
MESSAGE FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

Dear Members of the Albemarle County School Board,

Each year, Albemarle County residents make a significant investment in our public schools, and we take seriously our responsibility to ensure transparency and deliver a strong return on their investment. While our schools directly serve students, families, and staff, most of our county's residents do not currently have enrolled children. However, through their local tax contributions, all of our residents help shape the future of our community by supporting high-quality public education - one of the most powerful drivers of economic growth, workforce development, and quality of life.

The benefits of this investment extend far beyond the classroom. Research shows that strong public schools support local economies, increase home values, and reduce long-term costs associated with crime and healthcare. Every \$1 invested in public education is estimated to yield between \$4 and \$7 in long-term economic benefits. A community with strong schools and a well-educated workforce will attract businesses, increase income levels, and keep Albemarle County a vibrant place to live and work.

Through our strategic planning and engagement with staff, families, and the broader community, we have developed this draft funding request to support the success of every student, while upholding the responsible stewardship of taxpayer dollars. These principles led us to the proposals you will see in this funding request. One high-priority proposed investment is special education, where we seek to enhance services and improve outcomes for students with disabilities. This proposal includes:

Establishing an Intensive Support Center at Ivy Creek. Once we fully occupy the building as an ACPS school, students with significant emotional and behavioral needs will receive high-quality, specialized services locally, rather than relying on external placements. We will also be able to create needed instructional space for our Post High program.

- Increasing compensation for special education instructional assistants will ensure that we can recruit and retain dedicated professionals who provide essential daily support to students with disabilities.
- Augmenting contingency staffing for special education, allowing schools to be more responsive to the needs of students as enrollment and service demands fluctuate.
- Expanding special education services within the Scholars Pathway program, to increase access to career and post-secondary exploration opportunities for students with disabilities.

These proposed investments exemplify our commitment to ending the predictive value of race, class, gender, and special capacities for our children's success. As we move forward in the budget process, we remain dedicated to transparency, fiscal responsibility, and the shared goal of strengthening our community through public education.

Thank you for your continued engagement and support.

Sincerely,



Matthew S. Haas, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools