



Board-to-Board

November, 2012

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

Safe Schools/Healthy Students (SSHS) – SSHS presented its third year report during the October 11th School Board meeting, emphasizing that the success of its programs continues to be the leadership and effectiveness of student-led groups at many of our schools. Student-reported incidents of bullying and substance abuse are continuing to decrease. The report also notes that more than 200 school staff members have been trained in restorative practices at our high schools. Although this is the final year for federal funding of SSHS, the program will continue next year, since program efficiencies have resulted in a fund balance. The SSHS website includes the full report:

<https://www.safeschoolscville.org>

State of the Division Report – All Albemarle County public schools are accredited for 2012-13. Schools must have a minimum pass rate of 70 percent in all content areas and meet state graduation standards to earn accreditation. Schools with a graduation class fewer than 50 students (Murray High had 31) can apply for accreditation based on meeting additional standards. Under these criteria, the division applied to the state on behalf of Murray High School and accreditation was granted.

As the result of Virginia's waiver under the No Child Left Behind federal initiative, Adequate yearly Progress (AYP) measurements have been replaced by a different standard, Annual Measureable Objectives (AMO). A significant difference is the composition of student membership groups. Next year, testing standards for some of these groups will increase in rigor. Twenty-one of the division's 26 schools meet the new AMO standard, an improvement over the 17 schools in the prior year that met AYP objectives. The primary driver for the schools not meeting AMO was the change in how SOL data was reported for certain student membership groups.

SAT Test Scores—SAT test scores for Albemarle County students are among the top three percent of all students in Virginia according to the latest results from the state Department of Education. The mean average score of 553 on the critical reading test was second best among all school divisions in the state and the mean average scores for math and writing of 557 and 537 placed Albemarle third highest among all state school divisions.

Redistricting—The parent-led redistricting subcommittees for the northern and western feeder patterns have met three times and are reviewing data on current and projected enrollments, residential growth and building capacities. Some neighborhoods have been identified to help begin the review process, which ultimately will offer options for short and long-term scenarios. The schedule calls for those options to be finalized and presented to the public in December. One subcommittee is reviewing Agnor-Hurt Elementary School, where students could be redistricted to Broadus Wood, Woodbrook or Greer elementary schools. The second subcommittee is reviewing Brownsville, Crozet, Meriwether Lewis and Murray elementary schools with Red Hill also as a possible destination school. Any changes affecting Agnor-Hurt students are expected to take effect next August. The western feeder pattern subcommittee may recommend changes for next year or wait for improvements in the CIP to be approved.

Recommendations will be presented to the School Board after the December public meeting and a public hearing by the School Board will take place during the early months of 2013.

Health and Medical Sciences Academy – Approximately 80 government, academic, business, community and school leaders and student families participated in the October 22 open house for the county's new Health and Medical Sciences Academy at Monticello High School. Virginia's Secretary of Education, Laura Fornash and Superintendent Dr. Pam Moran were guest speakers for the evening. The program highlight was presentations by academy students of the research and project work they are engaged in as part of the academy's innovative instructional model.

CoderDojo Academies – Following ACPS' successful summer CoderDojo program, four more academies are operational this fall. CoderDojos provide students with hands-on instruction and prototype opportunities for computer coding, web page development, programming, and the design and development of computer application and video games. They bring

together students, instructors, mentors and speakers from public and private organizations involved in the computer science field. There is no program fee and all Albemarle County public school students are eligible to attend. Programs are being offered at Crozet and Baker-Butler elementary schools, Burley middle school and Monticello high school.

Western Albemarle High School Theater Ensemble – Thursday evening, November 1, at 7:30, the Ensemble will offer three one-act plays in the high school auditorium. Reminiscent of the long-running Broadway play, *the Producers*, is the story line for *Artistic Impression*, a tale about two playwrights who set out to compose the worst play ever written. Also on the bill that evening is *These Shining Lives*, based on a true story about employees in a watchmaking factory who suffer from radium poisoning. The evening's third production is *A Company of Wayward Saints*, a comedy about a theater company trying to win the patronage of a benefactor in order to return home. Tickets are \$3 in advance and \$4 at the door and can be purchased in the main office of the high schools.

