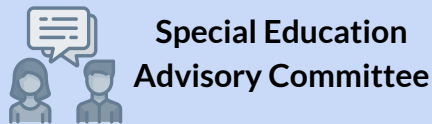


April 2021

Albemarle County Parent Resource Center is a local effort to link families, schools and communities together to better support children with disabilities in the school setting. The Albemarle County Parent Resource Center has a goal of fostering a positive relationship between parents and schools in an effort to assist parents with questions and planning, as well as through the provision of resources and training. The Parent Resource Center is being operated by Michael Armstrong for the 2020-2021 School Year.

The Parent Resource Center is located at Albemarle County Public Schools, Department of Special Education, 401 McIntire Rd., Room 323, Charlottesville, VA 22902. You can contact the Parent Resource Center at (434) 296-5885 or by email at [SPEDHELP@k12albemarle.org](mailto:SPEDHELP@k12albemarle.org).



## Special Education Advisory Committee

Next meeting:

Tuesday, April 13, 2021

7:00 PM - 9:00 PM

[Online Live Streaming](#)

## Moving Up: Best Practices for Transitioning to the Next Grade

**April 20, 2021 7:00 - 8:00 PM**

This session provides some of the best practices employed by staff that have resulted in successful student transitions to the next grade (i.e. Pk to Kindergarten, Elementary to Middle, Middle to High school).

Time will be allocated for Questions and Answers.

Registration required

[Click here to register](#)

or call (434) 296-5885.

## In the News...

### PRC & JMRL Team Up!

Albemarle County Public Schools' Parent Resource Center in collaboration with the Jefferson Madison Regional Library (JMRL) is excited to announce the creation of the Parent Resource Center's Special Book Collection available free to families at any of the JMRL Branches. This special collection



is made up of book titles on topics related to individuals with disabilities and their families. The collection is specially designed for parents, providing educational books for those wanting to learn more about specific disabilities. The collection also includes titles for younger readers that promote inclusion and the celebration of diversity.

In the past, parent resource centers typically set up their lending libraries in a central location that was convenient for the Resource Center, but not always for parents. Parents typically were expected to travel to a single location to make use of those materials. The Albemarle County Public Schools' Parent Resource Center wanted to make resources available that were located closer to where the kids and their families live. We could think of no better place to facilitate access to resources than our neighborhood public library system. Collaborating with the Jefferson Madison Regional Library has enabled the Parent Resource to take the next step toward modernizing what we believe a parent resource center should be; an active and present part of our community.

*Story Continues on Page 2*



"They say that April showers bring May flowers, well this month's PRC Newsletter is raining down on our community with some very exciting news, sure to make readers of all ages bloom! I'm talking about the Special Book collection now available for checkout at all JMRL branches. The story of what it is, and how it came to be, is our featured story this month. We also have a timely article about 'Moving Up', and another highlighting the benefits of Yoga upon your student." - Michael Armstrong, Parent Resource Center

## PRC & JMRL Team Up!... continued from Page 1

In an effort to make this wonderful resource available to children with disabilities and their families, the Jefferson Madison Regional Library (JMRL) has agreed to include the special collection titles in the online catalog and make them available to any community member with a JMRL library card. If a title of interest to you isn't available at your nearest branch, simply request to pick it up at the location convenient for you and JMRL will make the necessary arrangements.

The Special Collection was born out of the Parent Resource Center's desire to have a deeper connection to the community that it serves. A desire to have a far-reaching impact, by not only serving the parents of Albemarle County, but by also being a resource to parents who live in adjoining communities. To accomplish this, it seemed like a "no brainer" to work in collaboration with other established agencies in the area, and who better to combine resources with than JMRL, with its vast reach into the surrounding counties. We feel that this collaboration will deliver the greatest benefit to the largest number of people, and thanks to David Plunkett, and the dedicated staff at Jefferson Madison Regional Library, the Special Collection has become a reality.

