses these are all included in your third quarter report all actions that have the board has taken place on. We have good financial performance and expect to finish the fiscal year in a positive place. The last page of our financial report details where we think we will end the fiscal year. We will end the fiscal year with about a million three in available fund balance from what we have planned. We hope that that number will improve as our fourth quarter continues,

[01:31:33] But right now we are on a strong financial path and ask the board to approve the third quarter financial report. Or I'll field any questions if you have any. I move we accept the third quarter financial report as presented by Mr. Zimmerman.

[01:31:54] Do I have a second? Second. Moved by Dr. Acuff, seconded by Mr. Beard. All those in favor of approving our fiscal year, third quarter, fiscal year 2526 third quarter financial report.

[01:32:11] - Aye. - Aye. - Any opposed? The report is. - Motion carries. - Motion carries, thank you. So appreciate. That might be the shortest, not that budgets aren't important and not that we haven't looked at those numbers carefully, but that might be the shortest financial report ever.

[01:32:32] Thank you so much for all of your work. - And it's still light out. - And it's still light out. The next item on our agenda is Dr. Daphne Kaiser.

[01:32:44] our community engagement update our student senate focus right good evening chair Berlin and school board members tonight we're excited to provide an

[01:33:23] update on the student senate and the work students have led across ACPS during the 2025-26 school year what we hope you will hear tonight is not simply a summary of events or meetings, but how students across our schools are increasingly serving as partners in improving school culture, strengthening communication, and shaping conversations about school and system priorities.

[01:33:53] Tonight we will briefly review how this work connects to the division's strategic plan, provide an overview of the student senate structure and this year's work, hear directly from students about projects and experiences, and then close with reflections, themes, and next steps. Student Senate is deeply connected to the ACPS plan,

[01:34:27] a strategic plan, and our commitment to learning for all. This work supports thriving students through leadership development and belonging, affirming and empowering communities through authentic student voice and equitable and transformative resources by ensuring student experiences help inform decisions and priorities at its core student senate operationalizes the belief that we must know every student and that students themselves should help shape the systems

[01:35:02] intended to support them student senate was created to build a more consistent division-wide structure for student voice across ACPS. Rather than relying on occasional feedback opportunities, this structure creates ongoing opportunities for students to build leadership, connect across schools, identify shared concerns, and contribute to conversations about school and division priorities. Over time, this has helped move student voice from something episodic to something more

[01:35:38] sustained and embedded within our system. The Student Senate is a student-led leadership body designed to amplify student voice across ACPS. Students engage directly with school leaders, division leadership, school board members, and community partners. Importantly, the goal is not simply participation as partnership and students are helping identify problems, elevate perspectives, and contribute to solutions that impact their schools and peers.

[01:36:20] This year, students participated in three division-wide summits, each designed around a different stage of leadership and civic engagement. In the fall, students focused on leadership development and identifying shared challenges.

[01:36:39] In the winter, students engaged in conversations around the division budget, legislative advocacy and priority setting and in the spring students participated in school showcases community dialogues conversations with legislators and workshops on student leadership and school policy alongside these summits schools continued their own ongoing student-centered work tied to local needs and priorities as we reflect on the year we are beginning to

[01:37:17] see meaningful impact across schools and across the division. We are seeing increased student voice and decision-making, stronger relationships across schools, student-informed conversations around priorities and budget, and students becoming more confident in organizing, communicating, and leading. While this work continues to evolve, we are seeing students increasingly view themselves as contributors to positive change within their schools. One key area of growth this year was helping students connect

[01:37:53] their experiences to larger policy conversations. Students explored issues such as mental health and wellness, educator workforce supports, school funding and facilities, and college and career pathways. Through this process students shared ideas not only with one another and with school leaders but also directly with state legislators during the spring summit. One especially exciting outcome was an invitation from Delegate Amy Laufer for students to continue

