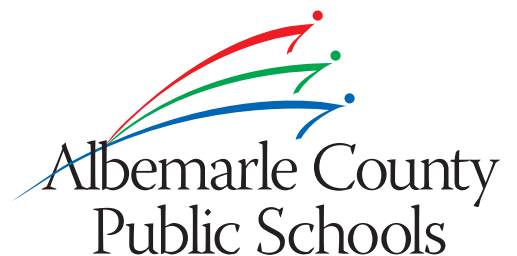


# Albemarle County Public Schools

## Identity and Communications Standards Manual

*Creating and maintaining a consistent image  
for our school system*



# ABOUT THIS MANUAL

## INTRODUCTION TO THE IDENTITY AND COMMUNICATIONS STANDARDS MANUAL

To help you bring our identity to life in a consistent and powerful way, we have developed this manual for your reference.

The consistent application of our logo and adherence to other standards in this manual will reinforce our image as a strong, unified school system committed to academic excellence for all students.

The standards within were created to give you a technical understanding of the components and structure of our new image. On the following pages, you'll find background information on the Albemarle County Public Schools identity, as well as guidance on how to most effectively leverage our identity in everyday communications.

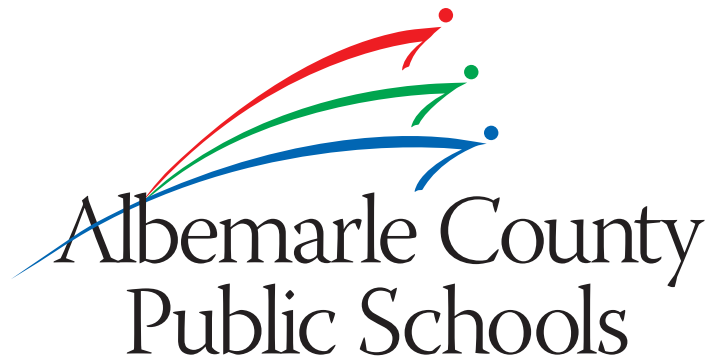
If at any time you have questions, please contact the division communications coordinator at (434) 972-4049.

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### WHAT OUR IDENTITY STANDS FOR

The Albemarle County Public Schools' new logo reflects our role as a leader in learning and a partner in the successful education of our community's children. The pages of an open book and the unlimited potential of all of our students inspired the logo's three vibrant tiers. The three tiers rise ever higher representing our dynamic elementary, middle and high schools, and the progress of each student toward a future of lifelong learning. The colors of the logo: red, green and blue can be combined to create any of the visible colors of the universe. This color scheme celebrates the diversity of our students, our schools and our community.

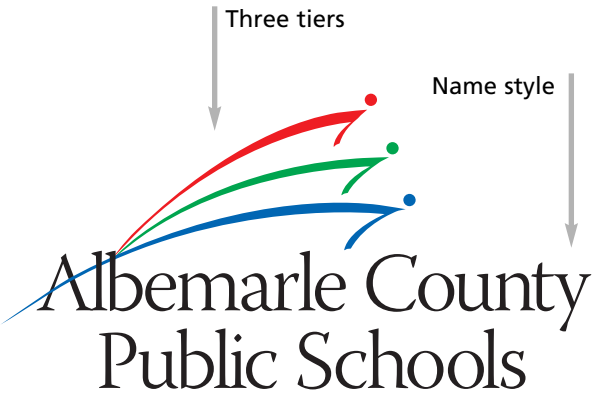


# OUR IDENTITY COMPOSITION

## THE ELEMENTS

Our logo is composed of two parts. The symbolic “Three Tiers” and the stacked name “Albemarle County Public Schools”.

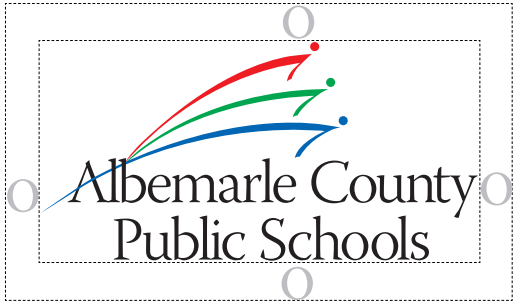
The relationship between these elements has been established as illustrated to the right. These elements and their relationships should not be altered.



## RESERVED SPACE

To give the Albemarle County Public Schools logo its proper prominence, a reserved area surrounds it. Nothing may intrude into this area. The minimum amount of clear area is in direct proportion to the logo size. It is equal to the size of the letter “o” within the logo name type.

While the logo is important, it is not a substitute for the words “Albemarle County Public Schools”. Do not use the logo type in place of the words “Albemarle County Public Schools” in product names or brochure titles. Also, do not use the logo within a line of typeset copy.



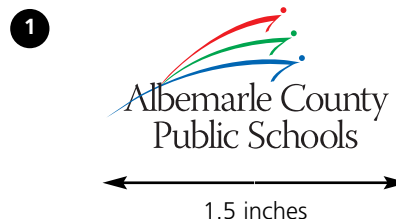
## OUR SIGNATURE SIZE

### PREFERRED SIZES

Three preferred sizes of the Albemarle County Public Schools logo have been established to create a visual standard – minimizing variation and aiding consistency among printed and electronic communications.

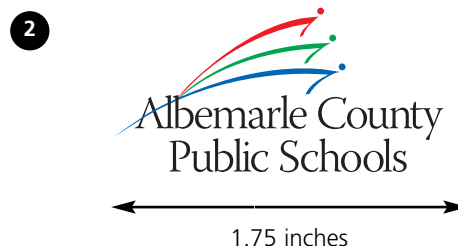
#### Size 1

For smaller items up to 6" wide such as CD covers, CD labels, and narrow format brochures.



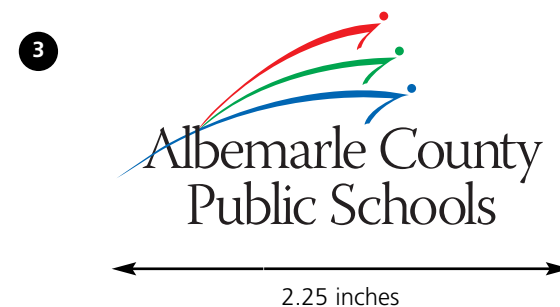
#### Size 2

For items between 6" – 8" wide.



#### Size 3

For standard brochures (8.5" x 11"), folders, and report covers, and widths of 8" and over



### Larger Sizes

For sizes larger than those shown here, always scale using increments of five percent.

Make sure that height and width proportions are the same. DO NOT compress or stretch logo to fit a space.

