

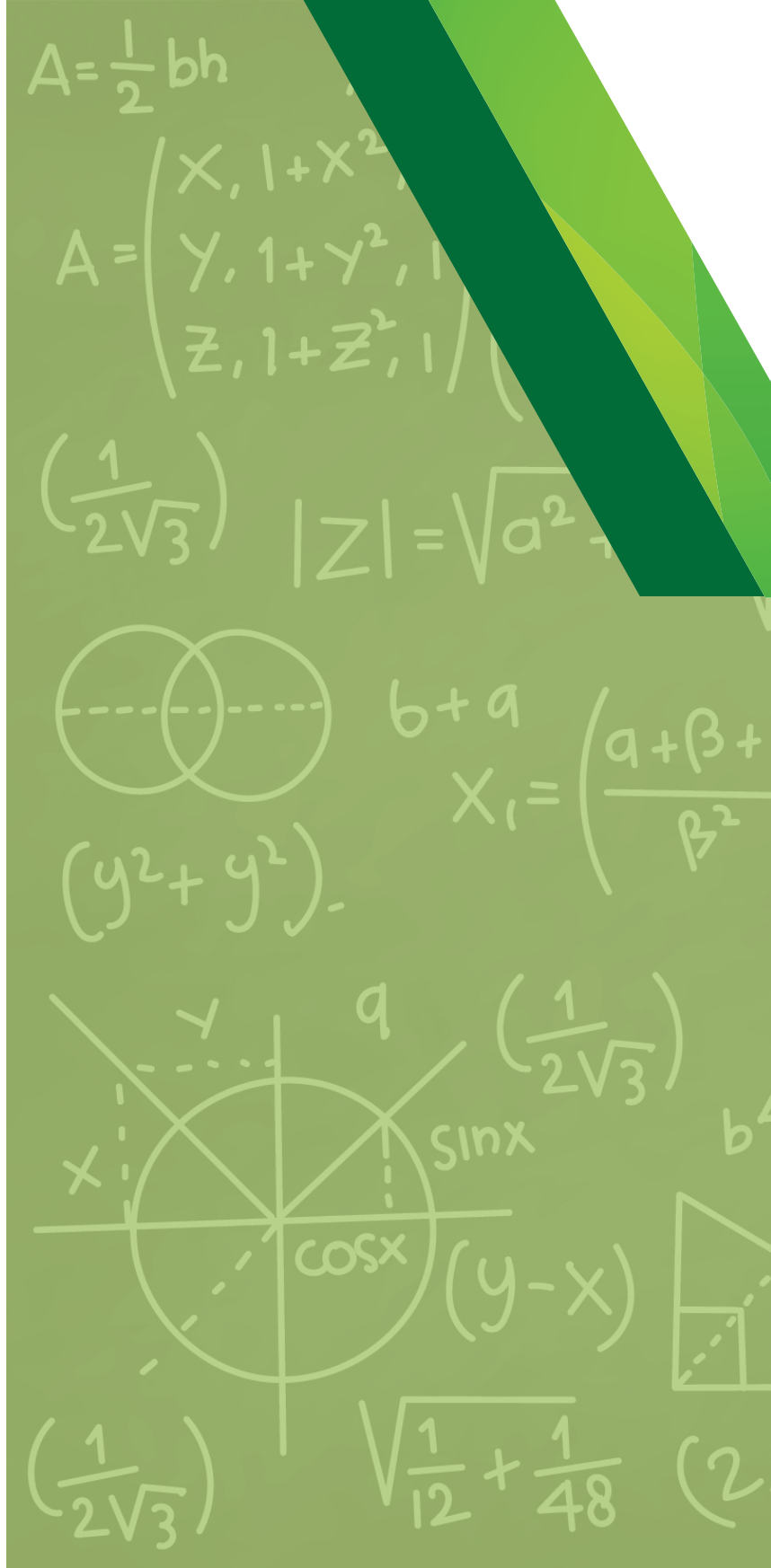


# MIDDLE SCHOOL PROGRAM GUIDE

Providing all students with the opportunity  
to explore brave environments

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# The Mission of Middle School

The Albemarle County Public Schools Middle School Program Guide presents a general overview of the county's middle school program. Specific information about individual schools and their policies is contained in each school's Parent/Student Handbook.

The middle school is the center of the K-12 continuum. It is distinct from the elementary and high school experience and uniquely designed to support the complex stage of human development for students aged 10 to 14.