Friday and Saturday evenings, November 16 and 17, at 7:30, the Ensemble will present the Shakespearean classic, *As You Like It*, a romantic comedy that includes the playwright's well known "All the World's a Stage" speech. *As You Like It* tickets are \$5 for students and \$7 for adults in advance, and \$6/\$8 at the door. Live music and dessert will be available during the intermission. Tickets are available at the high school's front office and in Crozet at Over the Moon bookstore and the Mudhouse Coffee Shop. All monies raised by the performances are used to support future student productions at Western Albemarle High School.

AF Junior ROTC Program-As the result of program requirements, the AFJROTC program is scheduled to end at Monticello High School with the conclusion of this school year. Previously, the Air Force set a program participation target of 100 cadets for schools with 1,000 or more students. Now in its 11th year, the program at Monticello never has exceeded 90 cadets despite an aggressive recruiting effort by program and school staffs. The target of 100 participating cadets now is a program requirement. We are working with program staff and the Air Force to explore whether there are participation alternatives that would allow the program to continue.

School Bus Safety—The week ending October 27th was National School Bus Safety Week and the school's transportation department recognized employees for their safe driving record during the past year. Statistics show that it is eight times safer to ride a school bus than for a student to be driven to school by a parent and more than 40 times safer if the driver is a friend or sibling. Each day, the department transports some 9,000 students over 14,000 miles and has now accumulated 100,000 hours without a lost time accident. During the past year, there were no driver-responsible student injuries on a school bus. A new initiative by the department is focused on working with Safe Schools/Healthy Students to incorporate Responsive Classroom principles to student behavior on a school bus.

Donations to Albemarle County Public Schools – The School Board received the following donations at its October 11 and October 25, 2012 meetings:

- Albemarle High school received a donation of 8 graduation gowns and 4 caps from Robert A. Garland, Jr., to be used at the 2013 graduation ceremony.
- Brownsville Elementary school received a donation of a baby grand piano from Kristin Landis.
- Red Hill Elementary school received a donation in the amount of \$2,240.00 from the Red Hill PTO. The donor requested the donation be used to supplement classroom supplies at the school.
- Murray High School received a donation in the amount of \$125.00 from Don Soechting. The donor requested the donation be used to help with expenses for Student Snack/Meals.
- Brownsville Elementary School received a donation in the amount of \$10,136.00 from the Brownsville PTA. The donor requested the donations be used for: Software licensing, professional development, grade level allocation per teacher, and the Principal's Discretionary Fund.
- Murray High School received a donation in the amount of \$100.00 from Sabrena Yoder, and \$325.00 from Don Soechting. The donors requested the donations be used to help with expenses for Student Snack/Meals.
- Monticello High School received a donation of a Yamaha Keyboard with accessories from Craig and Elizabeth Hanson, with stand and bench. The donors requested their donation be used in the Chamber Music class at Monticello High School
- Murray High School received donated plants and mulch from Grelen Nursery. The items were donated in support of "Day of Caring" and the donors requested the items be used at Murray High School.
- Crozet Elementary School received a donation in the amount of \$2,550.00 from the Crozet PTO. The donor requested the funds be used to help funds teachers at Crozet Elementary School.

- Meriwether Lewis Elementary School received a donation in the amount of \$250.00 from the Virginia Discovery Museum. The donor requested the funds be used to purchase physical education instructional supplies and/or equipment at Meriwether Lewis.
- Hollymead Elementary School and Baker Butler Elementary School received donations in the amounts of \$300.00 and \$100.00 for Preschool Reverse Inclusion payments. These payments are from parents of children without disabilities; however, they placed their child in one of the schools' special education classrooms. The funding is a nominal fee to cover the cost of incidentals for their child's participation.
- Monticello High School received grants in the amounts of \$15,000 from Martha Jefferson Hospital and \$15,000 from the UVa Health System. The funds will be used to support the new Health and Medical Sciences Academy that opened in August 2012 at Monticello High School.
- Burley Middle School was awarded a grant in the amount of \$1,850.00 from the LexisNexis Cares Employee Foundation. The funds will be used to implement a Music Therapy Program for the Functional Skills Class.
- Burley Middle School was awarded a grant in the amount of \$2,000.00 from the Dominion Foundation. The funds will be used to build the Burley Academic Garden.

School Board website: www.k12albemarle.org