## COLOR PALETTE

Color provides a powerful means of visual recognition. The color palette for Albemarle County Public Schools is designed to provide creative flexibility, while establishing a consistent and recognizable identity.

Depending on the application, the Albemarle County Public Schools preferred full color logo should be reproduced in the four color schemes specified on this page.

### For four-color process printing, ink jet or laser output:

Four-color, CMYK (Cyan, Magenta, Yellow, and Black) printing process to reproduce the logo for off-set printing

### For Web or video use:

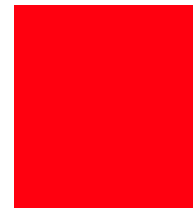
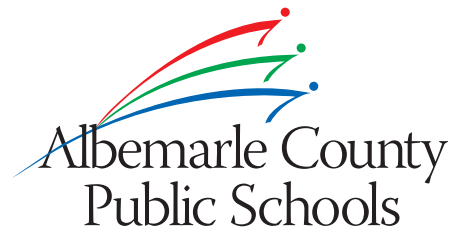
If displayed on screen, the RGB (Red, Green, and Blue) color version is preferred.

### For one-color applications:

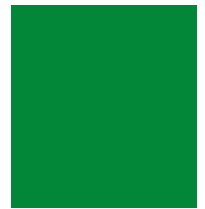
Use the color equivalent of Pantone 286

### For black and white printing:

For newsprint, fax or black-and-white print requirements, use the black with screen tint version of the logo



**ACPS Red**  
CMYK = 0.100.100.0  
RGB = FF0000



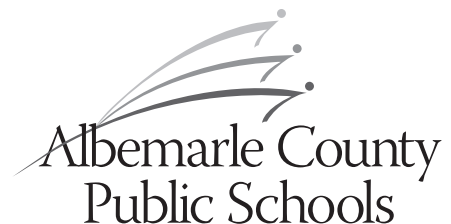
**ACPS Green**  
CMYK = 100.0.100.0  
RGB = 009966



**ACPS Blue**  
CMYK = 100.60.0.0  
RGB = 0066CC



**ACPS Black**  
CMYK = 0.0.0.100  
RGB = 000000



## OUR TYPOGRAPHY

### Our Primary Typeface

The highly legible, serif font “Palatino Linotype” is the primary font recommended for Albemarle County Public Schools communications. While it is an expanded family, the ACPS visual system only uses the specific weights of Roman, Roman Italic, and Bold.

Palatino Linotype Bold

**ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ**  
**abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz**  
**1234567890!@#%&^\*( )**

Palatino Linotype

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ  
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz  
1234567890!@#%&^\*( )

Palatino Linotype Italic

*ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ*  
*abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz*  
*1234567890!@#%&^\*( )*

### Secondary Typeface

The highly legible, sans serif font “Arial” is the secondary font recommended for brochure text and/or titles and subheads.

Arial

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ  
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz  
1234567890!@#%&^\*( )

Arial Bold

**ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ**  
**abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz**  
**1234567890!@#%&^\*( )**

### For Web use:

The recommended HTML text for ACPS use is the “Verdana” family.

Verdana

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ  
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz  
1234567890!@#%&^\*( )

## MAINTAINING LOGO INTEGRITY

This page illustrates some incorrect uses of the Albemarle County Public Schools logo.

**1.** Do not scale the logo smaller than 1.25" wide.



**2.** Do not set the logo on an angle.



**3.** Do not distort the logo. Keep the width and height proportions equal.

**4.** Do not "unstack" the words Albemarle County Public Schools.

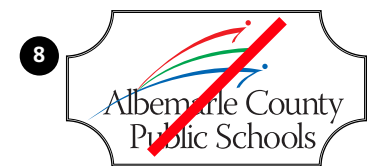


**5.** Do not alter the color scheme.



**6.** Do not apply special effects to the logo, such as drop shadows.

**7.** Do not add elements to the logo.



**8.** Do not enclose the logo within a shape.



# CORRESPONDENCE PACKAGE

The letterhead, envelopes, business cards, memos, news releases and fax cover sheets represent Albemarle County Public School's image to the public. Because of their importance, consistency is fundamental to ensure that we present a unified and professional appearance.

## PERSONALIZATION FOR DEPARTMENTS

All departments are to use the official ACPS format for letterhead, envelopes, business cards, memos, news releases and fax cover sheets. Templates for each department have been created for letterhead. Style guides for each of these items appear on the following pages. Electronic templates are available from the division communications coordinator at (434) 972-4049.

### LETTERHEAD

Departments should use one of the letterhead styles shown on pages 10 & 11.

**Recommended Paper:** 70# writing Rolland opaque bright white, linen finish

**Ink:** Four-color process (CMYK) or grey scale.

### ENVELOPES

Departments should use one of the envelope styles shown on page 12.

**Recommended Paper:** 24# writing White Smooth finish

**Ink:** Four-color process (CMYK) or grey scale.

### BUSINESS CARDS

Departments should use the business style shown on page 13.

**Recommended Paper:** 85# cover Rolland opaque, bright white, linen finish

**Ink:** Four-color process (CMYK).

## Four-color process (CMYK) specs



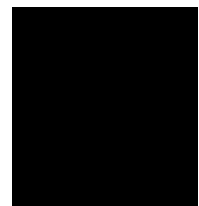
**ACPS Red**  
CMYK = 0.100.100.0



**ACPS Green**  
CMYK = 100.0.100.0



**ACPS Blue**  
CMYK = 100.60.0.0



**ACPS Black**  
CMYK = 0.0.0.100

# DEPARTMENT LETTERHEAD SAMPLE

**FOUR-COLOR PROCESS PRINTING (CMYK)**

Department Name and Information Here



**Office of the Superintendent**  
401 McIntire Road Charlottesville, Virginia 22902-4596  
Phone: (434) 296-5826 Fax: (434) 296-5869  
[www.k12albemarle.org](http://www.k12albemarle.org)

