



Board-to-Board

June, 2018

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

Workforce of the Future—At our June 8th retreat, we focused on “what schools should be,” and included guest speakers from the Darden School and the state department of education. Professor Ed Hess, who has written and lectured extensively at conferences and seminars for corporate and education leaders, shared his research revealing significant workforce shifts over the next 15 years. He predicts tens of millions of jobs will be lost to automation and said schools and the nation should be preparing for this evolution by developing skills within students not easily replicable by technology. Examples, he said, are careers that depend upon judgment, social and emotional capabilities and flexible adaption to problem-solving. Professor Hess said the U.S. is among the least prepared among modern industrial economies for this transition.

The representative from the state, Joe Wharff, the director of counseling, discussed the state’s new *Profile of a Virginia Graduate* requirements, with its emphasis on work-based project learning and community service as part of the high school curriculum. We also heard from PVCC President Frank Friedman. The all-day session was designed to inform School Board and staff planning and operations around how best to adapt learning environments in all schools to support contemporary skills development for students. The bottom line is the importance of learning environments that build towards a high school experience that substantially improves our ability to align the college and career readiness of students with the competitive markets they will encounter in their post-graduate lives.

Superintendent’s Listening Tour—Incoming Superintendent, Dr. Matthew Haas will be conducting a series of conversations throughout the next two months with teachers, classified staff, students and members of the community. The purpose, Dr. Haas has said, is to do “little of the talking and most of the listening” to how various stakeholders view the school division’s strengths, challenges, needs and future opportunities. He will use the input to help shape and develop his planning and priorities for his operational and strategic goals and will detail those goals in a report to the School Board.

Boys & Girls Club—We had extensive discussions at our June 14th meeting on the proposal by the Boys & Girls Club to build a new 300-student center at Albemarle High School. The center would displace the driving range used as part of the driver education program. Approximately 200 Albemarle students and 300 across the division take driver’s ed. Accident statistics showed no appreciable difference between Albemarle High students who use the range and Monticello and Western Albemarle students who use a course set up in the parking lots of those schools. While no decision was made on whether to proceed with the center, which would expand after-school participation by urban ring students in all grades, a Club representative said the Club may be willing to offset some of the estimated \$700,000 cost if the center was approved and the range was relocated to a site alongside Jouett Middle School. Discussions around that possibility are continuing. We expect at our meeting this month to consider if staff will be authorized to begin negotiating a Memorandum of Understanding with the Boys & Girls Club governing the prospective operation of a center if approved.

CATEC—We also reviewed a program evaluation of participation in CATEC programs by our students that showed such participation to be relatively small—averaging about 200 students per year out of a potential target audience of 4,000. During the same period, attendance by city students also has been relatively sparse, most recently averaging about 70 students per year. Currently, at \$2.5 million, we contribute about 75 percent of CATEC’s annual operational budget. Staff will be considering how to improve student interest and participation in CATEC programs, including scheduling changes that would make attendance more convenient. Also cited as a challenge in our June Board discussion are the decision-making challenges created by the current joint governance structure.

Recently, Deputy Superintendent Dr. Matthew Haas and Dr. Rose Atkins, the city’s Superintendent of Schools, met with representatives from the Central Virginia Apprenticeship Council on how the county and city could work together with the private sector on opening up more opportunities for CATEC students in the building trades industry.

Culturally Responsive Teaching—In a program developed by our Community Engagement Executive Director, Dr. Bernard Hairston, nine of our teachers and administrators received Culturally Responsive Teaching certifications this month. The program is the first of its kind in Virginia and may well be the only one of its type anywhere in the nation. It is designed to develop competencies around strategies and teaching methods that use awareness of cultural differences among students to tailor instruction to their individual strengths and needs. Students in our school division speak 79 different languages in their homes. Nearly 1,400 students are English language learners and more than 3,000 students are members of ethnic minorities. To be certified, educators must demonstrate measureable results in how their strategies and methods improved student performance. There are 17 educators who have earned certifications including most recently, three Cale teachers—Brad Handrich, Katy Schutz and Kimberly Wilson; one Meriwether Lewis teacher—Destinie Thomas. Also, Cale’s principal, DeeDee Jones and assistant principal, Ben Allen, LaTishia Wilson, Stony Point’s new principal, Ashby Johnson, an assistant principal at Jouett and C’Ta Delaurier, an instructional coach.

New Position for Dr. Moran—Dr. Moran has been named the Executive Director of the statewide Virginia Consortium for Learning. The organization includes membership of more than 70 school divisions across Virginia and its mission is to provide high-quality professional development to educators and the sharing of best practices. The Consortium conducts annual workshops and conferences, shares state-of-the-art research on innovative instructional practices and identifies grant opportunities for school divisions.

School Safety—The first meeting of our newly-organized School Safety Advisory Committee was held on June 21. The Committee, chaired by Dr. Nicholas King, our student services officer, includes representatives from the school division, parents, community organizations, the police department and experts such as the University of Virginia’s Dewey Cornell. The Committee was briefed on a new pilot program that will begin at Woodbrook Elementary School this August. It will utilize electronic access control technology that will ensure all exterior doors except for the front door are locked throughout the day, significantly reduce false alarms, prevent access by unauthorized personnel and facilitate access to the building by the police department during off-hours.

State Recognition—Five of our schools earned Virginia Index of Performance Awards from the state board of education. These awards are based upon superior student performance on state assessments and a school's achievement in meeting education goals set by the board and the Governor. Murray Elementary School received the board's Excellence Award, earned by only six percent of all schools in the state. Henley, Hollymead, Meriwether Lewis and Western Albemarle High School all received Distinguished Achievement Awards, placing them among the top ten percent of all schools in the state.

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