



Board-to-Board, April 2019

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

Ashby Johnson to Succeed Kathryn Baylor as Jouett's Principal—Ashby Johnson, who attended Jack Jouett Middle School and later returned as a teacher, a coordinator of the school's globally-recognized college preparatory program, and then assistant principal, has been appointed as the school's next principal by the Albemarle County School Board. Johnson's appointment is effective with the start of the new school year on July 1. She will succeed Kathryn Baylor, who recently announced her retirement after serving for 13 years as Jouett's principal.

Among her signature accomplishments is Johnson's service as Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) coordinator during the time when Jouett earned the international program's highest honor as a demonstration school. The AVID program was designed to support students in becoming the first in their family to attend college through the development of strong academic, planning and leadership skills. Jouett expanded the program's benefits to all of its students by making its strategies an integral part of its overall curriculum.

Johnson said she will be building on a strong foundation of achievement at the school. Some of her initial priorities include working with the Jouett community to develop vision and mission plans based upon common values, continuing to strengthen connections with all students to close opportunity gaps, and expanding the engagement of families and the broader community with the school.

Johnson has served as a middle and high school administrator in all three of the school division's feeder patterns, having been an assistant principal at Henley Middle School, Monticello High School, and Jouett. She is one of a handful of administrators in the division currently certified in culturally responsive teaching, which focuses on mastering evidence-based teaching strategies and practices that improve student performance across all demographic groups. Albemarle County students represent 89 different birth countries, and there are 74 different languages spoken in our students' homes.

An undergraduate of James Madison University with a Master of Arts in Teaching from Mary Baldwin, Johnson began her career in education as an instructional assistant at Greer Elementary School. She served as a Language Arts teacher and a special education teacher at Sutherland Middle School before joining Jouett as an intervention teacher, serving for seven years during the time when the school earned AVID demonstration school status.

Updates on ACPS Dress Code Enforcement—Further discussion of the possibility of adding language to the current dress code that prohibits the wearing of specific apparel such as Confederate and other hate-oriented symbols, was on the School Board’s April 11 agenda. This apparel was the subject of Superintendent Matt Haas’s finding last month that such clothing is disruptive to the learning environment, making it a violation of current dress code.

At the meeting, Superintendent Dr. Matthew Haas reported that after his finding last month, there were a few initial instances when students wore such clothing to school. These were well handled by school administrators, and since then, there have been no violations.

Last week, each Board member had the opportunity to discuss adding specific language banning clothing with Confederate insignia to the dress code. There were some concerns about whether this would infringe upon free speech rights. In the end, there was agreement to allow for more time to evaluate the continued effectiveness of the superintendent's approach before deciding whether to change the current viewpoint-neutral dress code to specifically ban Confederate clothing.

CATEC Director, Dr. Daphne Keiser, Appointed to Senior Leadership Role With Albemarle County Public Schools Leading Teacher, Administrator Recruitment—Dr. Daphne Keiser, currently the Director of CATEC, has been appointed as the Director of Educator Quality for Albemarle County Public Schools. Dr. Keiser’s appointment is effective July 1. In her new senior leadership role, she will report to Lorna Gerome, the Director of Human Resources. Dr. Keiser will oversee and direct the school division’s faculty and administrator recruitment, its orientation program for new teachers and administrators, and succession planning for leadership positions at the school and central office levels.

Her credentials also include managing day-to-day licensure, recruitment, and staff development while with the King William County school division. During Dr. Keiser’s tenure at CATEC, which serves students from both Charlottesville City and Albemarle County, the school added new centers of excellence in information engineering and technology and in health and medical services. The school also debuted a new apprenticeship program in partnership with several local businesses and earned a state grant for a summer pilot program that will extend apprenticeship opportunities to students as young as 16 years of age.

The school also earned grants that made possible a food bus for school and community events, utilizing the skills of students throughout the school in such disciplines as culinary arts, auto tech and auto body, planning, marketing, design, and computer systems.

Dr. Keiser is an undergraduate of Virginia State University with a Bachelor of Science in Interdisciplinary Studies and Elementary Education. She earned her Master’s and Ph.D. from UVA in Administration and Supervision. She began her career as an elementary school teacher in Sussex County in 1994. Her experience includes research and supervisory positions at UVA and leadership roles in both Greene and King William counties. In 2003, she joined Charlottesville City Schools as an assistant principal at Walker Upper Elementary School.