The goal of Albemarle County middle schools is to provide early adolescent students with equitable and developmentally appropriate learning experiences grounded in networks of care and curiosity, which encourage engagement in their own learning, respects and champions diverse life experiences, supports student health and wellness, and propels students to thrive in high school and beyond.

In order to reach this goal, Albemarle County has articulated five foundational tenets about effective middle school education and has developed an integrated program that reflects these beliefs.

## All Albemarle County Middle Schools:

1. Are intentionally designed learning environments that facilitate transitions and supports the unique nature of the middle school student's social, emotional, physical and academic growth,
2. Provide students varied choices and opportunities to explore and discover their talents and interests,
3. Guarantee opportunities for all students to acquire the knowledge, skills, and understandings in order to build confident, independent learners prepared for life-long learning,
4. Purposefully integrate a variety of instructional configurations to capitalize on the socially-constructed nature of learning and allow for productive struggle and challenge, and
5. Create brave environments that encourage students to take risks, discover and appreciate who they are, what they may become, and how they may contribute to our society.

# Students as Learners

As community members, students have responsibilities and obligations. Albemarle County middle schools expect that students will do the following:

- Become actively involved in their education.
- Comply with school rules and School Board regulations.
- Treat all students and staff with respect.
- Participate positively as members of the school community.

# Families as Partners

Families are an important part of the school community and are encouraged to participate in their child's education in the following ways:

- Promote daily attendance.
- Encourage their child to do their best every day, complete assignments, and be prepared.
- Provide a time and place for their child to complete homework and review assignments.
- Call their child's teacher/counselor if they have any concerns.
- Attend parent conferences, open houses, and other school activities.
- Participate in parent organizations, such as PTO, and volunteer for school activities.

# Communication

Communication is a vital aspect of the Albemarle County Middle School Program.

Classroom issues are best resolved through parent-teacher communication. Also, school counselors are available to assist with individual parent concerns. If parents have already brought a concern to the attention of the teacher or counselor and still have concerns, they should contact the school administrator.

Schools use some combination of the following to ensure effective communication:

- Open house and parent orientation meetings
- Individual conferences
- Interpreters in world languages
- School newsletters
- BrightArrow
- School web pages
- Team/department and classroom communications
- Interim grade reports
- Report cards
- Telephone
- Letters
- Monthly calendars
- ParentPortal
- Schoology
- School Planners

# School Counseling

Albemarle County middle schools provide a comprehensive, developmental school counseling program that assists all students in acquiring the skills, knowledge and attitudes needed to become effective students, responsible citizens, productive workers, and lifelong learners. The school counseling program supports the school's academic mission by promoting and enhancing the learning process for all students through an integration of academic, career and personal/social development.

The school counseling program is an integral part of the total educational process and a shared responsibility of the entire school community. The professional school counselor collaborates with other school professionals in helping students learn. A successful program requires the support and participation of all school personnel, families, outside agencies, and the community at large.

## Additional Resource

### School Counseling



# Social-Emotional Learning

Albemarle County Middle Schools provide daily opportunities for students to connect with their grade level peers in advisory. This time together is designed to support the whole child by building skills that afford students to become the best versions of themselves, both as individuals and as citizens of school and larger communities. The goals of advisory include: (1) help students develop social skills, and (2) help students feel connected, empowered, and safe to take academic risks so that students engage more with one another and their learning. As students begin to develop a community within their classroom, they will be able to utilize skills taught to engage in the larger school community throughout the day.

ACPS utilizes the Framework from CASEL to address social emotional learning for students.



# Middle School Program Overview

## Required Courses

| Grade 6                       | Grade 7                       | Grade 8                       |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Language Arts                 | Language Arts                 | Language Arts                 |
| Social Studies                | Social Studies                | Social Studies                |
| Health and Physical Education | Health and Physical Education | Health and Physical Education |
| Mathematics                   | Mathematics                   | Mathematics                   |
| General Science               | Life Science                  | Physical Science              |

## Exploratories

Exploratory classes are an integral part of middle school curriculum, providing students with different ways to view the world while complementing academic core offerings. Albemarle County middle schools offer three exploratory strands: World Languages, Career and Technical Education, and Visual and Performing Arts. All students are encouraged to participate in at least one exploratory experience in each strand during their middle school years.

Additional exploratories, including independent study, may be offered at each middle school based on the talents and interests of the students and faculty and staffing availability.