[01:38:29] these conversations in Richmond this fall. At this point, we'd like to shift to hearing directly from students. You will hear from students about the work that they led, the challenges they identified, and how Student Senate has impacted their schools and their own leadership development i will now turn it over to our

[01:38:55] students and miss roberts all right awesome um so at the heart of the student senate is the students themselves noticing what matters at their schools listening to their peers building community and stepping forward to help move something forward that is the part of the work that I am most proud of it is also important to name that this work is possible because the board has made space for it not only valuing student

[01:39:30] voices but by funding Student Senate and their student designed and student led projects that support matters it tells students that their ideas leadership and problem-solving are worth investing in the presentations you are about to see from Albemarle and Western Albemarle Senates reflect that side of

Student Senate. They show what happens when students take a broader invitation to lead and make it real in their own school communities. Tonight you will hear directly from students who have done exactly that. They have paid attention to what their peers are experiencing, thought carefully about what could be

[01:40:10] better, and step forward to help shape their schools. That is the purpose of Student Senate. Not just to give students a seat in the room, but to support them in using their voice with thoughtfulness, courage, and care. It is my pleasure to introduce our student presenters. Up first, we have Maxwell Keyes and Amy Wang from Albemarle High School, who will be followed by Claire Curry from Western Albemarle High School. Patriots, you are up.

[01:40:48] How do I hit? Oh, sorry. I don't know how to present.

[01:41:07] You guys are. Oh, there you go. Thank you. All right. It's all yours. Good evening, Madam Chair, members of the board. My name is Maxwell Keyes. I am a senior at Amaral High School, and this has been my second year serving as a student senate.

[01:41:27] Good evening. My name is Amy Wong. I'm also a senior at Amaral High School, and this is also my second year serving in student senate. So our guiding question for Alabama High School Student Senate was how can our Student Senate help foster a more inclusive and connected school community where every individual in the building feels seen, valued, and respected?

[01:41:52] So through monthly meetings, we reviewed and had meaningful conversations about our equity policies, discussed root causes of discrimination, and brainstormed ways to combat the discrimination. We also engage with peers and staff to gather valuable information and share our ideas with our peers and staff.

[01:42:11] Okay, so who was in our student senate at our school? So it was about 40 students at Aramore High School all from different affinity groups like Latinx, Black Student Union, the Muslim Student Alliance, SCA, our Student Council.

[01:42:32] So what were we doing? We were a coalition of Of a collective body we there's no other you know chance at school like the one we had to Come together from all different aspects Like we said we're a monthly meeting And what do we you know how how are we doing it?

[01:42:55] We're you know reaching across the table and seeing the other perspective of the students So like I mentioned the different affinity groups represented At Albemarle, the GSA, YAPIC, the BSU, Latinx, MSA, all students coming together and truly leaning into compassion and understanding and making our school definitely more united.

[01:43:27] So for one of our events we planned at Albemarle High School, we were honored to, you know, annually host the Chihamba by Danscapes, rooted in rich African heritage, powerful drumming, you could hear it down the hallway.

[01:43:43] Students from all different backgrounds, all these affinity groups, those not in those affinity groups, came and participated, danced, drum, had a good time. And it, like I said, united our school. Another one, we also got to take a field trip to the Jefferson School African American Heritage Center, formerly the first black high school in Charlottesville.

[01:44:07] So we wanted, as the BSU and as Student Senate, We wanted to highlight certain affinity groups, you know, to help with the understanding. So taking a mixed, diverse group of students to the first

black high school and now a heritage center in Charlottesville, we got to take a tour.