The community at large is the very reason that institutions like Albemarle County Public Schools and Jefferson Madison Regional Library are in existence. You are our stakeholders, you are who we serve. Thereby, nothing is more important to the Parent Resource Center than allowing you, the stakeholder, to have a say in what amenities you find significant. Our underlying goal is to make this special collection a valuable resource, and we have plans to keep expanding the collection. So, if there is a specific book title or topic that you'd like to see given consideration for inclusion in the special collection, we want to hear from you. Please share your ideas with Michael Armstrong at (434) 296-5885 or by sending an email to [SPEDHELP@k12albemarle.org](mailto:SPEDHELP@k12albemarle.org).



## THE COLLECTION OF BOOKS



ACPS Parent Resource Center and the Jefferson Madison Regional Library strive to make this special collection accessible to all. We've worked with JMRL to purchase titles in accessible formats that include audiobooks, ebooks, large print, and multilingual versions of the resources in our collection, whenever available. A few of the titles have already shown up on

JMRL's "new arrivals" list, and folks have been asking about them. It's clear that these books will find an audience and be an asset to our families in our community. Interested in seeing the books in the collection?

The following link/catalog search takes you to directly to the list of all of the titles:

<https://hestia.jmrl.org/findit/Tag/Home?lookfor=acps+parent+resource+center>

## LIBRARY CARD

Did you know... Anyone with a JMRL library card can place a hold to pick up a book at whichever branch is most convenient. Don't have a JMRL card? No worries. You can sign up online for a free public library card and get instant access to all of JMRL's electronic resources and ebooks by using the following link:

<https://hestia.jmrl.org/onlinecardregistration/>



## LIBRARY BRANCH LOCATIONS

<a href="#">Bookmobile</a>	<a href="#">Gordon</a>	<a href="#">Nelson</a>
<a href="#">Central</a>	<a href="#">Greene</a>	<a href="#">Northside</a>
<a href="#">Crozet</a>	<a href="#">Louisa</a>	<a href="#">Scottsville</a>

## Helping Students With Autism Transition Into a New School Year

Parents and teachers can minimize the stress with some joint prep before school starts.

By Elizabeth W. Barnes

Originally published 7/19/17 - © Edutopia.org; George Lucas Educational Foundation

When my son was an elementary student, he struggled with transitioning into a new class at the beginning of each school year. It could take him weeks to get used to a new classroom and curriculum, and sometimes months to develop a trusting relationship with his new teacher. Over time we discovered some tactics to make the change easier for him, helping him develop a relationship with his new teacher more quickly and transition into a new classroom and curriculum more smoothly.



### TRANSITIONING TO A NEW TEACHER

In his early elementary years, it would take my son up to six months before he was comfortable with and able to trust his new teacher. To shorten that time, we worked with the school to introduce him to his new teacher before the start of the school year. Our ideal approach was to have my son meet his new teacher before the end of the previous year so that he had the summer to get used to him or her.

That was not always possible, however, so some years we met a few days before the school year started. We wanted to ensure this meeting happened before the the first day of school when he was also processing all the stimuli of a new classroom, in addition to the social weight of being there with other students. We learned that this opportunity to meet the teacher before school started helped him develop a relationship and trust much faster.

### TRANSITIONING TO A NEW CLASSROOM

Similarly, it was helpful if my son could visit his new classroom prior to the end of the previous year if possible, or if not at least a few days before the new school year started. A classroom visit was an opportunity for him to get used to the sight, sounds, feel, and even smells of a new classroom without the pressure of focusing on the lesson or on social issues at the same time.

I took the opportunity to review the classroom for issues that I had learned might cause problems for my son. For example, if his desk or storage cubby was too close to the classroom door, it caused him stress during transitional times of the day when students rushed in and out. I talked to his teacher about placing his desk in a location where he could stim (or make repetitive body movements that helped him manage stress) without disturbing others; where he would not be distracted by noise from the hallway or playground; and where he was close enough to the teacher to engage with him or her and refocus as needed throughout the day.