# DEPARTMENT LETTERHEAD SAMPLE

ONE-COLOR GREY SCALE

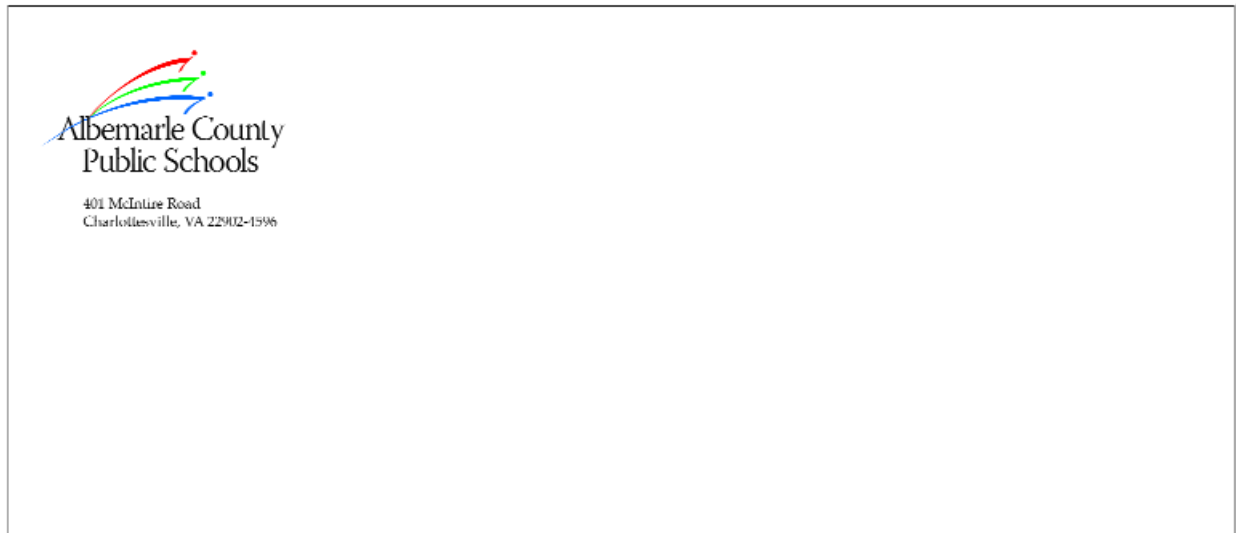
Department Name and Information Here



**Office of the Superintendent**  
401 McIntire Road Charlottesville, Virginia 22902-4596  
Phone: (434) 296-5826 Fax: (434) 296-5869  
[www.k12albemarle.org](http://www.k12albemarle.org)

# ENVELOPE SAMPLES

## FOUR-COLOR PROCESS PRINTING



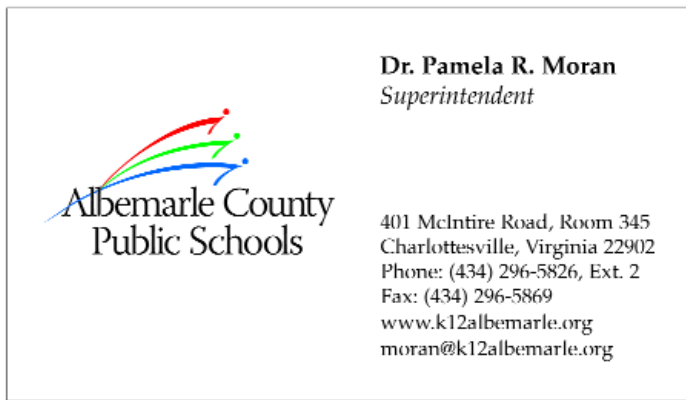
## ONE-COLOR GREY SCALE



# BUSINESS CARD SAMPLES

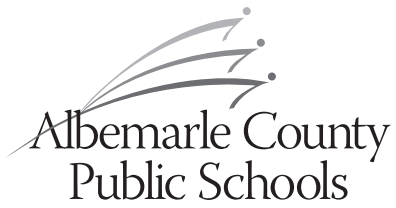
## FOR CENTRAL OFFICE STAFF AND DEPARTMENTS

Four-Color Process Printing



← Name, title and/or  
department name

## FAX COVER SHEET SAMPLE



**Office of the Superintendent**  
401 McIntire Road  
Charlottesville, Virginia 22902-4596  
Phone: (434) 296-5826 Fax: (434) 296-5869  
[www.k12albemarle.org](http://www.k12albemarle.org)

### FAX

DATE:

URGENT ☐

TO:

FOR REVIEW ☐

FROM: Dr. Pamela R. Moran  
Superintendent

PER YOUR REQUEST ☐

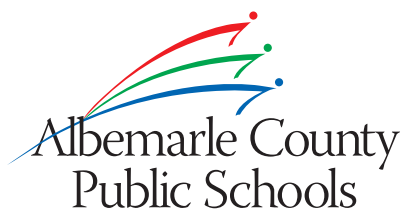
PLEASE REPLY ☐

RE:



# MEMO SHEET SAMPLE

## FOUR-COLOR DESKTOP PRINTING



**Office of the Superintendent**  
401 McIntire Road  
Charlottesville, Virginia 22902-4596  
Phone: (434) 296-5826 Fax: (434) 296-5869  
[www.k12albemarle.org](http://www.k12albemarle.org)

### MEMORANDUM

---

DATE:

TO:

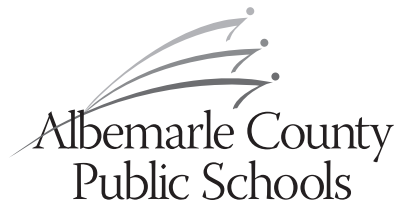
FROM: Dr. Pamela R. Moran  
Superintendent

RE:



# MEMO SHEET SAMPLE

GREYSCALE FOR DESKTOP PRINTING OR COPYING



Office of the Superintendent  
401 McIntire Road  
Charlottesville, Virginia 22902-4596  
Phone: (434) 296-5826 Fax: (434) 296-5869  
[www.k12albemarle.org](http://www.k12albemarle.org)

## MEMORANDUM

---

DATE:

TO:

FROM: Dr. Pamela R. Moran  
Superintendent

RE:





# STANDARDS FOR PRINTED PUBLICATIONS

Individual departments produce their own publications as needed whether it is a parent newsletter, a brochure explaining a new program, a poster advertising an upcoming event or a website promoting your department. However, as you are creating your print or electronic publications, keep in mind that the final product reflects not just your department but the school system as a whole.

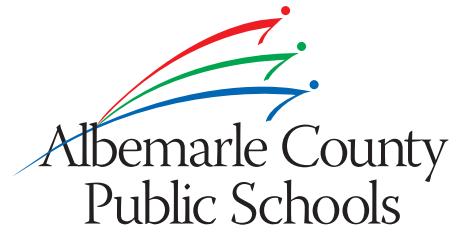
## NEWSLETTERS, BROCHURES, POSTERS AND OTHER PUBLICATIONS

All printed publications that will be viewed by external audiences should contain the following elements somewhere within the publication:

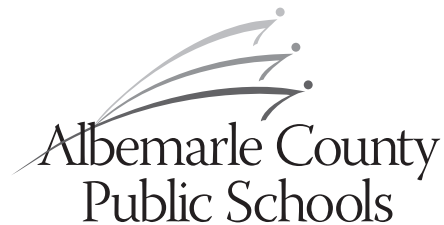
1. The ACPS logo and type signature – The official logo should appear on all publications produced by departments and schools within ACPS. Please follow the basic specifications and guidelines for properly applying the logo to various printed materials as outlined in this guide.
2. The URL for the ACPS website:  
**[www.k12albemarle.org](http://www.k12albemarle.org)**
3. The date of publication (month and year or year only) – may be as small as 7pt. type.

