





Albemarle County Public Schools

2024-25 STATE OF THE DIVISION

www.k12albemarle.org/sotd

"WE WILL KNOW EVERY STUDENT.

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BELOW: Future Mountain View Upper Elementary School students celebrate the Topping Out Ceremony at the new school building.



SUPERINTENDENT'S OVERVIEW





LEFT: Superintendent Dr. Matthew Haas and Chief Human Resources Officer Dan Redding pose for a photo at an employee recognition event. RIGHT: Dr. Haas helps a student tie their shoe.

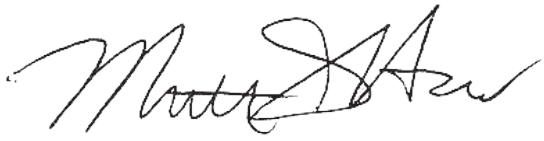
Each year, our State of the Division report offers an opportunity to reflect on what we've accomplished together and to look ahead at the work still before us. I am proud to say that Albemarle County Public Schools continues to move forward with purpose, guided by our strategic plan—*Learning for All*—and by our shared belief that every student deserves to thrive.

During the 2024–25 school year, our students, teachers, and staff demonstrated remarkable resilience and innovation. We expanded programs that connect learning to real-world experiences, including Scholars Studios, ACE Academy, and Early College pathways. We made significant progress toward implementing recommendations from our Instructional Practices Audit, ensuring that classroom instruction meets the needs of every learner. And through strong partnerships with our families and community, we deepened our commitment to equity, wellness, and academic excellence.

We also celebrated milestones that will shape our future—breaking ground on Mountain View Upper Elementary School, strengthening compensation and recruitment efforts to attract and retain talented educators and education support specialists, and achieving some of the lowest vacancy rates in recent years. Each success reflects the dedication of our teachers, staff, and leaders who make ACPS a place where students feel supported and inspired. As we look to 2025–26, our focus remains clear:

- Accelerate equity and access so that every student benefits from rigorous, engaging opportunities.
- Strengthen teaching and learning through collaboration, data-informed instruction, and professional growth.
- Enhance engagement, belonging, and well-being for all members of our school community.

Thank you for your partnership, trust, and commitment to our mission. Together, we are building a school system where every student's potential is recognized, cultivated, and realized.



PURPOSE OF STATE OF THE DIVISION



Greer students pose with tree nuts they collected and donated to the Department of Forestry to help replenish the state's tree nursery.

Through the annual State of the Division report, Albemarle County Public Schools (ACPS) provides information to the school board and the community about our successes and challenges from the previous school year. The report serves as an accountability tool, whereby the school division seeks to track our progress toward meeting goals and to identify and improve our weaknesses. The report also informs our decision-making in the process of evaluating an instructional method, shaping a systemic practice, or considering budget priorities.

Each year, ACPS shares the State of the Division report as another opportunity to engage our students and their families, our employees, and our community members. We consider stakeholder feedback to be an essential part of the continuous improvement process, and we encourage community members to contribute to our ongoing efforts to learn, adapt and grow through participation in school board meetings, community meetings, and online surveys.

During the 2021-22 school year, the division developed a new strategic plan titled *Learning for All*. In this plan, we clearly define the three main goals of our division: supporting our students and helping them thrive, affirming and empowering our communities while encouraging engagement in our schools, and providing transformative and equitable resources throughout the division.

To advance these three main goals, each department developed aligned strategies. The State of the Division report outlines the work ACPS has accomplished over the past year to advance these goals. We use data sources as metrics to guage our progress and determine next steps.

LEARNING FOR ALL

ACPS' STRATEGIC PLAN

OUR VISION

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

OUR 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.

OUR 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.

OUR GOALS

GOAL 1: THRIVING STUDENTS

ACPS will facilitate learning experiences grounded in high expectations, networks of care, and student curiosity to ensure academic and social-emotional development for all students while eliminating opportunity, access and achievement gaps.

GOAL 2: AFFIRMING AND EMPOWERING COMMUNITIES

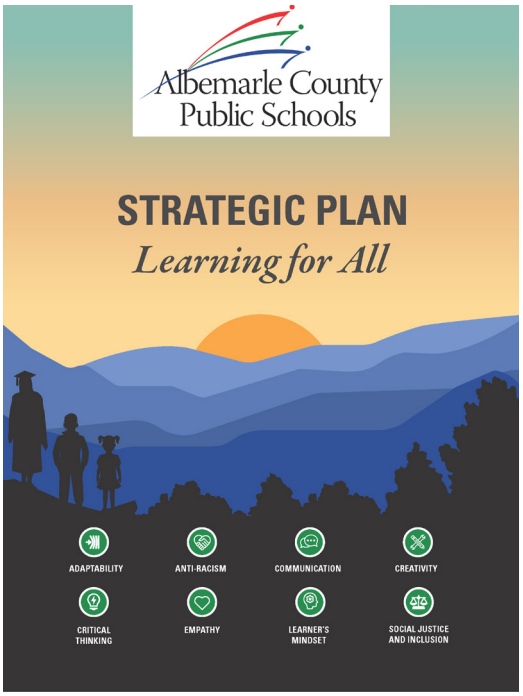
ACPS commits to developing a culturally-responsive environment that respects and champions the diversity of life experiences of all stakeholders and supports the physical and mental health of our students, staff and families so they are actively empowered to engage in our school community.

GOAL 3: EQUITABLE, TRANSFORMATIVE RESOURCES

ACPS will attract, develop and retain the highest quality staff; develop sustainable and modern facilities, infrastructure and equipment; and distribute all resources in an equitable manner to transform learning experiences and opportunities.

WHAT DRIVES OUR DIVISION?

STRATEGIC PLAN



During the 2021-22 school year, ACPS' Office of Strategic Planning worked with students, staff and community members to create the division-wide Portrait of a Learner, which outlines the skills our community believes all students should posses by the time they graduate. The Portrait of a Learner acted as a guide in creating the division's strategic plan, *Learning for All*, which ensures that schools engage with and meet the needs of all students while preparing them with the knowledge and skills they need to thrive.

Ultimately, *Learning for All* is a collective vision that articulates our community's hopes for ALL of our students and enables the division to provide an educational experience that prepares them to be lifelong learners and to make positive contributions to society, both while they are our students and in the future.

By analyzing data in our State of the Division report, we are able to ensure that, as a division, we are pursuing the goals from *Learning for All* so that we are able to continue to serving our families and community.

BUDGET INITIATIVES

Each year, our Fiscal Services Department works with every department and school in the division to create a budget that funds the operation of the division but also funds programs that move us toward meeting the goals outlined in *Learning for All*.

The 2024-25 School Board Adopted Budget, *Sustaining Focus on Continuous Improvement*, outlined several initiatives intending to advance these goals. Highlights of these initiatives include:

COMPENSATION INCREASE

The adopted budget included an initiative that provides all ACPS employees with a 3% salary increase and provided for increases in the Academic Leadership Compensation Program.

ENGLISH LEARNER AND SPECIAL EDUCATION

The adopted budget added five full-time equivalent (FTE) positions to the English Learner program and another five FTEs to Special Education program in response to enrollment growth and the shifting needs of English Learners and students with disabilities.

SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL RESOURCES

The adopted budget absorbed the cost, following the lapse of federal American Rescue Plan funding, to maintain current social emotional supports and upgrade to a differentiated staffing model that will allow ACPS to provide additional social emotional resources to schools based on need.

READING SPECIALISTS

The adopted budget sustained the current level of direct intervention support provided to students by reading specialists, reading intervention and math interventionists following the loss of federal funding for 10 intervention positions.

For more information on our budget process and to see the full 2024-25 School Board Adopted Budget, including all of the initiatives supporting our division, visit **k12albemarle.org/budget**.

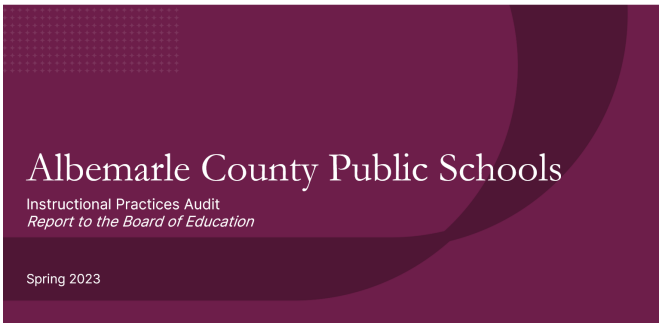
INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICES AUDIT

The mission in the ACPS strategic plan, *Learning for All*, states that "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."

On average, our division outperforms the state of Virginia on a number of achievement measures. However, a gap exists between achievements of our students of color and economically disadvantaged students and our white students.

To ensure that we are doing all we can to help all of our students succeed, ACPS commissioned Bellwether Education Partners in 2023 to complete a third-party audit of our instructional practices.

Bellwether presented five broad recommendations, each supported by key initiatives and specific actions, to address deficiencies in the areas of instructional tasks, adult learning, curricular resources, strategic alignment, and stakeholder engagement. The results of the audit continue to inform the State of the Division report each year.





