

## Message from the Superintendent

### ***Sustaining Focus on Continuous Improvement in ACPS***

Dear Albemarle County School Board,

As we embark on another crucial budgeting cycle for Albemarle County Public Schools (ACPS), I extend my gratitude to each one of you for your unwavering commitment to our shared mission of providing high-quality education to our students.

Reflecting on the successes of the past and current year, I am inspired by the dedication of our students, employees, families, and community members. Together, we have created a positive and enriching learning environment that aligns seamlessly with our strategic plan, *Learning for All*. The partnerships we have formed, both within our schools and with the broader community, have played a pivotal role in advancing our vision and mission.

In light of the challenges faced by public education nationally and statewide, the support we have received from Albemarle County residents reaffirms the value our community places on education. It is with this understanding that I approach the upcoming budgeting process with a commitment to transparency, responsibility, and a focus on maximizing the impact of every resource at our disposal.

Our primary objective for the upcoming budget cycle is to maintain the integrity and continuity of the successful programs implemented in the previous year. Rather than introducing new initiatives, our emphasis will be on sustaining the positive momentum we have built. The key to our success lies not just in maintaining but enhancing the programming we already have, ensuring that every student receives the real, challenging, and meaningful learning experiences they deserve. Our kids matter, and we want their learning experiences to matter to them.

As we navigate this budgeting process, we will prioritize a sustained focus on continuous improvement. Our investments will remain aligned with the strategic plan, emphasizing safety enhancements, directed staffing for reading and intervention specialists, maintaining low class sizes, and offering competitive compensation to recruit and retain exceptional staff. These strategic allocations, reflecting the input of our community and the approval of our School Board, are essential elements in our ongoing pursuit of excellence.

Additionally, school divisions across the country have taken on more roles and responsibilities within their community. Data points around suicide ideation, for example, indicate the need for us to provide more help to our school communities. That means that we must maintain our focus on mental health and wellness for our students and employees. Our Social-Emotional Coaches are working hard to make a difference in helping our students, often our most marginalized students, know that they matter to their friends, loved ones, and school communities. This is improving our students' attendance and building students' healthy connections to school. And the numbers of our English language learners, another vulnerable population, have increased dramatically, leading to staffing struggles that we must continue to work to overcome if we are to properly serve the needs of these students while improving their academic learning.

I recognize the responsibility that comes with managing the resources entrusted to us by the community, combined with state and federal funding. Our commitment to equity and ensuring that every student has access to the opportunities they need for success remains steadfast. We will continue our efforts to know each child, addressing their unique needs to foster an inclusive and supportive learning environment.

I am grateful for the positive impact we have collectively made for our children, and I assure you that our budgetary decisions will be guided by the same commitment to making the most of the community's investment. Together, we will navigate the challenges ahead, always striving for improvement and excellence in the service of our students.

This budget document is a reflection of our commitment to continuous improvement and a testament to our promise to provide the best education possible. I look forward to working collaboratively with the School Board to maintain the excellence of our current programming and ensure that every student in Albemarle County Public Schools has the opportunity to thrive.

Thank you for your continued partnership, dedication, and commitment to the success of Albemarle County Public Schools.

Sincerely,



Matthew S. Haas, Ed.D.

Superintendent

Albemarle County Public Schools