### School Newsletter sample:

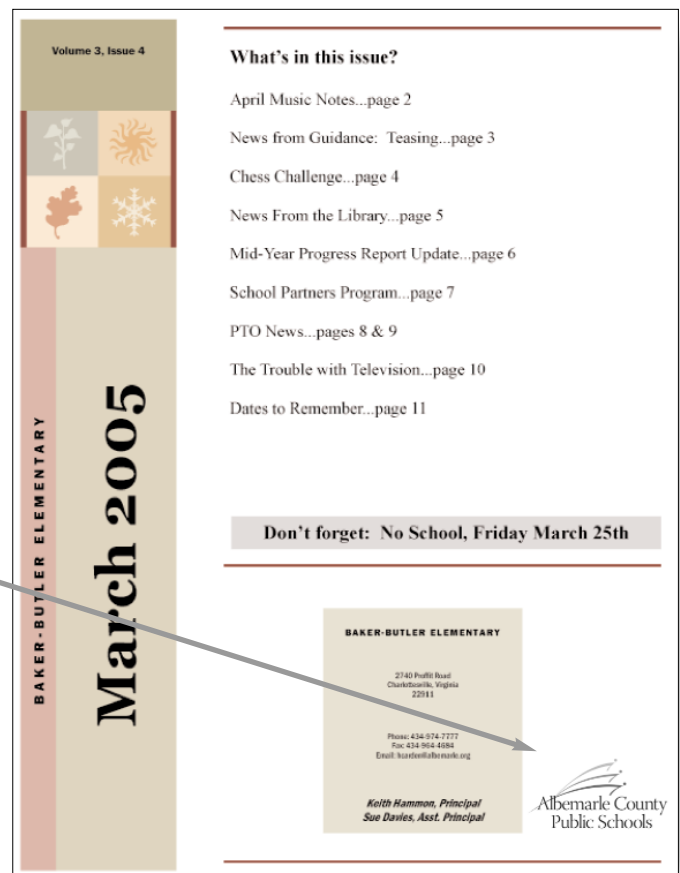
ACPS logo placed near individual school information in black and white (greyscale) version no smaller than 1.25 inches



Four-color (cmky) version



Black and white (greyscale) version



# STANDARDS FOR E-MAIL COMMUNICATION

E-mail is now the most common form of communication in business. In Albemarle County Public Schools, it's our primary internal communications tool. The role of e-mail in supporting our education mission is to help employees conduct the daily business of the school system effectively. While e-mail is simple and provides a written record, it does have limits and isn't always the best way to communicate. These guidelines have been created to help all employees communicate electronically in ways that support our organization's core values. They are designed to help employees:

- Present ourselves as representatives of Albemarle County Public Schools professionally and effectively through e-mail, and to
- Use e-mail appropriately for standard messages.

These guidelines incorporate Albemarle County School Board Policy IIBE (Acceptable Use of Technology). Policy IIBE can be downloaded at the following:

<http://www.k12albemarle.org/Board/NewPages/policies.htm>

## USAGE GUIDELINES

- Be familiar with the Acceptable Use of Technology Agreement for Albemarle County schools provided to each employee when hired. The agreement shows the school system's expectations for responsible, ethical and legal use of school computer resources.
- Know that e-mail messages are public records. They are considered written documents and are subject to the Freedom of Information Act. Never put in an e-mail what you wouldn't put on a postcard or billboard.
- Don't send confidential or sensitive information by e-mail. Anything sensitive and urgent should be communicated by phone or in person. Our policy states that employees can't use e-mail for confidential matters or privileged communications, such as student education records. Employees must adhere to all local, state and federal laws, policies and standards including the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).
- Change your password monthly and don't share it. Employees will receive automatic reminders to change their passwords. Passwords that are not changed within a

three-month period will be blocked. Employees will need to call the Technology Help Desk at 975-9443 to remove the block.

- Don't open e-mail attachments from unknown sources to protect against computer viruses.
- In our system, a good rule of thumb is to not send files larger than 2 Megabytes. Instead, cut large files into small pieces and send each piece separately.
- If you receive an improper e-mail, report it to your department or office manager who will report it to the Assistant Director of the Office of Technology as appropriate.

## MESSAGE COMPOSITION GUIDELINES

- Follow the same rules of common courtesy just as you would with face-to-face communications. Use salutations until a relationship is very well established.
- Use professional, courteous language. Adding please and thank you make for polite requests instead of demands.
- Use formal language with external correspondence. Informal language is acceptable for internal correspondence.
- Avoid sarcasm and be careful with humor. In person you can hear tone of voice and see facial expressions and body language. In writing, you can't hear or see any of those. E-mail is silent. Don't risk miscommunication and misunderstanding. Read messages aloud before sending to check tone.
- Use appropriate grammar, punctuation, capitalization and spelling. Use mixed case. Using all lower-case letters looks unprofessional. Using all caps is called SHOUTING because that's what it looks like. It's also more difficult for people to read and comprehend.
- Use acronyms, abbreviations, and emoticons sparingly for internal correspondence. Avoid for external correspondence.
- KISS your messages – Keep It Short and Simple.

# STANDARDS FOR E-MAIL COMMUNICATION

- Assume any message you send is likely to be forwarded to others. If you're forwarding a message you received, don't change the wording.
- Wait overnight to send or respond to emotional messages. Don't "flame" someone by sending or replying to an e-mail in a way that upsets someone.
- Never reprimand employees or correct colleagues by e-mail. That's called "zapping" employees with "nastygrams." If you wouldn't say it in person, don't write it. Reserve the negative for face-to-face.
- Use spell check. Our school system is regarded as a quality education organization and being accurate is important to our credibility.
- Re-read/proofread messages before sending.
- Have a subject line that accurately reflects the content of message
- E-mails are for division business and should have a signature. It's like leaving a business card. The signature should be automatically included in each e-mail sent. An individual should be able to contact you using the information in your signature. To add a signature, in Outlook go to Tools and then Options. A suggestion for signature format is:
- If the message you sent will take the recipient some time to read, include the word "long" in the subject line. An e-mail message more than 100 lines is considered long. E-mail is best for short straight-forward information. If your e-mail is long, introduce the subject in a short message and send details as an attachment.
- Be careful when addressing mail. Know where you're sending messages.
- Check your cc's when replying. If the message becomes a two-way conversation, stop including other people.
- Use BCC's in a very limited manner. In general, when people are included in an e-mail, all should be aware of who is involved. The two exceptions are:
  - When an invitation is to be sent by e-mail and the sender wants to avoid having a long list of addresses in the "To" section.
  - When sending an e-mail with parents included among the recipients. Unless you have permission for sharing parent e-mail addresses with people other than school employees, list the parents in the BCC section.