Revitalized Gold Card Program Yields Increased Participation—The Albemarle County School Board also heard a report on the great success so far of the revitalized Gold Card program, which provides free access to school events, including drama productions and athletic events, for residents who are age 60 or older. Many of these seniors have indicated in their application for the Gold Card, which is free, that they also are interested in volunteering for ACPS.

Governor Northam Signs Bill Facilitating the Use of Stop-Arm Cameras on Albemarle County School Buses—Governor Ralph Northam recently signed a bill introduced by Delegate Rob Bell that changes Virginia state code, giving all school divisions the opportunity to use school bus stop-arm cameras. For six years, Albemarle County Public Schools (ACPS) has been advocating for a change in Virginia code that would allow the implementation of a school bus stop-arm camera program in the school division, but Virginia code prohibited the division from moving forward.

Starting in August of 2018, Delegate Bell began working with the school division to understand the importance of these stop-arm camera programs. He met with ACPS school bus drivers and transportation experts before they started their service for the school year and discussed with them how the stop-arm cameras would make school buses safer for students. Bell introduced HB 2344 in January in a response to a safety need that he understood through those conversations. In order for the school division to implement the stop-arm camera program, which Director of Transportation Jim Foley hopes to do by the end of this year, county code will need to be updated to reflect the new wording of the Virginia Code.

Albemarle County Public Schools Students Earn 55 Awards at Regional Science Fair, Including Both “Best in Show” Honors—Albemarle County Public Schools students earned both *Best in Show* Awards at the 38th annual Virginia Piedmont Regional Science Fair recently held in John Paul Jones Arena at the University of Virginia. Overall, students from Albemarle, Western Albemarle, and Monticello high schools received 49 awards at the show, including 11 first place awards in the 15 show categories. Students from Sutherland Middle School received six awards in their division, including a first place in Electrical & Mechanical Engineering.

Libby Terrell, a Western Albemarle High School junior, won *Best in Show* and first place in Medicine & Health Sciences for her project, “The Effect of a Low Carbohydrate Diet on Cardiovascular Disease Risk Factors.” Her study tested whether lower carbohydrate diets improve cardiovascular health. The diets did not limit the intake of fats, but did reduce added sugars. Those who volunteered to follow the diets lost weight over a six-week period and improved their cholesterol results compared to a control group.

The second *Best in Show* was earned by Paula Zhu, an Albemarle High School junior, for her first place project in Cellular & Molecular Biology. Her study, “3-D Spatiotemporal Profiling of Adrenergic and Cholinergic Transmission,” developed and analyzed the first real-time visualizations of live neurotransmissions in the brain on a nanometer scale. These neurotransmissions are impaired in such conditions as autism, depression, and Alzheimer’s.

Libby and Paula automatically qualified for the Intel International Science & Engineering Fair, which will be held in Phoenix, Arizona, from May 12-17.

In addition to Paula Zhu, all of the other first-place category winners from Albemarle County Public Schools are students of Kirsten Fuoti, who teaches at Albemarle High School's Math, Engineering & Science Academy (MESA).

Among the first-place winners from Albemarle High School are:

- Landon Allan and Kate Fard, for their Environmental Management project that studied the ability of rain gardens to filter out contaminants from runoff water.
- Ethan Cha and Benny Bigler-Wang, for their Microbiology project that confirmed that natural, plant-based oils could be comparable to commercial, alcohol-based hand sanitizers in eliminating bacteria and maintaining skin health.
- Kylie Heapes and Maggie Weber, who demonstrated in their Chemistry project that nitrogen flushing best extends the shelf-life of milk with higher fat contents.
- Reese Hertel and Jack Kelly, for their Plant Sciences study that found that adding particles of a drought resistant plant in the watering of corn, soybeans and wheat could increase the drought resistance of all three crops.
- In Physics & Astronomy, Dhara Liyanage and Ryleigh Katstra, who tested the specific impact that the number of stokes per minute has on the speed of a boat.
- Isabelle Pardue, for her research project in Behavioral & Social Sciences, which looked at the association between various facial symmetry ratios and perceptions of physical attractiveness, finding that symmetrical perfection does not necessarily indicate perceived beauty.
- Ira Rosner, for his project in Energy & Transportation that determined that higher ocean temperatures caused by climate change could be reversed by utilizing floating solar farms, which also would generate clean energy.
- Samuel Rosner, for his Mathematical Sciences project that tested the effectiveness and behavior of a computer program he designed that created players who learn cooperation skills within the well-known strategic game theory, the *prisoner's dilemma*.
- Grant Williams and Blake Wiese, who examined how the shape of a kayak's hull alters its speed capabilities for their project in Electrical & Mechanical Engineering.