Stone-Robinson Elementary students celebrate a successful fundraiser by "sliming" their assistant principal, David Foreman.

STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL 1:
THRIVING STUDENTS

ACPS will facilitate learning experiences grounded in high expectations, networks of care, and student curiosity to ensure academic and social-emotional development for all students while eliminating gaps in opportunity, access and achievement.

2024-25

MILESTONES

Implemented structured literacy programs at all schools.

Completed teacher professional learning in two evidence-based programs for teaching structured literacy.

Removed Special Education program from disproportionate federal identification of Black students (intellectual disability) for the first time in 25 years.

Adopted new elementary and secondary math curriculum.

Exceeded state average for Special Education test scores in reading, math, and science.

Deepened progress of High School Redesign via the Scholars Studios design team building upon the initial implementation of Career Learning Communities.

Completed 97% of the project components recommended by the instructional practices audit

GOAL 1 OBJECTIVES

ACPS will ensure that each student is supported to achieve their best.

ACPS will develop structures that support students' academic mental health for both proactive and intervention purposes.

ACPS will increase student engagement in their own learning, in school culture, and in student government.

KEY METRICS

Achieve on-time graduation rates higher than the state average.

2024-25	2023-24
93.9% ACPS	**93.1%** ACPS
As of publication time, the state has not released on-time graduation rates. STATE	**92.8%** STATE

Improve pass rates in reading and math.

READING	MATH
75% 2024-25	**74%** 2024-25
75% 2023-24	**72%** 2023-24
74% 2022-23	**69%** 2022-23

Maintain course failure rates below 10% in middle and high schools.

2024-25	2023-24
10.58% HIGH SCHOOL	**10.29%** HIGH SCHOOL
8.27% MIDDLE SCHOOL	**8.48%** MIDDLE SCHOOL

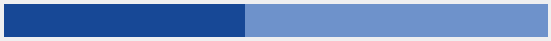
Exceed the state averages for SOL pass rates.

2024-25



Higher than state averages in 18 out of 45 categories in 2024-25.

2023-24



Higher than state averages in 20 out of 45 categories in 2023-24.

Reduce the percentage of students identified as High Risk (needing reading intervention) in grades K through 3 from fall to spring each year. Achieve high risk rates of less than 20% for each grade level by the 2026-27 school year.

SPRING '25	SPRING '25	SPRING '25
19% KINDERGARTNERS	**22%** FIRST GRADERS	**26%** SECOND GRADERS
34% FALL '24	**25%** FALL '24	**31%** FALL '24
27% SPRING '24	**28%** SPRING '24	**31%** SPRING '24

MILESTONE IN ACTION: THRIVING STUDENTS

STRENGTHENING STUDENTS' READING SKILLS



Students use HMH Into Reading materials to talk about how different vocabulary words can shape the tone and context of a story.

In 2024–25, ACPS adopted Houghton Millflin Harcourt's (HMH) Into Reading (v1) as the division's core English Language Arts program for grades K–5. By providing a coherent, evidence-based literacy program, ACPS ensures that every child is engaged in meaningful and consistent Tier 1 reading and writing experiences that align with science-based reading research, the Virginia Literacy Act, and the 2024 English Standards of Learning. The implementation of HMH Into Reading reflects the division's ongoing commitment to equity, excellence, and high-quality instruction for all students.

LITERACY PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

- Division-wide spring, summer, and preservice HMH launch sessions were held for all K–5 educators to support the rollout of the new literacy program.
- Teachers participated in LETRS 1 training to strengthen their understanding of evidence-based practices in phonological awareness, phonics, word recognition, and language comprehension.
- Monthly HMH Champion collaboration meetings fostered school-based expertise and teacher leadership across the division.
- HMH Champions and ACPS Instructional Coaches received access to HMH Coachly licenses, enabling them to provide real-time support and answers to teacher questions.
- Grade-level and school-based professional learning sessions focused on effective lesson design and delivery, assessment practices, and the development of consistent academic routines.

IMPLEMENTATION WITH INTEGRITY: Classroom walkthroughs and principal feedback indicate growing consistency in routines such as phonics instruction, vocabulary development, comprehension discussions, and gradual release of responsibility.

INSTRUCTIONAL SHIFTS OBSERVED

- There is a stronger emphasis on explicit, systematic literacy instruction across foundational skills, vocabulary, comprehension, and writing.
- Teachers are increasingly using the Gradual Release Model ("I Do, We Do, You Do") to promote student ownership of learning.
- Formative data are being used more frequently

WHAT IS *HMH INTO READING*?