Name  
Title, Department or School  
Division name  
City, State  
E-mail address  
Phone #

When using your division e-mail account, you are representing the division and are producing official division communications. The use of quotes in e-mail signatures should be avoided. This will prevent employees' personal views from being interpreted as division positions.

- Don't send e-mail messages with multiple ideas. Send single subject e-mails so it's easier for the recipient to respond and file.

## E-MAIL TIPS

- If an e-mail was not intended for you, courtesy dictates you return it to the sender.
- E-mail isn't always received. For critical messages use receipt confirmation or follow-up with a phone call.
- Don't expect an instant reply. If you need an immediate response, call.
- Respond to your e-mails in 48 hours. If you need more time, tell them so.

E-mail use is a privilege, not a right. Inappropriate use can result in termination of access or disciplinary action as well as potential civil or criminal liability and prosecution.

*Sources: Albemarle County School Board Policy IIBE; Connecticut State Government E-mail Etiquette Guidelines; University of Southern Mississippi Department of Marketing and Public Relations E-mail Guidelines; Netiquette Guidelines by S. Hambridge, Intel Corp.; Guidelines on Effective E-mail Communication by Diane Howard, Ph.D.; A Dozen Guidelines for Using E-mail by Bill Lampton, Ph.D.; How-tos of Techno-etiquette by Jill Bremer of Bremer Communications.*

All departments within Albemarle County Public Schools should strive for excellence in their published materials in order to reflect the high expectations of the system. This style guide will help employees achieve a consistent image across the variety of written materials that represent ACPS including brochures, news releases and web pages. Please use it in preparing your own publications for external audiences.

This guide is not intended to be comprehensive. *The Associated Press Stylebook*, available at most bookstores, serves as the primary reference for word usage, spelling, grammar, capitalization and punctuation. This style guide was produced to address those issues that may be unique to ACPS or commonly used throughout the system. The aim of this guide is to help employees adopt a style that is consistent and appropriate for school system use.

If you have any questions after consulting this guide, please contact the division communications coordinator at 972-4049.

## **ALBEMARLE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS: HOW DO WE REFER TO OURSELVES?**

**Albemarle County Public Schools** – spell out the complete name on first reference. ACPS, Albemarle County schools, the school division, the division or the school system may be used on second reference. When referring to the school system as ACPS, do not place a “the” before the acronym.

When referring to the teachers, students, schools and other individual components of Albemarle County Public Schools, it is acceptable to refer to the system as Albemarle County, i.e. Albemarle County teachers, Albemarle County students, Albemarle County schools.

**The Albemarle County School Board** – spell out the complete name on first reference. The school board or the board may be used on second reference.

**School Names** – When referring to individual schools in the system, use the school’s name along with the appropriate grade-level designation (elementary, middle or high) and the word School on the first reference: Agnor-Hurt Elementary School, Burley Middle School, Albemarle High

School. The grade-level designation and the word School may be dropped on subsequent references or in cases where numerous schools are mentioned within the same publication: Agnor-Hurt Elementary or simply Agnor-Hurt.

When referring to several schools in the same sentence that have the same grade-level designation, place the appropriate designation (elementary, middle or high) and schools (both lowercase) at the end of the series: The superintendent will visit Agnor-Hurt, Baker-Butler and Brownsville elementary schools today.

**Administrative Departments and Offices:** When referring to departments and offices within the school system, use Department or Office in the name and capitalize on first reference. For example, Community Engagement Office, rather than Community Engagement; and Instruction Department, rather than Instruction. On second reference, you may use the department or the office.

**Goal/Priority:** When referring to an ACPS Strategic Plan Goal or Priority, capitalize on first reference. For example: Strategic Plan Goal 1. On subsequent references, you may use the goal (lowercase) or the priority.

**Mission Statement:** The core purpose of Albemarle County Public Schools is to establish a community of learners and learning, through rigor, relevance, and relationships, one student at a time.

## **ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS**

When using abbreviations and acronyms, be sure to spell out the word(s) on first reference with the abbreviation or acronym in parentheses. You may use the abbreviation or acronym by itself on subsequent references. Use abbreviations and acronyms sparingly unless your readership is familiar with them. Also, be careful to avoid having too many abbreviations in one publication, resulting in alphabet soup.

*The Accelerated Learning Program (ALP) is in place at a number of schools. ALP has been credited with improving test scores.*

**PLURALS:** Plurals of abbreviations and acronyms are formed by adding an “s” without the apostrophe.  
*Students scored well on the SOLs this year.*

# STYLE GUIDE

**STATE NAMES:** Spell out the names of all 50 states when they stand alone in textual material. However, when they are paired with the name of a city, town or village, use the U.S. Postal Service format (two letters, no periods) to abbreviate.

*The administrative offices of Albemarle County Public Schools are located in Charlottesville, VA.*

Abbreviate the United States only when used as an adjective. Spell it out whenever it is used as a noun.

**MONTHS:** When a month is used with a specific date, abbreviate (Jan., Feb., Aug., Sept., Oct., Nov., and Dec.). Spell out when using alone or with only the year.

*January was a cold month. Jan. 2, 2006 was the coldest day of the year. Jan. 2 is my birthday. I began my new job in January 2006.*

## CAPITALIZATION

In general, avoid unnecessary capitalization. Official names and proper nouns are capitalized but the lowercase style for things such as job descriptions and unofficial department names is preferred for external communications.

<i>Capitalize</i>	<i>lowercase</i>
Albemarle County Public Schools	the school system
Albemarle County School Board	the board
The Instruction Department	the department
The Community Engagement Office	the office
Agnor-Hurt Elementary School	the school
Superintendent Pam Moran	the superintendent

### **Committee, Council, Group, Program and Initiatives:**

Capitalize only when part of the formal name; lowercase with informal use.

*The Superintendent's Executive Council made several recommendations. Several board committees will meet this week.*

*The Project Achieve initiative and the Accelerated Learning Program have been successful.*

**Course Names:** Generic course names and fields of study should be lowercase. However, you should capitalize the proper names of languages.