*Note: Students with additional academic needs may participate in intervention courses in lieu of one or more electives.*

# Curriculum

The Albemarle County middle school curriculum provides a transitional experience for the student between the elementary and secondary years. An effective middle school curriculum that ensures success has the following characteristics:

- A common core of basic skills in all subject areas
- An integrated curriculum that facilitates learning connections
- Physical education and health
- Exploratories

The middle school curriculum includes instruction in the core areas of language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, physical education, and health. Exploratory programs include opportunities for instruction in World Languages, Career and Technical Education, and Visual and Performing Arts.

The Commonwealth of Virginia tests all middle school students in grades six, seven and eight on the Standards of Learning (SOL) in English and mathematics. The state also tests students in grade eight on the SOL in science, civics and writing. In addition, students participating in Algebra I or Geometry take an end-of-course SOL test that may result in a verified high school credit.

## Possible Middle School Mathematics Pathways

| 6th Grade                     | 7th Grade                  | 8th Grade                              |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------|--|
| Math 6 or<br>Math 6 Compacted | Mathematics 7<br>Algebra 1 | Mathematics 8<br>Algebra 1<br>Geometry |

## Virginia Standards of Learning Tests for Middle School Grades

|                | 6th Grade | 7th Grade | 8th Grade |
|----------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Reading        | X         | X         | X         |
| Writing        |           |           | X         |
| Mathematics    | X         | X         | X         |
| Social Studies |           |           | X         |
| Science        |           |           | X         |

# Schedules

Albemarle County middle schools use modified block schedules. Students attend classes in approximately 82-minute blocks on alternating days. Below is a schedule for a typical sixth-grader.

## 6th Grade Sample Schedule

| Advisory (45 Minutes)     |                     |
|---------------------------|---------------------|
| 1A - Language Arts        | 1B - Language Arts  |
| 2A - Math 6               | 2B - Math 6         |
| Lunch/Recess (30 Minutes) |                     |
| 3A - Science              | 3B - Social Studies |
| 4A - Health/PE            | 4B - Exploratories  |

## 6th Grade Exploratory Rotations

The following will be offered as choices at all Middle Schools in addition to any other school based options.

### Option 1

9-week rotations: All students will take Career Investigations. The remaining exploratories are student choice.

|                  |                       |
|------------------|-----------------------|
| <b>Quarter 1</b> | Career Investigations |
| <b>Quarter 2</b> | Student Choice        |
| <b>Quarter 3</b> | Student Choice        |
| <b>Quarter 4</b> | Student Choice        |

### Option 2

Year-long selection

|             |                                    |
|-------------|------------------------------------|
| <b>Year</b> | AVID<br>Choir<br>Orchestra<br>Band |
|-------------|------------------------------------|



# Schedules

Albemarle County middle schools use modified block schedules. Students attend classes in approximately 82-minute blocks on alternating days. Below is a schedule for a typical seventh- or eighth-grader.

## 7th Grade Sample Schedule

Student in Math 7

| Advisory (45 Minutes)     |                            |
|---------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1A - Language Arts        | 1B - Language Arts         |
| 2A - Math 7               | 2B - Math 7, Exploratories |
| Lunch/Recess (30 Minutes) |                            |
| 3A - Science              | 3B - Social Studies        |
| 4A - Health/PE            | 4B - Exploratories         |

## 8th Grade Sample Schedule

Student in Algebra 1

| Advisory (45 Minutes)     |                     |
|---------------------------|---------------------|
| 1A - Exploratories        | 1B - Language Arts  |
| 2A - Algebra 1            | 2B - Exploratories  |
| Lunch/Recess (30 Minutes) |                     |
| 3A - Science              | 3B - Social Studies |
| 4A - Health/PE            | 4B - Exploratories  |

Find student options for exploratories at [k12albemarle.org/msguide](http://k12albemarle.org/msguide).

# Homework

Homework may be assigned in accordance to **School Board Policy IKB, Homework**, to meet students' needs and to enhance the quality of the curriculum taught in the classroom. Assignments should be carefully planned among core teachers so that students are not given excessive amounts of homework. It is recommended that students spend 60 to 80 minutes on average per night for all subjects combined.

# Prevention, Intervention, and Remediation

The Standards of Quality require the local School Board to provide programs for prevention, intervention or remediation for students who are educationally at risk. Students who are achieving significantly below grade level may be required to attend math and/or reading intervention programs during their exploratory time frame.