HMH Into Reading is a comprehensive K–6 (Kindergarten through 6th grade) literacy curriculum developed by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt (HMH). It's designed to help students build strong reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills while supporting teachers with structured lessons, assessments, and resources.

The HMH Into Reading program describes itself as being grounded in scientifically based best practices, providing instruction that is **explicit, systematic, sequential, multisensory, and cumulative**, particularly in the development of foundational skills. It claims alignment with the science of reading and the five key pillars of reading: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension.

HMH's November 2023 document, "HMH Into Reading Research Evidence Base," outlines how the curriculum draws on both internal and external research to connect theoretical foundations to instructional design. Independent evaluations, such as those conducted by EdReports, have awarded the program their highest rating of "meets expectations" for standards alignment and usability.

CORE FEATURES

1. Reading Instruction
   - Focuses on foundational skills (phonics, phonemic awareness, fluency) for early grades.
   - Includes literature and informational texts with diverse, engaging themes.
2. Writing and Grammar
   - Guides students through various writing genres (narrative, opinion, informative).
   - Integrates grammar and language skills into reading and writing lessons.
3. Vocabulary and Comprehension
   - Builds academic vocabulary through direct instruction.
   - Emphasizes comprehension strategies like summarizing, predicting, and inferring.
4. Assessments and Differentiation
   - Offers regular formative and summative assessments.
   - Provides leveled readers and digital tools for personalized learning.
5. Digital Resources (HMH Ed Platform)
   - Interactive student eBooks.
   - Teacher tools for planning, grading, and tracking progress.
   - Online games and activities that reinforce reading skills.

PURPOSE

HMH Into Reading is built around the Science of Reading, meaning it's based on evidence about how children learn to read. It aims to:

- Build strong foundational literacy.
- Support all learners (including English learners and students with diverse needs).
- Engage students with meaningful, authentic texts.

to guide reteaching, practice, and extension opportunities.

- Student engagement has been enhanced through the use of authentic texts, collaborative discussions, and myBook annotations.
- Collaboration among classroom teachers, EL, SPED, reading, and specials teachers—as well as instructional coaches and school leaders—has strengthened consistency in literacy instruction across schools.

LESSONS FROM YEAR 1 IMPLEMENTATION

HMH Into Reading offers teachers a wide range of instructional and digital resources to support literacy instruction. Fully exploring and leveraging all of these materials will take time and continued practice. As teachers continue to build familiarity with these tools, the division is focused on maximizing their strategic use and strengthening the use of assessment data to drive instructional decisions and continuous improvement.

YEAR 2 PRIORITIES (2025–26)

- The division will deepen teacher expertise through ongoing professional learning at monthly HMH-focused faculty meetings.
- PLC-level planning structures will be strengthened to sustain consistent and effective Tier 1 instruction.
- Family engagement will be expanded through the use of family letters, the HMH Family Room, and school-based literacy nights.
- HMH assessment data and reports will be utilized to monitor student progress and guide instructional adjustments throughout the year.

STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL 2:
AFFIRMING & EMPOWERING COMMUNITIES

ACPS commits to developing a culturally-responsive environment that respects and champions the diversity of life experiences of all stakeholders and supports the physical and mental health of our students, staff and families so they are actively empowered to engage in our school community.

2024-25

MILESTONES

Launched *Communities in Schools* partnership.

Developed and began implementing personal device-free education policy.

Established a coordinator of school counseling.

Trained staff on *Teen Mental Health First Aid.*

Implemented use of the *Remind* communication platform at all schools.

Transitioned to a new division website template aimed at improving usability and family and community engagement.

Introduced a new visitor management system in all schools.

Increased number of school-based vaccine clinics offered throughout the year.