*She is taking biology, algebra and English this semester.*

**Department/Office Names:** Capitalize formal official department names and office names. Lowercase the department and the office when they stand alone and in plural uses, but capitalize the proper name element.

*The Transportation Department is responsible for the system's school buses. The Human Resources and Purchasing departments are working together on that project.*

**Directions and Regions:** Generally, you should lowercase north, south, southeast, etc. when they are referring to compass directions. However, you capitalize them when you are referring to regions or widely known sections of a city or state.

*The school is located in the western part of the county. Officials from the state will visit schools in North Raleigh.*

**General Assembly:** Capitalize when preceded by the name of the state or when the reference is specifically to the state's legislature.

*The Virginia General Assembly is still in session. The General Assembly voted against that bill.*

**Job and Position Titles:** Capitalize formal job titles only when they are used immediately before a name. Lowercase job titles when they are used alone or in constructions that set them off from a name by commas. Use lowercase at all times for terms that are job descriptions rather than formal titles.

*Superintendent Pamela Moran gave the opening remarks. Dr. Pamela Moran is the superintendent of Albemarle County Public Schools. The superintendent, Pamela Moran, is expected to attend the meeting. Pamela Moran, superintendent of the school system, will be our speaker.*

*When teacher Mary Smith entered the room, the students grew quiet.*

**Publication and Composition Titles:** Capitalize the first word and all principal words, including prepositions and conjunctions of four or more letters. Italicize the title rather than placing it within quotation marks.

*The class is reading The Wind in the Willows.*

**Seasons:** Lowercase all seasons, spring, summer, fall and winter, unless they are part of a formal name.

*Students on the year-round calendar begin school in the summer. The PTA is sponsoring its annual Winter Carnival at the school.*

**Students:** Do not capitalize freshman, sophomore, junior or senior unless they appear at the beginning of a sentence.

## COMMONLY MISUSED WORDS

**accept, except:** Accept means to receive; except means to exclude. The teacher accepted the present from her student. Everyone in the class except Tom participated in the discussion.

**affect, effect:** Affect as a verb means to influence.

*The test scores will affect the rankings.*

Effect as a verb means to cause.

*He will effect change in the school.*

Effect as a noun means result.

*The effect was overwhelming.*

It is best not to use affect as a noun.

**African-American:** ACPS recommends using the term African-American. For consistency, other common origins of ethnicity in America should be referred to in a similar fashion, for example: Asian-American, Native-American and European-American. It should be noted that the preferred term for those whose ethnic origin is in Africa is African-American. Black refers to people of color with ethnic origins outside Africa.

**all ready, already:** All ready means completely ready or everyone is ready. Already means previously.

**all right, alright:** There is no such word as alright; use all right.

**among, between:** Among is used with more than two items. Between is used with two items.

**because, since:** Because is used to denote a specific cause-effect relationship.

*He went to school because it is required by law.*

Since is used in a more casual sense when the first even led logically to the second event but was not the direct cause.

*They went to the game since they had tickets.*

**can, may, might:** Can suggests mental or physical ability. May implies permission or sanction.

*Tom can swim, but his mother says he may not.*

May also expresses possibility and wish.

*It may snow tonight.*

Might is used after a governing verb in the past tense; may after such a verb in the present tense.

*She said that we might go. She says that we may go.*

**capital, capitol:** Capitol refers to the building where legislatures normally meet. Capital refers to the city or town that serves as the seat of government. When used in a financial sense, capital refers to money, equipment or property used in a business.

**chair, chairman, chairwoman:** Chairman and chairwoman are acceptable when they refer to specific people. Otherwise, use chair.

**compose, comprise, consists of, include:** Compose means to create or put together.

*The United States is composed of 50 states.*

Comprise means to contain, to include all or embrace. It is best used only in the active voice, followed by a direct object.

*The United States comprises 50 states.*

Consist means that all parts are listed but include does not.

**daylong, yearlong:** One word without hyphens.

**drop out, dropout:** Drop out is a verb; dropout is a noun: He is planning to drop out of school. The number of dropouts has decreased.

**e-mail:** Use the hyphenated form, with the "e" lowercase unless it's at the start of a sentence.

**each:** Each implies "one".

**ensure, insure:** Ensure means to make certain.

*The school system is committed to ensuring that every child has a quality teacher.*

Insure means to guard against loss; use in references to insurance.

*Please insure this package.*

**every day, everyday:** Every day is an adverb; everyday is an adjective.

*She goes to school every day. She wears everyday clothes.*

**every one, everyone:** Use two words when referring to each individual item.

*Every one of the students was special.*

One word when using it as a pronoun referring to all persons.

*Everyone wants the system to reach its goal.*

**farther, further:** Farther refers to physical distance; further indicates additional degree, time or quantity.

*As you go farther, your ability to hear is further decreased.*

**fewer, less:** Fewer refers to individual items; less refers to bulk or quantity.

**grade, grader:** Hyphenate grade or grader when used as an adjective or a noun.

*third-grade student, 12th-grade student, she is in the fifth-grade*

**Hispanic, Latino:** The preferred term for those whose ethnic origin is in a Spanish-speaking country is Hispanic. Latino refers to people from a Latin American country. When possible, use a more specific identification such as Cuban or Puerto Rican.

**Internet, intranet:** the Internet is capitalized. Avoid including URLs that are particularly lengthy and complicated in documents, unless they are essential to guide the reader to a specific page. The intranet is lowercased and refers to a private network inside a company or organization for internal use.

**its, it's:** The possessive form of 'it' is its. Its is a possessive like his, her and your.

*Its value cannot be measured.*

It's is a contraction for it is or it has.

*It's normal for a contraction to require an apostrophe.*

**kids, children:** Use children.

**lay, lie:** Lay means to put or to place. This verb requires a direct object to complete its meaning.

*Please lay your test papers on the desk.*

Lie means to recline, rest, and stay or to take a position of rest. It refers to a person or thing as either assuming or being in a reclining position.

*Since he is sick, he is going to lie in bed all day.*

**more than, over:** More than should be used with numerals.

*There are more than 12,000 students in the system.*

Over generally refers to spatial relationships.

*The plane flew over the building.*

**Online:** One word in all cases for the computer connection term.

**principal, principle:** Principal is a noun and adjective meaning someone or something first in rank, authority, importance or degree.

*The principal is the head of the school. He is a principal player on the team.*

Principle is a noun that means fundamental truth, law, doctrine or motivating force.