I found the best approach was to take a step-by-step walk through the day with the teacher, and together envision things that might come up. This allowed us to make changes that day, rather than make changes on the fly after the school year started and after my son was experiencing stress.

### TRANSITIONING TO NEW CURRICULUM

We would also request a meeting early in the new year with the new teacher to go over his individualized education program (IEP) accommodations and ensure that we were all on the same page. We made sure the new teacher, my son's speech or special education teachers, and his case manager were there, as well as his previous year's teacher, if possible.

In these meetings, we took the opportunity to talk with his new teacher and his previous teacher about my son's strengths and challenges in the classroom. We also discussed the lessons learned and creative approaches previous teachers had used that were successful. We would focus on his areas of growth and how to nurture them, challenging behaviors and how to manage them, and what worked and didn't work the previous year and why.

Depending on staff availability, this meeting could be held at the same time he was introduced to his new teacher and classroom as mentioned above, or it could be a separate meeting after the school year had started. It did not have to be an official IEP meeting, and we would work with the school to set it up as needed.

### A SMOOTHER TRANSITION

Helping my son transition into a new school year required coordinating with his school and new teacher before the start of the school year. By introducing him to his new teacher and classroom, and doing a little preparation with school staff around his IEP and curriculum, we found that his transition was much smoother and more successful for both him and his teacher.

## The Benefits of Yoga Upon Your Student

The purpose of yoga is to build strength, awareness, and harmony in both mind and body. Some of the physical benefits of yoga include: increased flexibility, increased muscle strength, improved energy, weight reduction, cardio health.

Aside from the physical benefits, one of the biggest benefits of yoga is how it helps a person manage stress, which can have devastating effects on the body and mind. Stress can reveal itself in many ways, including neck and back pain, sleeping problems, headaches, drug abuse, and an inability to focus. Yoga can be very effective in developing coping skills and a positive outlook on life. Incorporating regular yoga practice into your life creates mental clarity, calmness, and sharpens one's concentration.

The following "Yoga at Home" PDF's were created by Haleigh Brown, an Occupational Therapist Intern with Albemarle County Public Schools, to highlight some ways parents can incorporate yoga into their children's daily routines. Haleigh also created the "Yoga at School" PDF's for teachers to consider using in their classrooms.



### RESOURCES

<a href="#"><u>Yoga at Home for Elementary Students</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Yoga at Home for Middle School Student</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Yoga at Home for High School Students</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>Yoga at School Elem. Students</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Yoga at School Middle School Students</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Yoga at School High School Students</u></a>

## PARENT RESOURCE CENTER PRESENTS...

Parent educational opportunities presented locally, both live and recorded.

**April 20, 2021**

**7:00 - 8:00 PM**

**"Moving Up: Best Practices for Transitioning to the Next Grade"**

**Presented by Valerie Parks, Special Education Coordinator**

This session provides some of the best practices employed by staff that have resulted in successful student transitions to the next grade (i.e. Pk to Kindergarten, Elementary to Middle, Middle to High school). Examples, as well as cases will be shared, as will tools and practices used in the division. Time will be allocated for Questions and Answers as part of the session.

**Registration:** <https://forms.gle/nS4D2DxMWndY5hPX8>

### RECORDING ARCHIVES:



**["Snap and Read: Support for Parents Helping Their Children"](#)**

Text to Speech Assistive Technology on every ACPS Laptop!  
(Recorded Jan. 2021)



**["CO-WRITER: Speech to Text Support for Parents Helping Their Children"](#)**

Supportive assistive technology to help kids with the writing process.  
(Recorded Feb. 2021)



### Non-Discrimination Statement

Albemarle County Public Schools does not discriminate on the basis of sex, gender, race, color, national origin, disability, religion, ancestry, age, marital status, genetic information, or any other characteristic protected by law in its programs and activities, and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts of America, the Girl Scouts of the USA, and other designated youth groups.



**Contact:** (434) 296-5885



**Email:** SPEDHELP@k12albemarle.org



**Website:** <https://www.k12albemarle.org/our-departments/special-education/prc>