GOAL 2 OBJECTIVES

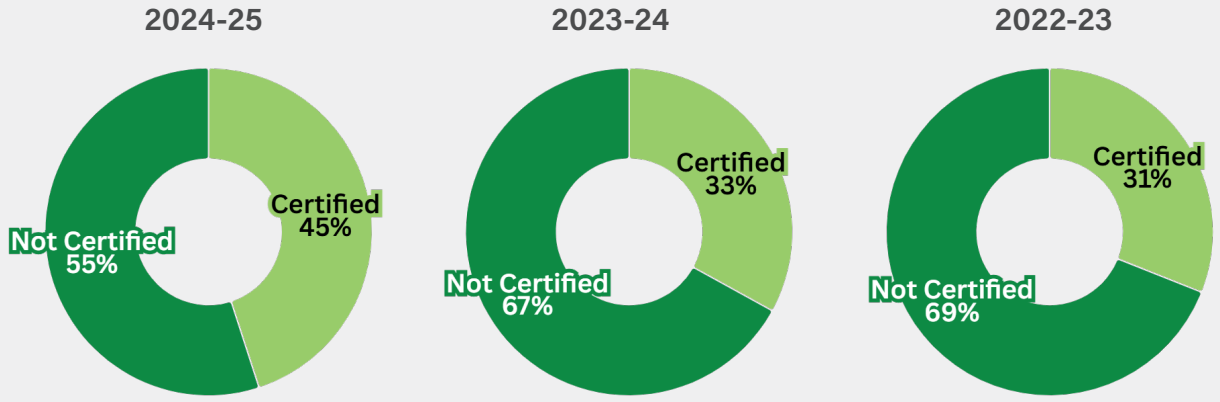
ACPS will foster culturally-responsive environments that affirm the identities and life experiences of all community members.

ACPS will support the physical and mental health of our students, staff and families.

ACPS will actively empower our students, staff and families to engage in our school community through effective communications.

KEY METRICS

All teachers certified in CRE by the 2025-26 school year.



**Large increase in 2024-25 due to completion of first 3-year cycle.*

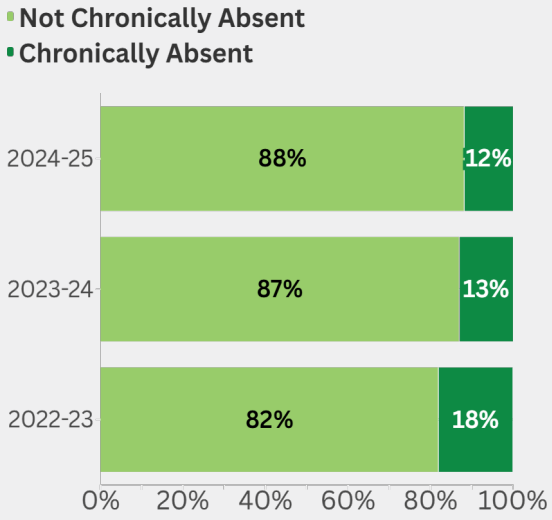
Teacher demographics more closely match student demographics each year.

WHITE	PEOPLE OF COLOR
87%	**13%**
2024-25	2024-25

2023-24 teacher demographics **more closely resemble** student diversity **(42%)** than in 2022-23.

86.8% 2023-24	**13.2%** 2023-24
88.8% 2022-23	**11.2%** 2022-23

Decrease rates of chronic absenteeism.



Increase positive feeling from our families in the areas of school climate, school fit and family engagement as measured by the Panorama survey.

2024-25

School Climate	School Fit	Family Engagement
69%	**65%**	**21%**

	School Climate	School Fit	Family Engagement
	70% 2023-24	**65%** 2023-24	**20%** 2023-24
	57% 2022-23	**57%** 2022-23	**17%** 2022-23

MILESTONE IN ACTION:
AFFIRMING & EMPOWERING COMMUNITIES

GROWTH IN SCHOOL SAFETY AND SECURITY

ACPS has made significant strides in advancing safety and security measures. Recent progress demonstrates a commitment to fostering safe, supportive, and focused learning environments for all students and staff.

PERSONAL COMMUNICATION DEVICE-FREE EDUCATION

- ACPS transitioned from a permissive model to a device-free learning culture to reduce classroom distractions and promote academic engagement, with a particular focus on high school implementation.
- The division introduced clear, standardized protocols for daily procedures, including exceptions for medical, safety, or learning needs.
- Staff and administrators developed progressive discipline strategies, paired with restorative approaches, to reinforce compliance while maintaining positive student relationships.
- These changes increased consistency across schools, ensuring that all students and staff share clear expectations and accountability.

GROWTH IMPACT: Stronger focus during class, improved teacher-student connections, and a safer, more equitable learning environment.

SCHOOL SAFETY OFFICER (SSO) PROGRAM

- ACPS established a standardized School Safety Officer (SSO) program in partnership with the Human Resources Department and supported by the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services.
- The division developed a dedicated SSO position with clear job responsibilities and guidelines to strengthen day-to-day school safety operations.
- To reflect increased responsibilities and expectations, ACPS implemented a higher pay scale and expanded training opportunities.
- The division successfully filled 23 SSO positions across middle and high schools, many with staff members who previously served in other school support roles.

GROWTH IMPACT: A more professional and consistent safety presence in schools, enhanced support for administrators, and stronger alignment with state safety standards.

ALICE RESPONSE PROGRAM

- Continued comprehensive intruder response framework: Alert, Lockdown, Inform, Counter, Evacuate (ALICE).
- Regular training and drills for staff and students, with an emphasis on adaptable decision-making.
- Strengthened coordination with first responders and tailored responses to each school's layout.
- Building level feedback and debriefs at the school level, including table top exercises, to guide ongoing improvements.

GROWTH IMPACT: Enhanced staff and student confidence, clearer roles during emergencies, and stronger district-wide consistency.

WEAPON SCREENING SYSTEMS

- ACPS launched a phased implementation of weapon screening devices at comprehensive high schools, beginning with varsity football and basketball games.
- The division established clear protocols and communication with families and spectators to ensure a smooth and respectful screening process.
- ACPS continues to refine procedures, staffing models, and technology selection based on feedback from pilot events to strengthen safety, efficiency, and community confidence.

GROWTH IMPACT: Increased deterrence, improved preparedness, and greater community trust in school safety measures.

Together, these initiatives reflect ACPS' continued growth in building safer, more connected learning environments. Across the division, students are better able to focus on learning, teachers can devote more energy to instruction, and families can feel confident that safety remains a top priority. The shift toward proactive, consistent practices—whether through stronger emergency preparedness, professionalized school safety roles, or the creation of distraction-free classrooms—demonstrates a shared commitment to the well-being of every member of our school community. By combining innovation, collaboration, and accountability, ACPS is not only strengthening its safety infrastructure but also cultivating a culture of trust, care, and readiness that supports learning for all.

MILESTONE IN ACTION:
AFFIRMING & EMPOWERING COMMUNITIES

STRENGTHENING SCHOOL-BASED MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORTS

Mental health support specialists continue to be deeply integrated into ACPS and play a vital role in addressing student needs and bridging gaps caused by the ongoing shortage of child-focused mental health providers in Virginia. Their presence ensures that every student has more consistent access to caring adults who can offer support, guidance, and intervention when needed.

MEETING CRITICAL NEEDS ACROSS VIRGINIA

New statewide data highlight both encouraging growth and ongoing challenges in the field of child mental health. Since 2019, the number of licensed Clinical Social Workers (LCSWs) in Virginia has increased by 58%, rising from 7,291 to 11,493. However, only 6% of these professionals list children as their primary specialty. Similarly, the number of Licensed Professional Counselors (LPCs) has grown by 149% since 2014—from 4,003 to 9,987—but just 5% primarily serve children.

These numbers underscore the essential role of school-based mental health support specialists in ensuring access to care for students and families. Their work directly meets the needs of students facing serious mental health challenges. Division data shows that only 6.8% of ACPS students have seriously contemplated suicide—3.4 percentage points lower than the statewide rate of 10.2%.

GROWTH IMPACT: Students in ACPS are receiving earlier, more consistent mental health support that prevents crises and promotes wellness.

EARLY INTERVENTION AND PEER EMPOWERMENT

Even within our schools, these specialists are creating meaningful change every day.

- At the high school level, specialists co-teach the Teen Mental Health First Aid course, which trains more than 1,000 freshmen each year to recognize when peers may be struggling and how to connect them to help. One crisis counselor shared that a student came forward with their family after a peer encouraged them to seek support—an example of the powerful peer-to-peer care this program fosters.
- At the middle school level, a specialist is piloting the Signs of Suicide program, helping students start conversations earlier about mental health and giving them the language and tools to support themselves and one another.

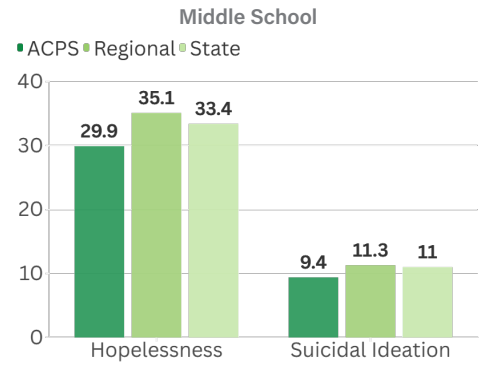
GROWTH IMPACT: Through early education and peer empowerment, students are gaining the awareness, empathy, and confidence needed to care for themselves and their classmates.

