



Board-to-Board, January 2020

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

Superintendent Presents Balanced Funding Request to Albemarle County School Board—On January 23, Dr. Matthew Haas, Superintendent of Albemarle County Public Schools (ACPS), presented his funding request for the 2021 fiscal year, entitled “A Work in Progress” to the Albemarle County School Board. Haas stated that \$13.6 million dollars in new revenues will be paired with \$13.6 million in new expenses, equating to a balanced budget request for the 2021 fiscal year.

For this budget year, the state will offer significant additional funding, providing new opportunities to the school division that support its strategic plan and objectives. The school division is required by the Virginia Department of Education’s Standards of Quality to deliver certain instructional programs and support services; from that point, every budget decision is framed by the ACPS Strategic Plan and influenced by division reports, strategic school and departmental improvement plans, funding proposals submitted by school and department leaders, and input from the community.

Already this budget season, ACPS has held two work sessions to update the Board on last year’s strategic proposals and to seek ideas and input on the Board’s priorities. The division plans to conduct three more budget work sessions to discuss compensation, growth, and proposals in more detail. The process then moves forward with a public hearing and the presentation of the School Board’s Funding Request to the County Board of Supervisors. Budget adoption follows in the spring.

Haas stated during his presentation that ACPS anticipates an increase of \$13.6 million, which brings its total projected revenues to \$209.1 million. Overall, more than 70% of revenues come from local sources while about 28% of funding comes from the state and just under 2% comes from the federal government. This amounts to \$147.7M in local funds, \$57.8M in state funds, and \$3.6M in federal funds. ACPS expects a 14.3% hike in state revenues, which exceeds last year’s support by about \$7.2 million.

That increase in state revenues can be attributed to three things: a decrease in the division’s calculated Local Composite Index, growing student enrollment, and an upturn in the state’s revenue stream. However, this projected revenue is based on the Governor’s Proposed Budget, which is subject to change, so that final projection will not be available until later this year.

Haas further explained that school division expenses are grouped into four categories: employee compensation, which comprises 56% of the increase and student enrollment growth and demographic changes, which make up 35%. Non-discretionary increases make up 6% of the increase, and the final 3% fund four school division proposals related to the division's strategic plan.

Updates on School Renaming—On January 23, the School Board approved changing the name of Cale Elementary School to Mountain View Elementary School, effective July 1, 2020. The new name was the overwhelming choice of students, staff, and parents, who were able to take a school-wide survey, vote, and submit suggestions in a box at the school.

Additionally, Haas announced that Sutherland Middle School will be the next school to have its name reviewed by a community advisory committee. Mortimer Sutherland was a teacher and principal in the school division who retired in 1946. He later served on both the Albemarle County School Board and the Board of Supervisors. The middle school bearing his name was built in 1994.

The school division has created a web page that provides current information on its school name reviews, including updates and progress in meeting the School Board's direction. The School Naming Review web page can be accessed at <https://www.k12albemarle.org/acps/division/school-naming-review/Pages/default.aspx>.

Among the requirements of the division's school name review policy is the appointment of a community advisory committee to include the school principal, three school staff members, three parents who have children in the school, and two community members who live within the school attendance boundary but do not have children currently enrolled in the school.

Advisory committee members will be responsible for developing a community-wide survey to solicit potential names for the school. Sutherland will be included among the list of names to be considered. The advisory committee also will conduct two public meetings, first to receive comments about potential names, and then, to hear opinions on a list of up to 10 names that the advisory committee will choose.

The policy stipulates that the advisory committee will narrow down the list of 10 names to three finalists. If Sutherland is among that group, the committee will determine if that name is consistent with the school division's naming criteria, which includes reflecting the school division's four values of excellence, young people, community, and respect.

The committee then will notify the Superintendent of their preferred name for the school and Superintendent Haas will make a final recommendation to the School Board.

Members of the Sutherland community and attendance zone who are interested in serving on the community advisory committee are asked to send an email describing their relationship with the school, their interest in being part of the review process, and contact information. Emails should be sent by Friday, February 7, to schoolnamingreview@k12albemarle.org.

School Board Votes on Leadership Roles and Meeting Dates—At its January 9 organizational and business meeting, the Albemarle County School Board voted on the various leadership roles that its members would hold for the upcoming year. The Board voted for Jonno Alcaro and Graham Paige to remain in the roles of Chair and Vice-Chair, respectively, for the calendar year 2020. Members who will serve on the board of Charlottesville Albemarle Technical Education Center (CATEC) in 2020 are Katrina Callsen, Kate Acuff and Ellen Osborne. The 2020 Capital Improvement Programs Advisory Committee will consist of Acuff and Alcaro, while Osborne will serve on the Audit Committee. The representative to the Public Education Foundation of Charlottesville-Albemarle will be Paige, who will also serve on the Discipline Committee along with David Oberg and Callsen. Alcaro and Callsen will make up the Legislative Committee and Judy Le and Acuff will comprise the Communications Committee.

Dates for 2020 School Board meetings were approved and can be found at <http://esb.k12albemarle.org/attachments/f70fc73f-032f-4265-a084-b8798c6e0414.pdf>.

Community Satisfaction Survey—This month, ACPS asked students, parents, employees, and community members to participate in its Community Satisfaction Survey. Feedback will provide the school division with valuable operational information that will be used as part of a commitment to continuous improvement. Responses also inform the development of the 2020-21 budget and long-range planning decisions.

Language Arts & Multi-Disciplinary Learning Resources Available for Public Review--During the January 9 School Board meeting, learning resources for English Language Arts (grades 6-12) were proposed for approval, as was a multi-disciplinary database learning resource.

The proposed learning resources will be on display through February 27, 2020, in Room 331 of the Albemarle County Office Building, located at 401 McIntire Road in Charlottesville. Members of the public may review the resources from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, excluding school division holidays. The proposed language arts and multi-disciplinary learning resources will be considered for approval at the School Board meeting on February 27.

In accordance with School Board Policy IIAA, a textbook selection and adoption committee developed specific evaluation checklists to determine alignment of materials with Albemarle County curriculum goals, correlation to the related discipline area competencies, and lifelong-learner competencies. The committee also reviewed learning resources to ensure they meet the selection criteria outlined in Policy IIAA, including overall instructional purpose, educational suitability, age appropriateness, timeliness, subject matter importance, and product quality.