



Board-to-Board, October 2019

A monthly report from the Albemarle County School Board to the Albemarle County Board of Supervisors

Albemarle County High School Seniors Outperform State and National Peers on College Readiness Scores—High school seniors in Albemarle County’s four public high schools once again turned in strong academic performances on the College Board’s SAT tests this past school year. Scores on the verbal test averaged 603, which is 39 points above the average for all Virginia seniors and 79 points above the average score of all seniors in the nation. On the math portion of the test, Albemarle County seniors reached an average score of 589, exceeding the state average by 33 points and the national average by 66 points.

Combined SAT test scores for black and Hispanic students in Albemarle County were slightly below the statewide averages, but well ahead of the national average scores. In Virginia, the combined SAT test score for Black students was 967, compared to a total of 1,120 for all students in the Commonwealth. In Albemarle County, the combined score for Black students was 955; nationally, it was 921. For Hispanic students, the combined score was 1,064 in Virginia; 1,058 in Albemarle County; and 966 across the nation.

School Board Votes to Change the Name of Cale Elementary School—The Albemarle County School Board voted at their October 10 meeting to change the name of Cale Elementary School following recommendations by both a Cale community advisory committee and Superintendent Dr. Matthew Haas that the name should be changed.

The advisory committee will now reconvene and have up to 90 days to recommend a new name to the School Board. In accordance with the Board’s revised policy on the renaming of facilities, the advisory committee will be required to hold two community meetings. The first meeting will solicit potential names from the community, and the second meeting will receive community feedback on new names under consideration by the committee.

As part of his recommendation to change the name of Cale Elementary School during the Board’s September 26 work session, Dr. Haas suggested four improvements to the current naming policy including:

- Convening more than one community advisory committee at a time;
- Allowing future advisory committees, when considering whether to change the name of a school, to also select a new name, if needed, as part of the same process;
- When considering a new name, giving preference to geographic location; and

- Establishing a review cycle for all school names to ensure they remain relevant to the school division’s mission and values.

These changes, if approved by the Board, would make the review process more efficient, less costly, and less stressful for the community, future advisory committees, and the family and friends of the person or persons for whom a school is named. The Board is expected to vote on the proposed policy changes during their work session in two weeks.

The community advisory committee includes three parents of current Cale students and two members of the Cale community who do not have children now attending the school. Also serving on the committee are two teachers from the school, the school’s associate principal, and its former principal. The committee is chaired by former Albemarle County Supervisor, Dennis Rooker, and also includes the school division’s Assistant Superintendent for School Community Empowerment, Dr. Bernard Hairston.

A complete record of the documentation and information that was reviewed by the advisory committee is available at:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/u/1/folders/1SzWQBSmmgLquotbbxYKdVikZfjsXk3ik>

Dr. Hasan Kwame Jeffries at ACPS Community Speaker Series—On October 10, one of the nation’s leading scholars and authors from the Civil Rights Era, Dr. Hasan Kwame Jeffries, visited Charlottesville as part of the ACPS Community Speaker Series and *Reframing the Narrative* program. Dr. Jeffries has been a powerful advocate for justice for people of all races through his writings, television appearances, and social media podcasts. The visit included an extended conversation on why the teaching of “hard history” is so valuable to the social, emotional, and professional development of students and our communities. Following that conversation, Jeffries spoke to teachers from the city and county school divisions. This one-hour conversation was funded in part by Montpelier and the Charlottesville Albemarle Community Foundation.

Western Albemarle’s Athletics Hall of Fame Debuts This Month With Two Events to Raise Money to Support Student Athletes—Western Albemarle High School (WAHS) held two events last month in conjunction with a Hall of Fame that it is establishing to recognize athletes, coaches, administrators and teams who have excelled throughout the school’s history. Both events were intended to raise funds to support athletic programs that benefit all student athletes and included a [Warrior Club Golf Tournament](#) on Friday, October 25, at Old Trail Golf Course, and a [Warrior Club Banquet](#) on Saturday, October 26, at Restoration, located within the Old Trail Golf Club. The banquet included the formal induction of Hall of Fame members.

Western Albemarle is one of Virginia’s highest-rated public high schools for the quality of its athletic programming—in all, WAHS boys and girls teams have earned 60 state championships for the school, including eight this past year. The inaugural class of inductees includes six student athletes, an athletic director, a coach, and an entire team—the 1996 boys soccer team, the first Western Albemarle team to earn a state title. The team’s remarkable performance included outscoring all opponents by a score of 86-9. Our own Trevor Henry’s son, Kent Henry, is one of the initial inductees for his outstanding successes in Football and Lacrosse.

On-Time Graduation Rate for ACPS Seniors Reaches 94.4 Percent, Exceeding State & National Averages—For the 12th consecutive year, the on-time graduation rate for seniors in Albemarle County Public Schools (ACPS) has exceeded the Virginia statewide rate. The state Department of Education reported this month that 94.4 percent of seniors in the division’s four high schools graduated on time in the 2018-19 school year, an increase from the prior year’s rate of 93.4 percent. Statewide, 91.5 percent of high school seniors graduated on time (within four years of entering high school). The national on-time graduation rate is 85 percent.

Locally, Albemarle County seniors outperformed their peers across Virginia on two other academic performance measures. Nearly two out of three graduates earned the state’s Advanced Studies Diploma, signifying the students met Virginia’s most rigorous academic requirements for graduation. This compared to a statewide rate of 51.5 percent. The school division’s dropout rate of 4.1 percent was lower than the statewide rate of 5.6 percent.

On-time graduation rates in the county for specific student demographic groups, including Black and Hispanic students, students with disabilities, students from economically disadvantaged homes, students for whom English is a second language, Asian students, and students of two or more races, all surpassed statewide rates, but in some cases were well below the overall division rate.