In the junior division, Sutherland's Vivian Hui earned first place for her Electrical & Mechanical Engineering project that analyzed how robotic lawn mowers performed on different types of slopes.

According to the Intel International Science & Engineering Fair, millions of students worldwide compete each year in local and school-sponsored science fairs. The winners of these events go on

to participate in Society-affiliated regional and state fairs in order to qualify for the international event.

Approximately 1,800 high school students from more than 75 countries, regions and territories participate in the international fair to showcase their independent research and compete for up to \$4 million in prizes.

Ted Dintersmith Speaks to ACPS Community—On Wednesday, April 17, Ted Dintersmith was featured at the ACPS Community Speaker Series. Dintersmith is an internationally known thought leader on American education who lives in the ACPS area. He has traveled throughout the country to gain a sense of the kinds of learning experiences that prepare students for the career and citizenship demands of the future. His film *Most Likely to Succeed* is a feature-length documentary on education that reveals the shortcomings of conventional education methods in today's innovative world. The film explores new approaches that aim to revolutionize education, inspiring school communities to reimagine what students and teachers are capable of doing. It has been an official selection of 30 major film festivals, including Sundance.

To further his research into education, from 2015 to 2016, Dintersmith traveled to all 50 states, visited 200 schools, and met thousands of people involved in education, including students, teachers, administrators, parents, education policy makers, legislators, and governors. During that time, he saw the best of U.S. education and drew daily inspiration from remarkably innovative teachers. The observations that Dintersmith made were the motivation for the book *What School Could Be*, which describes the change taking place in schools across the country.

Budget Updates Made to Albemarle County School Board—On April 18, the School Board received budget updates in preparation for adopting the FY 2019-20 budget on April 25. Staff recommended that the School Board adopt a budget based upon their February 5 request with adjustments, including a \$238,689 projected reduction in state revenues and increases in local revenues in other areas. On the expenditure side, the proposed \$1,000,000 in compensation strategies was replaced by an additional 0.7% increase in teacher salaries, for a total of a 3.0% teacher salary increase. The School Board asked staff to further analyze projected fund balances before making any final recommendations.

Community Members Sought to Join Cale Advisory Committee Reviewing the School's Name—Following the School Board's adoption of a new division policy on the naming or renaming of school facilities, applicants are being sought to serve on a community advisory committee that will conduct the first review under the revised policy. In October, the School Board directed Superintendent Dr. Matthew Haas to review current policy on the naming of school buildings and facilities to add school division values to the criteria for such naming.

The new policy says advisory committees, including staff, parents and community representatives, should be established whenever the name of a school was under review. The policy directed that school names should take into account how faithful these designations are to the school division's values of respect, community, young people, and excellence.

Of particular interest are the more than one dozen schools in the division that are named for individuals. The first school name that will be reviewed under the new policy is that of Cale

Elementary School, named in 1990 for a former Albemarle County Superintendent of Schools, Mr. Paul H. Cale, who served in that role from 1947 to 1969.

The advisory committee, in turn, will make a recommendation to Superintendent Dr. Matthew Haas on whether there should be a name change.

Earlier this year, Superintendent Haas appointed Dennis S. Rooker, who served three terms on the Albemarle County Board of Supervisors, to chair the Cale advisory committee. The committee will include Cale's principal; three parents who have students enrolled at Cale; three teachers from the school; and two community members who do not currently have children in school but who live within the school's attendance boundaries.

From the time of the committee's first meeting, it will have 90 days to report out its recommendation on whether there should be a name change to the superintendent. The first meeting of the Cale community advisory committee will take place next month.