[01:44:28] We watched the film Raised by Lorenzo Dickerson and Jordy Yeager and learned from brilliant minds such as Ivan Ora and Ms. Sherry Bryant about the rich and complex history of Charlottesville not just at our school but in the surrounding counties as well. And we were very generously given a fund for a student Senate to continue with our mission and so part of that we dedicated to our upcoming initiative which is stress free week so we'll have a couple of activities for students participate in to kind of mitigate the stress caused by

[01:45:08] our couple of weeks of testing. Our proposed initiative for the rest of our funds is purchasing more pocket talk translation devices which is very important and essential to our community as our newcomers program ends and so currently we have a couple of these in our pre-training center and at the front office counselors and nurse's office I believe but teachers like Miss Barnes have mentioned that she would like to have these in her classroom as well and so we hope that these funds will go towards purchasing increased numbers of Pocket Talks that will be available at the library and students will be able to check this out similar to how students currently check out learning laptops. We

[01:45:47] hope this will support all students at IHS. Thank you all so much. I want to say one more thing is that there's no other kind of group you can be a part of that does this intercrossing between schools. We have been able to get closer to the BSU at Monticello and Mocha Woka at Western you know and how we break up our affinity groups truly bring unity to our school community. So we hope you will

[01:46:18] continue this on. Thank you. Hello board my name is Claire Curry I'm sure you already know me but today I'm playing double duty and I'm going to be presenting on the few activities and projects that we have put our energy into

[01:46:58] this year the main pillar that we have that we have focused on most importantly is community engagement so in October we hope we held our second annual

[01:47:20] apologies in October we held our second annual trunk or treat and with the help of the was leadership classes trunk or treat for us has been one of the main ways to engage with our community specifically with the families and the children of Crozet. All the trunks, we had around 30 trunks and around 400

[01:47:57] people show up and those trunks were held by either community partners, school clubs, or just a few groups of students who wanted to just enjoy the Halloween season. Many trunks were traditional with candy to pass out to kids. We also had some trunks that set up games and various activities and it just proved to be a really wonderful time for families to come out have a good time and really witness the the warm comforting nature of students in it as you can see we had

[01:48:35] a lot of cars with clubs and community partners and it was truly such a wonderful time as you can see we've had various backdrops in different stations. On the sides we had refreshments with pizza and different drinks. As you can see right here we had a balloon arch backdrop with pictures taken by our very wonderful school photographer Luke Winters. And this just proved to be the first big event of the year to engage with

[01:49:09] the WASP community, the Crozet community, and to really be a wonderful place and a wonderful time to just have a good time because fun is important and connection is important. And that's one of our main pillars, especially for the WA Student Senate.

[01:49:27] So jumping forward a few months to April, we held our third annual Always Better Together. So Better Together first came to be from the Student Senate three years ago. And it came from the problems that our students saw in the school and specifically students with various cultures and ethnicities saw that their ethnicities and cultures weren't fully represented within the school and within the school communities and

[01:50:01] students in it three years ago hit the ground running and created Better Together. The first event was a pioneer for WAS. WAS hadn't seen this level of cultural respect and identification for long time and this served as really the trailblazer to get us back into that my space and that mode that motivation to to be better and to recognize the various aspects within our school that maybe aren't as present as they should

[01:50:41] be but to still give them that recognition the first year we called our event better together the second year even better together and this year the third annual year we we've called it always better together because it's true we are always better together and we are stronger together and to be together and to have those connections is really one of the strongest forces the school community and the community of Crozet can have. So specifically this year we have followed in the same footsteps but we have improved in so many different

[01:51:20] aspects. We had various tables from community groups. Again, we had a lot of community nonprofits come out to support, set up tables with activities, games, information about their nonprofits and their organizations. And to open this door to bring recognition to specifically the community and the nonprofits there was a beautiful way to bridge the connection between the schools, the cultures, and the outside community all together and that was

[01:51:58] really awesome. So to add a little bit of extra fun to this event this year we created these t-shirts with a design commissioned by one of our art students and while this did serve to be our attire for the night, this also served to be the direct display of how committed we are to keeping everyone together and And I've seen so many of our Senate representatives throughout school, even after the event, wearing these T-shirts.

[01:52:35] And the amount of compliments we've gotten on these is truly incredible, which means they're serving their purpose. Those T-shirts are meant to serve as the display of who we are, what we represent, and what we hope to continue representing in the future.

[01:52:53] You can ask anyone, and one of the main things they will compliment about the event is the food. We have so much food every year from various crozet restaurants and personal cooks.

[01:53:09] We've gotten so many types of food from various ethnicities, various cultures. And I know for me, at least in my family, food really is such a big connector just in general. And to provide that for the students and faculty and community to feel that connection and to build that connection through food is very special and has been for the entirety of the three years we've been doing this.

[01:53:38] Another very special part about our events is our commitment to bringing music and the arts into this event. And our easiest way and most effective way, I believe, in doing that is getting our student groups and community partners who are good with music.

[01:53:58] As you can see in this picture in front of you, we have partnered with Henley, our middle school. And they bring their jazz band every year to play and play a few songs for us, and to really show

what they are about and how they really support our event and what we do.

[01:54:17] We've had so many student groups over the past few years play music, build that connection. Music is also a wonderful connector of people. Music is a universal language. I fully believe that. And our event has proven that, especially for the Wals community.

[01:54:35] the people of Crozet this year we invited a UVA dance group Sharara I believe and they were incredible they danced for a solid half an hour I want to say it was awesome to watch them and looking around the crowd everybody was engaged everybody was tuning in they were dancing and it was such a beautiful thing to see to really see the connection that's building and really the purpose of the event in itself is to be that connection for everyone, to engage the

[01:55:13] community, to bring everyone together, to show that the divide doesn't have to be a divide. We can all be together, and our events have done that successfully. Along with a few other, some of the smaller successes we've had, at every countywide meeting, we've had a fairly large turnout with our students they've been engaged they participated they've helped with all activities and been present really with the purpose with our schools obviously within the WA student senate but really together with the entire the entirety of the ACPS student senate

[01:55:51] they have been present and they have done that we have also persisted and unified during political division was had a difficult time with very two divided political stances and Student Senate made that one of our goals to unify and to keep everyone together and realize that politics really isn't a really isn't the main reason we need to be divided we can be together we can be strong and that's what

[01:56:29] matters and we acknowledged some simple simpler school-wide issues that we could address in our monthly meetings just together with the was admin so we could snuff those issues while we did and that was our year we had a great year I'm really happy and proud of our students in it for the work we have put in our events have been successful and we hope to continue that success in the years

[01:57:00] coming thank you and I want to thank our students for presenting this evening sharing your leadership and your perspectives just thank you so much as we step back from the individual projects and experiences this work matters because it is helping ACPS build a more authentic culture of student partnership. Student Senate helps us hear more consistently from our students,

[01:57:38] strengthening belonging and connection, build student confidence and leadership, and connect student voice to school and division level decisions. Ultimately, this work is helping students see themselves not as just recipients of the systems, but as people who can shape and improve them at the end of the year students shared consistent I need to get back to our

[01:58:08] slideshow let's see I had the right one ah I did have the right one ah here we are okay all right

[01:58:53] so at the end of the year students shared consistent themes about both the value and future direction of Student Senate. Students most valued connecting with their peers across schools, hearing different perspectives, and engaging in meaningful conversations with leaders and guest speakers. Students also challenged us to continue growing this work. They want the Student Senate to become more organized, more action-oriented, and more connected to real

[01:59:27] change in schools. And the issues student most consistently elevated were school safety and climate, belonging and mental health, and identity-based harm and student well-being. And these things

give us strong direction for next year's work.

[01:59:45] Each year students complete a self-assessment connected to leadership efficacy and confidence. This year we saw sustained growth across most leadership domains. Students reported feeling more confident in organizing peers, planning events, building student involvement, and leading efforts to improve their schools. One of the strongest gains was students confidence in organizing others around school and community issues. At the same time,

[02:00:24] students identified areas where we can continue to grow, particularly around research and inquiry skills and helping students identify and analyze the most prominent issues affecting their communities. That feedback will help shape next year's support structures. As we look toward next year, our focus is on strengthening and refining our work. Key next steps include continuing our three annual summits, strengthening school level support, improving

[02:01:01] communication structures, expanding leadership pathways and continuing to use student feedback to guide priorities and improvements. We see this work as a long-term culture building work and not a one-year initiative. So we appreciate the opportunity to share this update tonight and at this point we welcome any questions, reflections, or discussion from the board. And of course our students

[02:01:33] are here to answer any questions just one question for the albemarle high school group which staff member got up high in the face on stress relief week oh okay do you have somebody picked out in mind is that coming up next week when is that next week okay good let us know what that is i'm just wondering how do uh how do students get involved if they want to be in the student senate

[02:02:09] going forward wow um they talked to uh miss roberts they talked to the current student senate and expressed their interest we're always looking for students that are eager to serve in the senate and we've had some we've had some great students since we started the student senate and we look forward to having another great group next year

[02:02:46] So at the beginning of every at the beginning of every year the amazing principals at the high schools have to put together and ask amazing sponsors two of whom are here tonight to help with the recruiting so they go back and they often use older classmen just like recruit the next generation this year in particular we ask that they put a particular eye on not just students who are in traditional leadership roles within clubs and organizations but younger younger students who are showing great potential or willingness to lead

[02:03:25] so that they could develop alongside so this year we did have a lot of underclassmen that were part of it and so I know that these these kiddos have been pushing hard for kids to get involved and leave a legacy I think Max wanted to share a little bit about Monticello's student Senate he didn't together a formal presentation but that's okay. Yeah so I don't have any main talking points so I may stutter a couple times but you know that's fine. I just I have a lot of pride in what we've built as a senate. I love what Albemarle County has put together as a structure especially with

[02:03:59] inclusivity Albemarle and Western they had a great job just describing that and contrary to the other representatives this was my very first year on the senate so student governance like prior to this didn't even know we had one in full transparency in my junior year I didn't even know we had one so I would also love to say thank you to our Senate personally because I would not have been able to do the job

that I did without their help it was always the like is always the hey get the white rice they got Qdoba for us it's great right they gave me so much so many insights what to

[02:04:38] do right and how I can help them grow as well and I'm really really proud of that even just certain events that we did we did co-donations for the refugee community over christmas and helping eighth graders grow and strive into high school positions and i just really love that what we've built and i just wanted to highlight that so thanks so much thank you so much any other questions so i have just a couple quick questions one is um claire would you let us know next year um when uh the date is for the um halloween chunk turkey trunk and

[02:05:17] I promise we'll do a school board trigger chunk. Thank you. I can't guarantee that we will be in costume because I can't speak for my fellow board members, but I will commit to doing that. The other thing I was just thinking, and this is more of a follow-up for Amber and Dr.

[02:05:35] Kaiser, is just I was just thinking VB-- help me, Matt-- the Virginia School Board Association and then the National School Board Association just put forward-- just put out their call for proposals for presentations.

[02:05:51] So I'd love to talk to you guys about that, because I think it's-- I mean, when you guys talk about the inclusivity, I mean, as I've said, this-- I feel better about the future of our world, about our country, because I see the work-- the hard work that you all put into relationships, and discussions, and decisions, and tough conversations.

[02:06:16] so I feel better about the future, and I think it's just important to share what we're doing. So I would love to talk to you offline about kind of putting together a proposal that we could reach out and share this good work with others. - As long as we can bring students.

[02:06:31] - I would, exactly. Well, we have to figure out the legalities of all that, but I agree, like it has to, like it is authentic student voice, so it has to come from students, so. Thank you so much, we so appreciate it.

[02:06:49] Oh yes, and I still, I'm gonna say it one more time, you have to eat your dessert but you're that is your last direction from us so that is our last um piece of school division business um and as i mentioned at the beginning of the meeting because of the capstone projects uh certificate ceremony uh retirement um celebration we did not do a closed meeting at the beginning so we intentionally are doing it at the end um and so i do i'm asking

[02:07:24] if i have a closed meeting motion from the floor thank you uh chair berlin thank you everybody i move that the school board of albemarle county virginia go into a closed meeting is authorized by the virginia freedom of information act section 2.2 dash 3711a of the code of virginia under subsection 1 which authorizes the discussion consideration or interviews of prospective candidates for employment and the assignment appointment promotion performance demotion salaries disciplining or resignation of specific public officers appointees or employees

[02:08:00] of any public body the purpose of this item is to review and discuss the point the appointment of a principal for greer elementary school the appointment of a candidate for chief technology officer the selection of student representatives to the school board for the 2026-2027 school year and the reappointment of licensed staff for the 2026-2027 school year thank you mr do i have a second moved by uh mr beard uh seconded by dr acoff all those in favor of moving into closed

[02:08:34] session aye all those opposed we will now move into closed session my estimate just based on the agenda items that we have is about an hour um but we will but that's just an estimate it could be shorter could be longer um i don't know um but we will reconvene here to come out of closed session and if there's any announcements i apologize um we also need to add one more piece to the closed meeting motion um and mr black will quickly phrase i'm just looking behind me with my eyes in

[02:09:11] the back of my head this is for uh architect selection so that is correct do we right so um i'll forget which subsection of the freedom of information act authorizes it but it's the one uh concerning contract negotiations and vendor selection um so what we would ask is that we supplement the motion to add that item to the closed meeting agenda would you like us to read if somebody could just uh make a motion to supplement the motion that's already been it's already passed i move we supplement the closed meeting motion to include architecture

[02:09:48] and design work per the code second amendment noted by dr acove seconded by mr dylan buck all those in favor aye any opposed we will now move into closed meeting in room room room room 235 and then we will reconvene here um close it out to close out the meeting in about an hour

[02:10:23] Good evening, everyone.

[03:25:09] Do I have a motion coming out of closed session? Thank you, Chair Berlin. 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 authorized authorizing the closed meeting were heard discussed or considered in the closed meeting second moved by mr beard second by dr acoff all those in favor

[03:25:39] hi do we need to do individual vote on that no no i don't think so um uh do i have any motions coming out of closed session i have one oh sorry um i move that we appoint candidate a to the position of chief technology officer for acps do i have a second for that motion a second moved by ms osborne seconded by mr dylan beck do we need to do a voice voice a voice vote for any of these

[03:26:11] okay just want to make sure um all those in favor aye any opposed that motion passes do i have any other motions coming out of closed session yes chair berlin i move to direct staff to enter negotiations for the selection of the architect for the northern feeder pattern elementary school in the order discussed during the closed meeting do i have a second second moved by dr acoff seconded by mr dylan beck all those in favor aye that motion clearly passes um do i have another

[03:26:46] motion yes chair berlin i have a motion i've moved that we approve the list of licensed staff for the 26-27 school year do i have a second second moved by mr dillenbach second by mr beard all those in favor aye any opposed that motion clearly passes um i am going to do the last motion um i move um that we appoint candidate a for the principalship of greer elementary school

[03:27:19] second moved by myself seconded by dr acoff all those in favor aye any opposed that motion clearly passes um i just wanted to share just a piece of uh a note of information about that um the school board uh just reviewed the candidates information and the recommendation and we are extremely excited about this candidate. We feel like they have the background needed for this for Greer Elementary School as we have been listening to the feedback and what teachers and staff and family

[03:27:58] have been telling us is needed and we feel like their background will meet that. Unfortunately because of the confidential nature of a hiring decision and the fact that that person needs to tell their

employer we are not able to disclose the name at this point but we hope to be able to share that information as early as monday thank you so much do i have any other pieces of business in front of me looking to my left and to my right i now uh adjourn our meeting at i apologize for 10 o'clock thank you so much



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