**Programs for prevention, intervention, and remediation include, but are not limited to, the following:**

Summer school

Response to Intervention (RTI) programs

Tutorial programs

# Grading

| Grading Scale |        |
|---------------|--------|
| <b>A</b>      | 90-100 |
| <b>B</b>      | 80-89  |
| <b>C</b>      | 70-79  |
| <b>D</b>      | 60-69  |
| <b>F</b>      | 50-59  |

Grading practices must follow the guidelines provided in the **School Board Policy IKBA, Grading Policy**, in order to ensure equitable grading practices that encourage and support student learning. Grades (grading) are the representation of student achievement and should accurately represent a student's mastery of course standards. The purpose of a grade is to communicate student achievement at a point in time. Grades will be accurate, supportive of student learning, and consistent.

# Activities and Interest

Each middle school builds time into the school day that encourages student participation in a wide variety of activities that are not normally taught in the curriculum. This provides an opportunity for community members and staff to share their expertise, interests and hobbies, and to interact with students in a non-academic setting. During this time period, students participate in clubs, intramurals, and/or planned activities.

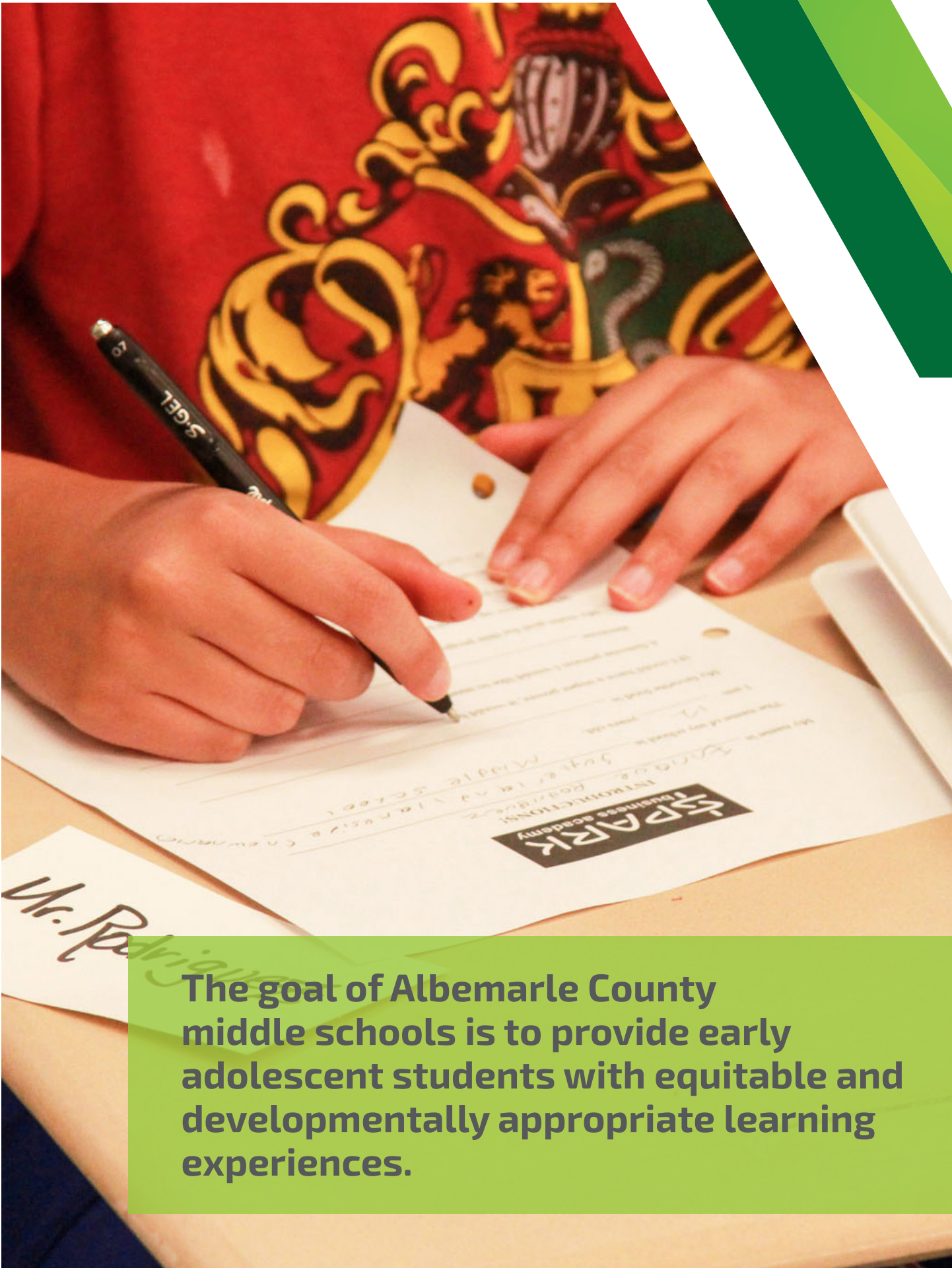
## After-School Sports and Activities

The Albemarle County Parks and Recreation Department sponsors the Middle School Sports Program, a recreational program for all abilities, at all middle schools. The purpose of the program is to provide an active, organized and fun activity for students after school hours. The program consists of a variety of sport activities for girls and boys. Students learn the rules and skills of each sport, as well as participate in game situations. Games are played within each school and with the other middle schools. For information about this program, please contact the **Albemarle County Parks and Recreation Department at (434) 296-5844.**

