



**Board-to-Board, May 2022**

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

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***Dr. Patrick McLaughlin appointed Assistant Superintendent as division continues its focus on strategic plan, continuous improvement***—At its May 12 meeting, the Albemarle County School Board approved the appointment of Dr. Patrick McLaughlin as assistant superintendent, effective July 1. Dr. McLaughlin, who has been the Chief of Strategic Planning for the division since 2018, will continue to lead the Office of Strategic Planning, Accountability & Research, and Program Evaluation and will begin working even more closely with individual schools on the alignment of their performance improvement planning with the division’s strategic plan.

The new assistant superintendent brings 15 years of senior-level administrative experience to his enhanced role, which has included serving as the principal of the division’s largest middle school, Henley, for eight years and one year as interim principal for Western Albemarle High School.

Among the highly influential roles he has fulfilled more recently, Dr. McLaughlin directed the multi-year research, development, and community collaboration that resulted in the school board’s adoption of *Learning for All*, the division’s strategic plan. He also was the lead educator overseeing the monthly reporting of COVID-19 data to the school board. Those reports have guided the design of mitigation strategies and practices that have prevented large-scale transmission of the virus in schools.

Dr. McLaughlin frequently leads breakout sessions of school board members that focus on how to enhance policies, student learning, and the learning environment. He also has managed the division’s student academic assessment programs, including the annual Standards of Learning (SOL) tests administered to all students in grades 3-12 as well as the SAT tests, which are now offered without cost to high school students.

Examples, Superintendent Haas pointed out, are the policy and program evaluations and the online surveys that represent the views of employees, students, and community members produced and supported by his department’s team. Among the key mission areas for the Office of Strategic Planning, Accountability & Research, and Program Evaluation, moving forward, are to:

- Evaluate, report and advise on key division initiatives and programs;
- Develop, implement, monitor and assess division-wide and school-specific strategic improvement plans;
- Facilitate and support local, state and national testing;

- Coordinate applied research in the school division; and
- Anticipate emerging organizational needs and advise division leadership of solutions that address those needs.

Dr. McLaughlin attended Albemarle County Public Schools (ACPS). He is an undergraduate of the University of Pittsburgh and received both his master's degree and Doctor of Education from the University of Virginia. He is a past recipient of the Virginia Board of Education's Distinguished Achievement Award, and during his tenure as Henley's principal, the school received a Virginia Index of Performance (VIP) award for academic excellence.

In 2015, Dr. McLaughlin was promoted from being Henley's principal to being the division's Strategic Planning Officer, and then became Chief of Strategic Planning in 2018. Dr. McLaughlin joins current assistant superintendents, Dr. Bernard Hairston and Dr. Clare Keiser. Dr. Hairston has announced that he will retire on June 30.

***Greer name review advisory committee opens second survey to gather input on four possible school names***—Members of the Mary Carr Greer Elementary School community will soon receive a second survey seeking their perspectives on potential names for the school as part of the ACPS naming review process. This survey asks participants to choose from among four possible school names: Mary Carr Greer Elementary School, Blue Ridge Elementary School, Hydraulic Elementary School, and Gecko Elementary School.

The survey, which can be accessed at <https://survey.k12insight.com/r/NIFaID>, is part of a school naming review being conducted by a volunteer community advisory committee in accordance with a division-wide policy. The policy requires a community review of all schools in the division that are named for an individual to ensure those school names reflect the division's four values of equity, excellence, family and community, and wellness. The survey will close at 9 a.m. on Friday, May 27.

The first survey of two was released on May 9, and 305 of 366 respondents suggested retaining the name Mary Carr Greer. Over 80% said that they were familiar with the school's current namesake, Mary Carr Greer. During the May 16 public comment meeting, three people spoke in favor of keeping the current name, none spoke against the current name or in favor of new names, and no additional new names were suggested.

Members of the advisory committee were chosen from among those who expressed interest in serving on the committee. Two committee members are the school's principal, Steve Saunders, and Susie Lee, a guidance counselor at the school who will serve as the committee's chair. The ACPS Community Education Coordinator, Karen Waters-Wicks, will serve as the project manager of the name review process.

Three committee members are from the Greer faculty: Charles Craig, Timmy Walker, and Mayrim Maldonado-Pagan. Maldonado-Pagan is also a Greer parent. Three other committee members are parents: Desmond Glenn, Amanda Sampson, and Cindy Klappmuss, who also serves as chair of the school's PTA. Three additional committee members live in the school community, but do not have students attending Greer: Ted Coates, Rita Hassall, and Dede Smith. Coates

currently serves on the board of the Ivy Creek Foundation, which is a community-driven historical preservation organization. Smith, a former executive director of the Ivy Creek Foundation, is also a local historian and the former vice mayor of the City of Charlottesville.