*He acts according to the highest principles.*

**that, which:** That introduces an essential clause – one that specifically defines or limits a description and is necessary for full comprehension of a sentence. These clauses do not require a comma. Use that to introduce the clause if the sentence sounds or looks awkward without it. Which is best used to introduce a clause containing incidental or nonessential information. These clauses require a comma.

**their, there, they're:** Their is a possessive pronoun.

*They went to their house.*

There is an adverb that indicates direction.

*We went there for dinner.*

They're is a contraction for they are.

**toward, towards:** Use toward without the "s".

**Web:** The shortened form for World Wide Web is always capitalized; web page, website and webmaster are lowercase unless at the beginning of a sentence.

# STYLE GUIDE

**who, whom:** Use who and whom for references to humans and animals with names. Use that and which for references to inanimate objects and animals without names. Who is appropriate when someone is the subject of the sentence, clause or phrase.

*The student who won the contest goes to my school.*

Whom is correct when someone is the object of a verb or preposition.

*The student to whom the prize was awarded goes to my school.*

**who's whose:** Who's is a contraction for who is. Whose is the possessive.

**-wide:** Countywide, systemwide, statewide, districtwide and schoolwide are all spelled as one word without hyphens.

## NUMBERS

Generally, spell out numbers under 10. Use figures for 10 and higher, unless the number is at the beginning of a sentence. In those cases, spell out the number, using a hyphen to connect the word ending in "y" to another spelled out number. For large numbers, do not use commas to separate words that are part of one number. In cases where a sentence starts with a large number, it may be better to recast the sentence to avoid having to spell out the number. Spell out casual uses such as thousands of students attended.

*Mr. Moore had nine students in his class.*

*Mrs. Smith had 23 students in her class.*

*Thirty-six students attended the session.*

*One-hundred forty-three students signed up for the course.*

*A total of 143 students signed up for the course.*

For ordinals, spell out first through ninth. Use figures starting with 10th.

*He is a first-grader, she is a fourth-grade student, he is in the 11th grade, and she is a 12th-grade student.*

**Ages:** Always use figures. Ages expressed as adjectives before a noun or as a substitute for a noun use hyphens.

*A 5-year-old boy, the 5-year-old read a book, the boy is 5 years old.*

**Dates and Year Notations:** Always use Arabic figures, without st, nd, rd or th.

*The fair starts Oct. 1, 2006. He will be performing Oct. 2-3.*

For years, always use figures, and use an "s" without an apostrophe to indicate spans of decades or centuries: *the 1990s*. For school years, use the 2006-07 school year, not '06-'07. However, the shortened form with the apostrophe is appropriate when referring to a specific year such as *the Class of '06*.

**Fractions:** Spell out numbers less than one in running text, using hyphens between the words. Use figures for precise numbers greater than one, converting to decimals whenever practical:

*One-third of the student body voted in favor of the measure.*

*She had to walk 2.5 miles during her P.E. class.*

**Percentages:** In running text, use figures and spell out the word percent. Also, use decimals, rather than fractions. For amounts less than 1 percent, precede the decimal with a zero. The percent symbol, %, may be used in charts.

*Only 1 percent of the students surveyed agreed with that statement, while 10.5 percent said they were unsure.*

*Out of the total school population, 0.6 percent are Native American.*

**Time:** Use figures with a lowercase a.m. or p.m. rather than writing out "o'clock." The exception to the use of figures is with noon and midnight. Use a colon to separate the hour from the minutes; however, do not use a colon and zeroes to specify an hour. Also, avoid such redundancies as 9 a.m. in the morning.

*The meeting starts at 3 p.m. The school day begins at 7:30 a.m.*

*Lunch is served at noon.*

## PUNCTUATION

Following are just a few reminders about the more common punctuation and spacing mistakes.

**Ampersand:** The ampersand (&) should not be used in



place of and. Only use the ampersand when it is part of a company's formal name or if it is used as a graphic element in a publication.

## Apostrophes:

**Possessives:** Plural nouns not ending in s, add 's: women's rights. Plural nouns ending in s, add only an apostrophe: the students' books. Nouns plural in form, but singular in meaning, add only an apostrophe: *mathematics' rules*. Nouns the same singular and plural, treat them the same as plurals: *the two deer's tracks, the lone moose's antlers*. Singular nouns not ending in s, add 's: the teacher's desk. Singular common nouns ending in s, add 's unless the next word begins with s: *the hostess's invitation, the hostess' seat*. Singular proper names ending in s, use only an apostrophe: *Jones' house, Dickens' novel*.

**Plurals of a single letter:** Add an 's. Do not use as an apostrophe for plurals of numbers or multiple-letter combinations.

*Mind you p's and q's.*

*She is a product of the 1980s.*

*He scored well on his SOLs.*

**Colon:** The most frequent use of a colon is at the end of a sentence to introduce lists, tabulations, texts, etc. The first word after the colon should be lowercase. Capitalize the first word after a colon only if it is a proper noun or the start of a complete sentence. Do not double space after colons.

*Proficiency tests are given in four grades: fourth, sixth, ninth and 12th.*

## Commas:

**In a series:** Use commas to separate items in a series, but do not put a comma before the conjunction in a simple series. Put a comma before the concluding conjunction when an element in the series requires its own conjunction and in a complex series of phrases.

*The flag is red, white and blue.*

*The parks and recreation supervisors, the mayor, and the city manager all agree.*

*The athletes must show that they are skillful enough to compete, they have the stamina to endure training, and they have the proper attitude.*

**With conjunctions:** When a conjunction such as *and*, *but* or *for* links two clauses that could stand alone as separate sentences, use a comma before the conjunction.

*The superintendent will visit the school, and the assistant superintendent will go to the meeting.*

*The students in her class did well on the test, but the rest of the school did not.*

**Dash (—):** Use dashes to denote an abrupt change in thought in a sentence or an emphatic pause. When a phrase that otherwise would be set off by commas contains a series of words that must be separated by commas, use dashes to set off the full phrase.

*The scores for the proficiency tests—fourth, sixth, ninth and 12th grade—improved in 2006.*

**Periods:** Use a single space after periods and other forms of punctuation that end sentences, questions, etc. Also, use only one period if an abbreviated word ends a sentence.

**Semicolons:** In general, semicolons are used to indicate greater separation of thought and information than a comma but less than a period.

**To clarify a series:** Use semicolons to separate elements of a series when individual segments contain material that also must be set off by commas.

*Agnor-Hurt, Baker-Butler and Broadus Wood elementary schools; Burley and Henley middle schools; and Albemarle, Monticello and Western Albemarle high schools will participate.*

**To link independent clauses:** Use a semicolon when a coordinating conjunction such as *and*, *but* or *for* is not present.