CONTINUED SUPPORT AND COLLABORATION

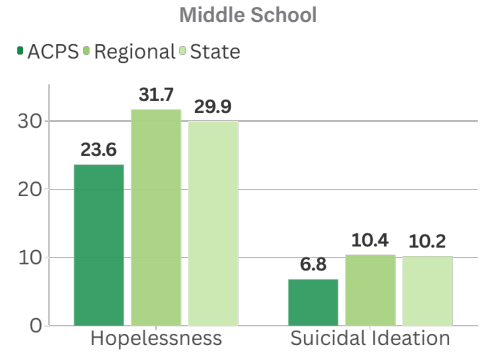
When the division experienced a temporary shortage of school psychologists, Mental Health Support Specialists stepped in alongside special education teams to ensure that student counseling and evaluation services continued without disruption. Their flexibility and collaboration have helped sustain a consistent level of care during staffing transitions and high-need periods.

GROWTH IMPACT: ACPS students and families continue to receive uninterrupted, high-quality support through teamwork and cross-department collaboration

2023 Dept. of Criminal Justice Survey Results



2025 Dept. of Criminal Justice Survey Results



Together, these efforts reflect Albemarle's collective commitment to student wellness. Through strong partnerships among schools, families, and organizations, we are building stronger, healthier school communities.

STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL 3:
EQUITABLE, TRANSFORMATIVE RESOURCES

ACPS will attract, develop and retain the highest quality staff; develop sustainable and modern facilities, infrastructure, and equipment; and distribute all resources in an equitable manner to transform learning experiences and opportunities.

MILESTONES

2024-25

Began construction on two new schools and a new data center.

Completed collective bargaining elections.

Implemented a 3% pay increase for all employees.

Launched weapons detection systems at high school sporting events.

Opened two employee health clinics locations to serve as a low-cost health care option for employees.

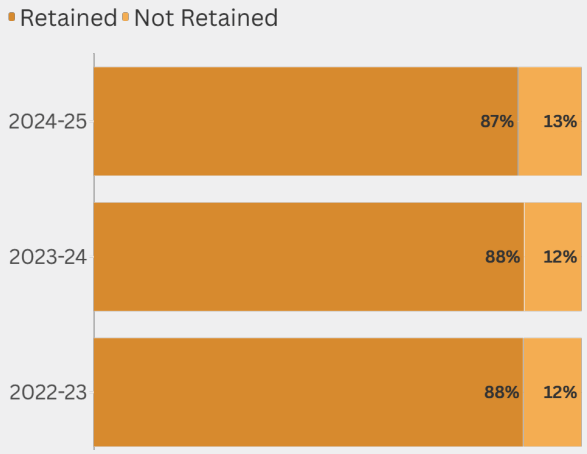
Began the school year with full complement of bus drivers.

GOAL 3 OBJECTIVES

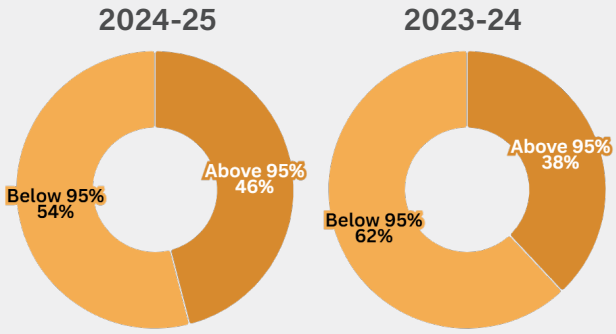
ACPS will attract, develop and retain the highest-quality staff.	ACPS will develop modern and environmentally sustainable facilities, infrastructure and equipment.	ACPS will provide resources in an equitable manner that transforms learning experiences and opportunities for students.

KEY METRICS

Improve teacher retention rate.



Reduce number of schools at or above 95% capacity.



Note: Enrollment shifts were intentionally made to relieve overcrowding at Baker-Butler by moving students to Agnor and Hollymead. These changes reflect redistributed enrollment rather than an overall increase in school overcrowding.

All schools in the division are rated as "Distinguished (over 90 points)," or "On-Track (80-89 points)" on the new Virginia School performance and support framework. No schools are rated as "Off-Track (65-79 points)" or "Needs Intensive Support (below 65 points)."

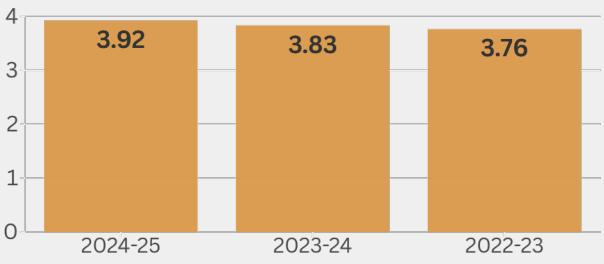


Note: As of publishing, these results are still preliminary and do not reflect federal accountability designations, which may impact these categories when released.



Note: This system of accreditation is no longer used by the VDOE.