## Working Together

| Questions About... | Call or Email...               |
|--------------------|--------------------------------|
| Discipline         | Administration                 |
| ESOL               | International & ESOL Office    |
| Grouping           | Counselor                      |
| Scheduling         | Counselor                      |
| Attendance         | Office Associate/<br>Counselor |

| Questions About...         | Call or Email...          |
|----------------------------|---------------------------|
| Academic Concerns          | Teacher                   |
| Special Education Services | Special Education Teacher |
| Peer Relations             | Counselor                 |
| General Questions          | Office Associate          |
| Homework                   | Teacher                   |



The goal of Albemarle County middle schools is to provide early adolescent students with equitable and developmentally appropriate learning experiences.

# Other Resources

For the most up-to-date information on other school resources offered at the middle school level, please visit the following webpages:

## Special Education Services

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



## English for Speakers of Other Languages

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



## Talent Development

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



## School Nurse

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



# Directory

## Jackson P. Burley Middle School

901 Rose Hill Drive  
Charlottesville, VA 22903  
Office: (434) 295-5101  
School Counseling: (434) 295-5102  
Fax: (434) 984-4975

## Joseph T. Henley Middle School

5880 Rockfish Gap Turnpike  
Charlottesville, VA 22932  
Office: (434) 823-4393  
School Counseling: (434) 823-5040  
Fax: (434) 823-2711

## Journey Middle School

210 Lambs Lane  
Charlottesville, VA 22901  
Office: (434) 975-9320  
School Counseling: (434) 975-9321  
Fax: (434) 975-9322