*The package was due last week; it arrived today.*

If a coordinating conjunction is present, use a semicolon before it only if extensive punctuation is required in one or more of the clauses.

*They attended class everyday, took good notes, and did their homework each night; but they still did not do well on the test.*

*Adapted from the Wake County Public School System Communications Standards Manual and the Associated Press Style book.*

# NEWS RELEASES & MEDIA ADVISORIES

News releases and media advisories are tools for communicating with the media.

The majority of news releases and media advisories about Albemarle County Public Schools (ACPS) will be written and released by the division communications coordinator through the Community Engagement Office. However, there are instances when it's appropriate for an individual school to issue its own news releases or media advisories. These instances would include publicizing an upcoming event at an individual school or when a news release request is time-sensitive and was not provided to the division communications coordinator at least four days prior to your desired distribution date.

If you have questions on whether you should issue your own news releases or media advisories, please call the division communications coordinator at 972-4049. If you send a news release or media advisory directly from your school to the media, be sure to send a copy at the same time to the division communications coordinator in the Community Engagement Office. The division communications coordinator will share your news release or media advisory with the superintendent and School Board, and place it in the division's website.

Local media publication and broadcast schedules vary. You can call the media outlet directly to determine the best timing to send your news release or media advisory. In general, weekly publications should receive your news releases or media advisories several weeks in advance. For daily newspapers, television stations and radio, send three to seven days in advance, when possible.

Electronic templates for news releases and media advisories are available from the division communications coordinator at (434) 972-4049. A current directory of local media can be obtained from the website or by calling the division communications coordinator at (434) 972-4049.

## NEWS RELEASE/MEDIA ADVISORY GUIDELINES

A **news release** can be effective in convincing news editors and directors to cover your news tip. A news release should provide a reporter every piece of information he or she needs to write or broadcast a story about your news tip. A news release should include background information and quotes to add a personal touch and credibility. The media expects to receive news releases written in a definite format. A news release should be written like a brief article in your daily newspaper. They should be used to announce significant, actual news. Appropriate topics for news releases include:

- Major School Board decisions or new initiatives
- Student, staff or school awards
- Division or school activities with major community partners
- First-time, schoolwide or divisionwide events
- Programs unique to a specific school

**Media advisories** can be used to announce upcoming events you would like the media to cover. Media advisories are shorter than news releases, usually only one or two paragraphs. A media advisory should include:

- A very brief description of the event
- The time, date and location of the event
- A contact name and number for more information

## GUIDELINES

- All news releases and media advisories, which will be hand delivered, mailed, e-mailed, or faxed must be issued using the official ACPS templates.
- Be sure to date the release and provide a contact name and number in the space provided in the templates.
- All news releases and media advisories should begin with a headline at the top of the page that is centered in 14 point bold Palatino Linotype, italicized and underlined.

# NEWS RELEASES & MEDIA ADVISORIES

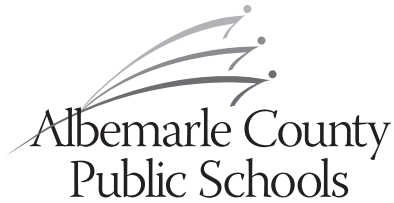
- All text in the body of the news release or media advisory should be in Palatino Linotype in 11-12 point type.
- All paragraphs should be flush left with no indentation at the beginning. Line spacing is single with double spaces between paragraphs
- If the news release is longer than one page, indicate this by centering -MORE- at the end of the first page. Media advisories are only one or two paragraphs and do not extend to two pages.
- To signal the end of a news release or media advisory, center three number symbols, ###, on the last line of the release.
- Keep it to one page whenever possible, don't go beyond two pages.
- Include a contact name and phone number so reporters can get more information.

## TIPS FOR WRITING EFFECTIVE NEWS RELEASES

A well-written news release should read like a brief article in your daily newspaper.

- Answer the questions of who, what, when, where, why and how in the first few paragraphs.
- Use the inverted pyramid style, putting the most important information at the beginning of the news release and the least important information at the end.
- Be brief.
- Write in the active style. Describe the topic briefly but in enough detail that the reporter will be able to picture it.
- Avoid education jargon. Always spell out acronyms.
- Identify people by their titles, first and last names.
- Leave personal opinions out unless they are included as a quote.

## NEWS RELEASE SAMPLE



Community Engagement Office  
401 McIntire Road, Room 341  
Charlottesville, Virginia 22902-4596  
Phone: (434) 972-4049 Fax: (434) 872-4564  
www.k12albemarle.org

### NEWS RELEASE

DATE:

CONTACT: (Name)  
(Title)

PHONE: (Area Code + Number)

#### *Headline – 14-pt., bold, underlined, italicized*

(ALBEMARLE COUNTY, Virginia) – Answer the questions of who, what, when, where, why and how in the first two paragraphs. Write in the “inverted pyramid style” by putting the most important information at the beginning of the news release and the least important information at the end. All text in the body of the news release should be in Palatino Linotype 11- or 12-point type.

Paragraphs should be flush left with no indentation at the beginning. Line spacing is single with double spaces between paragraphs. To signal that a news release is continuing or ending, use one of the symbols below. Place the symbol two lines below the last paragraph of the news release, centered and in bold:

**-MORE-**

If news release continues to a second page

**###**

If signaling the end of a news release

## MEDIA ADVISORY SAMPLE



Community Engagement Office  
401 McIntire Road, Room 341  
Charlottesville, Virginia 22902-4596  
Phone: (434) 972-4049 Fax: (434) 872-4564  
www.k12albemarle.org

### MEDIA ADVISORY

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DATE:

CONTACT: (Name)  
(Title)

PHONE: (Area Code + Number)

**Headline – 14-pt., bold, underlined, italicized**

WHAT: <Title of event>

WHEN: <Date, time>

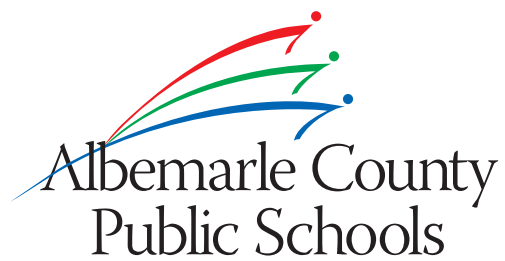
WHERE: <Location – be as specific as possible>

WHO: <Who is participating, sponsoring event>

HOW: <Description of event or key details in two or three short sentences>

###





**Community Engagement Office**

401 McIntire Road, Room 341

Charlottesville, VA 22902

(434) 972-4049

[www.k12albemarle.org](http://www.k12albemarle.org)

July 2006