In order to engage students with the naming review process during this second round of surveys, they will be able to vote for their preferred name in their classrooms and even receive an “I voted” election sticker similar to that distributed to voters in federal, state and local elections.

The school division will post the survey results on the [Greer Elementary School Naming Review](#) web page soon after the survey closes on Friday, May 27. The advisory committee will have its final meeting to discuss the survey results on Monday, June 6. During this meeting, the committee will consider all of the information obtained through public comment, survey results, and its own research.

The committee will send its name recommendation, along with all supporting evidence, to the school division’s superintendent, Dr. Matthew Haas, and announce their choice on Tuesday, June 7. Haas will take the advisory committee’s recommended name for the school under advisement and submit a formal recommendation to the school board, who will make the final decision.

In all, 14 schools in the division will undergo a naming review. To date, naming reviews of six schools in the division have been completed, resulting in four schools changing their name and two retaining theirs.

The advisory committee welcomes suggestions or questions about the review process at any time. All committee members can be emailed at [SchoolNamingReview@k12albemarle.org](mailto:SchoolNamingReview@k12albemarle.org).

The committee’s recommendation on a school name will be provided to the superintendent, who, in turn, will make a recommendation to the school board. The board will make the final decision on the school’s name. If that decision is to change the name of the school, the new name would become effective next July 1.

***More than 1,000 nominations received for this year’s Golden Apple Awards***—For the second consecutive year, nominations for the Golden Apple Awards, a program honoring outstanding public and private school teachers in Albemarle County and Charlottesville City, totaled more than 1,000. As the pandemic continued to impact local education, the dedication, creativity and support of teachers for their students continued to attract widespread recognition from local communities. Nominations easily surpassed the 100-150 annual teacher recommendations that characterized most of the 21 years of the program’s existence.

Golden Apple honors one teacher from each public and private school in the county and city who has demonstrated excellence in the classroom through the use of innovative instructional strategies and techniques and involvement with families and community partners. Since its inception, the program has been sponsored by Better Living Building Supply and Cabinetry. The company’s chairman, Mr. Richard Nunley, often has talked about the positive difference a teacher made in his life at an early age. He established the program, he has said, in appreciation

of “exceptionally talented and caring teachers who have lifted up young lives.” In fact, he married one of them. His wife Judy taught at Clark Elementary School in the city.

Golden Apple judges look for evidence that teachers are simulating thought and dialogue among students, understanding and meeting their needs, and involving families in the education process. Nominations are received from students, parents, other educators, and members of the community. The teachers who are selected for the award represent less than 2% of all teachers in the city and county public and private schools.

This year, teachers from 42 schools were honored in a ceremony Lane Auditorium at the County Office Building. Guest speakers included Superintendent of Charlottesville City Schools, Dr. Royal Gurley, and Albemarle County Public Schools Superintendent, Dr. Matthew Haas. Award presenters included Charlottesville’s Chief Academic Officer, Dr. Katina Otey; Albemarle’s Assistant Superintendent, Dr. Clare Keiser; and the Head of School for the Miller School of Albemarle, Michael Drude.

Each Golden Apple recipient received a brass, gold-plated replica of an apple with their name and a grant of \$500 to be used for a classroom program or activity.

Golden Apples earned by Albemarle County teachers include:

- Jordan Golomb, ACPS Virtual School
- Marianne Baker, Agnor-Hurt Elementary School
- Malik Poindexter, Albemarle High School
- Drew Craft, Baker-Butler Elementary
- Katherine Gerry, Broadus Wood Elementary School
- David Foreman, Brownsville Elementary School
- Leigh Steigman, Burley Middle School
- Stephen Stalker, Center I
- Dr. Kimberly Smyth, Charlottesville-Albemarle Technical Education Center (CATEC)
- Elena Alba, Community Lab School
- Jessica Morrone, Crozet Elementary School
- Meaghan Craddock, Greer Elementary School
- Amelia Bochain, Henley Middle School
- John Carroll, Hollymead Elementary School
- Shannon Reilly, Jouett Middle School
- Robert Gregg , Lakeside Middle School
- Kathryn DeAtley, Meriwether Lewis Elementary School
- Monique Faruque, Monticello High School
- Bethany Morris, Mountain View Elementary School
- Marcy Williams, Murray Elementary School
- Martha Layman, Red Hill Elementary School
- Allison Nader, Scottsville Elementary School
- Briana Carel, Stone-Robinson Elementary School
- Emily-Ann Fleming, Stony Point Elementary School
- Alexander Groff, Walton Middle School

- Clayton Grimes, Western Albemarle High School
- Filadelfia Soto, Woodbrook Elementary School

Golden Apples earned by Charlottesville City teachers include:

- Matthew Resnick, Buford Middle School
- Huma Ahmad, Burnley-Moran Middle School
- Andrew Josselyn, Charlottesville High School
- Caitlin Natale, Clark Elementary School
- Brenning Greenfield, Greenbrier Elementary School
- Melanie-Ann Johnson, Jackson-Via Elementary School
- Lindsay Kamide, Johnson Elementary School
- Jenny Issacs-Lowe, Venable Elementary School
- Bridget Drain, Walker Upper Elementary School

Golden Apples earned by private school teachers include:

- Alexander Keevil, Blue Ridge School
- John Garland, Charlottesville Catholic School
- Sarah Rodriguez, The Covenant School
- Ryan Henry, Miller School of Albemarle
- Anna Hennessy, St. Anne's-Belfield School
- Meg Davis, Tandem Friends School

***Annual ACPS 2022 Equity Conference to be held on June 11***—The ACPS Equity Specialists and Conference Committee are will hold 2022 Equity Conference **on** Saturday, June 11, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Monticello High School. In addition to hearing from educators who are engaged in this collective work to eliminate practices that produce inequitable outcomes for students, participants will discover what it means to be an ACPS Culturally Responsive Educator.

For the past few years, our ACPS Equity Specialist Team has chosen a song for our annual conference theme—a song that represents our mission. This year's song is [\*Wake Up Everybody\*](#), by Harold Melvin & The Blue Notes (November 1975). This year's corresponding theme, “Wake Up Everybody, Teach a New Way,” is a call for educators to use their considerable talents and relentless dedication to students to make measurable differences in their classroom. The lyrics talk about challenges that have been with us since the beginning of time. Ironically, because the persistence and pervasiveness of these inequalities seem insurmountable, some have been led to give up. This cannot be our future.

***New transportation director is setting a high performance bar for department's future partnership with families, students and staff***—The First 100 Days. It's become a standard measure of progress for any new leader of an organization, and for Charmane White, the school division's Director of Transportation, it's no different. She recently completed her first 120 days leading a department of more than 200 employees with an annual budget that approaches \$15 million.

Approximately 7,000 students rely on the division's school buses to get to and from school every day and to travel for athletic programs and other extracurricular activities. The division's 160 bus drivers travel more than 14,000 miles daily to complete 550 different bus routes across the county's more than 700 square miles.

In addition to these services, the department includes transportation planning and analysis, training, administering the fuel program for all local government and school division vehicles, and vehicle maintenance for these vehicles and for other government and private school customers.

White admits this school year has had more than its share of unexpected challenges, including bus driver shortages, schedule delays exacerbated by the pandemic, and rising fuel prices. The short- and long-term answers to these challenges, White says, will be found in a visionary approach that begins with the basics: people.

One of her first actions as the new department director was to establish a Transportation Roundtable, consisting of nearly two dozen employees who are meeting with her on a monthly basis to bring forth issues and solve problems. One of the first ideas to spring from the group was a highly targeted and ongoing recruitment campaign for new drivers.

She also has established a position on her senior staff that will be devoted on a full-time basis to the professional development of Transportation staff. "Our focus will be leadership training. We want our entire team to model equity and inclusiveness and for everyone to have access to the highest levels of opportunity to improve their skills and their career with us," White explained.

One area in particular that appeals to White is the importance of equipping drivers with student management techniques that are akin to those used by teachers in such programs as Responsive Classroom. "After all, we are part of the school community and we should be utilizing the same practices that teachers use to build trust and strong relationships with students," she said.

Another key area targeted for improvement is the department's communications with families. The driver shortage has led to as many as 25 messages a day from the department, notifying families of pick-up delays that affect their children. White knows these delays complicate not only school schedules, but those of families.

Looking not too far into the future, White is developing new ideas and options that will enhance the quality of service the department offers families and children. These include increased use of passenger vans that do not require a commercial driver's license to operate and adding Type A school buses to the fleet. These buses are smaller than a traditional school bus and also may not require a commercial license. The department already has purchased the first two of these buses.

White also has been talking with her counterparts in other transportation organizations, such as Jaunt, exploring the possibility of using these services in selected areas of the county to transport high school students. The goal is to protect the integrity of bus schedules even in the event of driver shortages. It also will free up buses on these high school routes for redeployment in other

areas. Then, there's the delivery, expected soon, of as many as six electric buses, for smaller, high-volume routes in areas such as the urban ring around Charlottesville.

Prior to becoming the department's director, White was instrumental in developing the department's Safe Driving Award Program; its Remote Learning Program that enables drivers seeking their Commercial Driver's License (CDL) to become certified at the department's location rather than having to go to a Department of Motor Vehicles location; and its Responsive Language Program. She serves on the Executive Board of the Virginia Association of Pupil Transportation (VAPT), chairing its Region Five Committee.

While the first 100 days has been a time for gathering information and setting high performance goals, the next 100 days, White points out, will be a time for making significant progress towards meeting these goals, a time for accountability on improving our partnerships with families, students and employees.