## Lakeside Middle School

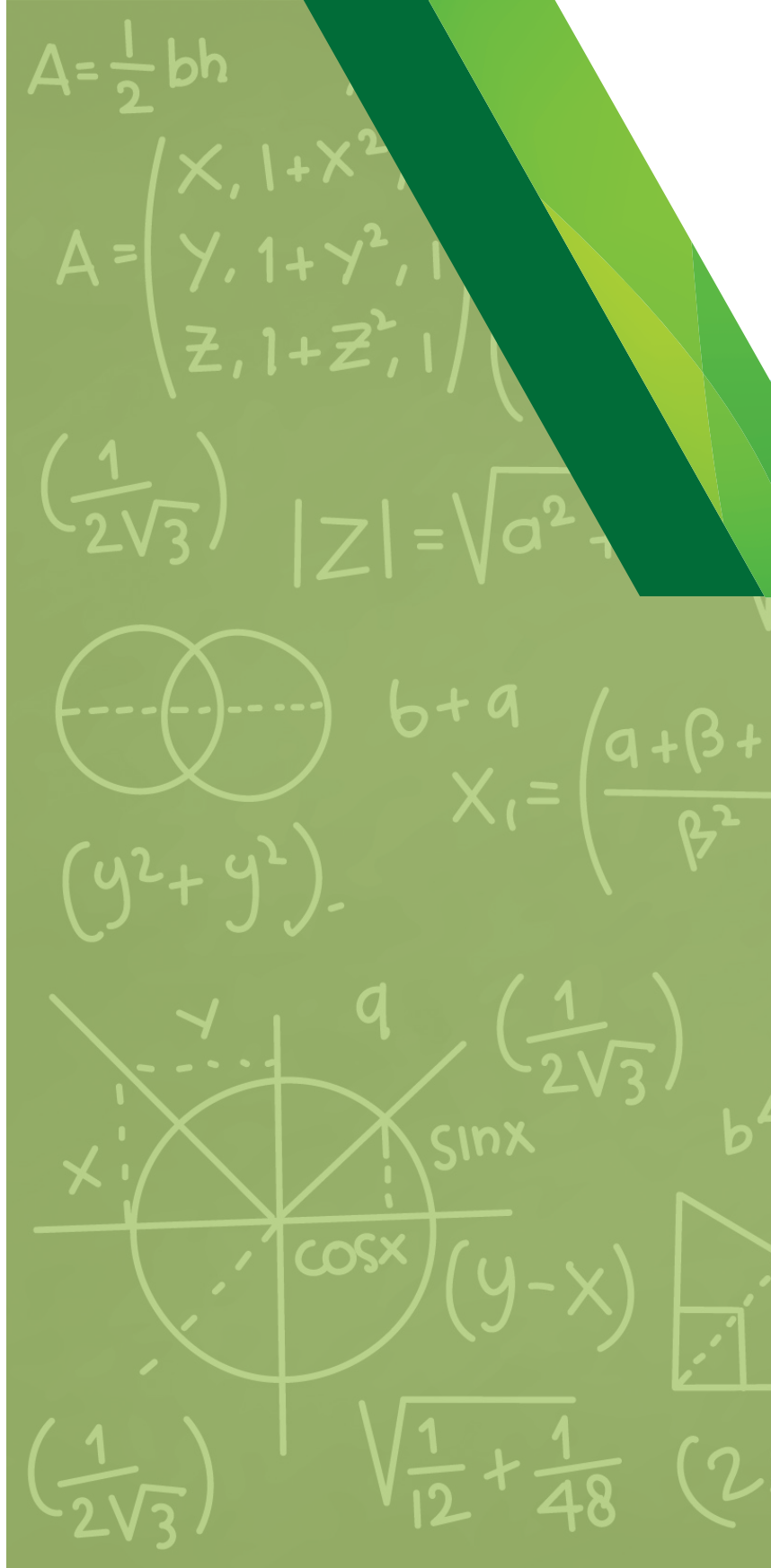
2801 Powell Creek Drive  
Charlottesville, VA 22911  
Office: (434) 975-0599  
School Counseling: (434) 975-0599  
Fax: (434) 975-0852

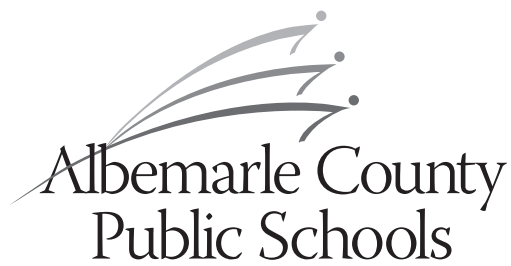
## Leslie H. Walton Middle School

4217 Red Hill Road  
Charlottesville, VA 22903  
Office: (434) 977-5615  
School Counseling: (434) 977-6533  
Fax: (434) 296-6648

## Community Lab School

1200 Forest Street  
Charlottesville, VA 22903  
Office: (434) 972-1607  
School Counseling: (434) 293-3090  
Fax: (434) 979-6479





## Mission

Working together as a team, we will end the predictive value of race, class, gender, and special capacities for our children's success through high-quality teaching and learning for all. We seek to build relationships with families and communities to ensure that every student succeeds.

**We will know every student.**

## Vision

Our learners are engaged in authentic, challenging, and relevant learning experiences, becoming lifelong contributors and leaders in our dynamic and diverse society.

## Values

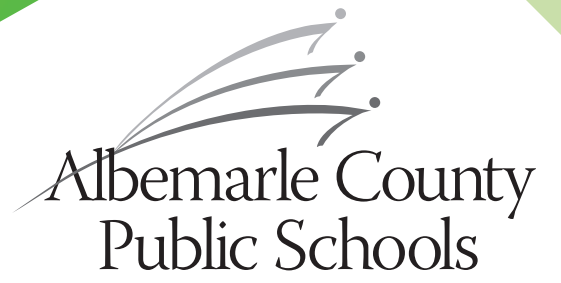
**Equity:** We will provide every student with the level of support necessary to thrive.

**Excellence:** We will mitigate barriers and provide opportunities for every student to be academically successful.

**Family and Community:** We will engage with and share the responsibility for student success with families and community partners.

**Wellness:** We will support the physical and emotional health of our students and staff.





Albemarle County  
Public Schools