Increase employee engagement mean by at least .10 each year.



Provide two guaranteed field experiences per year to all students by 25-26.

2024-25	2023-24	2022-23
At least two field experiences provided for all students grades K through 8.	At least one field experience provided for all students grades K through 8.	At least one field experience provided for all students grades K through 5.

MILESTONE IN ACTION:
EQUITABLE, TRANSFORMATIVE RESOURCES

INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICES AUDIT AND THE VIRGINIA LITERACY ACT GUIDE OUR FOCUS



Greer students pose with books donated to them through the school's partnership with the University of Virginia's Police Department, who tutor Greer students in reading and literacy concepts throughout the year.

ACPS partnered with Bellwether Education Partners in 2023 to complete an instructional practices audit to identify ways ACPS can improve the quality of education for all students, particularly those who have been historically under served. The audit examined instructional policies and classroom practices to understand why some students, especially students of color, are not performing as well as others on standardized assessments in areas such as reading and math.

Through conversations with students, staff, and families—and by observing classroom instruction—the audit took a close look at what is being taught, how it is being taught, and how students are being supported in their learning. By identifying strengths and opportunities for improvement, ACPS is better equipped to create equitable learning environments and uphold our commitment to ensuring that every child, regardless of race, background, or learning needs, has access to high-quality instruction.

WHY THIS MATTERS

A key finding of the audit is the importance of investing in high-quality instructional resources, particularly those that strengthen intervention and student support. The Virginia Literacy Act (VLA), passed in 2022, began implementation for students in grades K–3 in the 2024–25 school year. The act requires each reading specialist, in consultation with classroom teachers, to coordinate and oversee interventions for students not meeting literacy benchmarks, develop and monitor reading plans, and collaborate closely with families and teachers to support student progress.

Together, the VLA and the Instructional Practices Audit established a clear mission: to build a consistent, division-wide system of supports that ensures all students are making progress.

WHAT'S HAPPENED AND WHAT'S NEXT

Over the past year, ACPS adopted and implemented HMH Into Reading as the new K–5 literacy curriculum. The division now creates and monitors reading plans for all students in grades K–5 and many in grades 6–12, allowing staff to track interventions and measure progress. Teachers also use Lexia Core5 and PowerUp to provide targeted interventions and resources.

Looking ahead to the 2025–26 school year, ACPS will implement new core math resources for elementary grades, Math 8, and Algebra I. Additional adoptions will include 6–12 Language Arts, K–12 Reading Intervention, and 6–12 Science materials.

Through our partnership with Branching Minds, ACPS is developing a handbook for our Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS). Every K–12 student will have a reading plan, and schools with math specialists will also create math plans. Schools are collaborating to establish more transparent processes for families and to support academic acceleration.

Teachers will continue to receive additional training, new classroom materials will be introduced, and schools will strengthen collaboration with families to support student growth. By working together, we can ensure that every student in ACPS has the opportunity to reach their full potential.

MILESTONE IN ACTION:
EQUITABLE, TRANSFORMATIVE RESOURCES

A SYSTEMATIC APPROACH TO CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

The Department of Professional Learning supports ACPS's Strategic Plan Goal 3, which aims to attract, develop, and retain the highest-quality staff. Professional learning supports student success by fostering teachers' capacity to provide high-quality teaching and learning for all. Our department strives to provide "structured professional learning that results in changes in teacher practices and improvements in student learning outcomes." (Learning Policy Institute, 2017, pg. v).

CHARACTERISTICS OF ACPS PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

Systematic: A systematic approach to adult learning supports staff at all levels through a combination of workshop-based PD, job-embedded coaching, and PLCs to build professional knowledge and support transfer into practice.

Coherent: Professional learning must address all three components of the instructional core (teacher knowledge and skill, student engagement, and the challenge of learning tasks) to improve student learning and outcomes.

Relevant: Professional learning bridges the knowing/doing gap and leads to transfer to practice when oriented to the characteristics of high-quality adult learning (active, collaborative, ongoing, content specific, feedback rich, and supported by coaching).

Differentiated: Educators require differentiated approaches to professional learning based on their level of familiarity and/or skill in using a practice or adopting a change.

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING FRAMEWORK

ACPS recognizes that because professional learning exists on a continuum, the experiences designed to support learning need to match educator needs at varying stages of development. This graphic articulates the current ACPS professional learning opportunities and entry points to support the transfer of teachers' professional knowledge into practice.

PROGRAMMATIC SHIFTS AND RELATED SUCCESSES

Refinement of a Guaranteed and Viable Professional Learning Curriculum for Teachers and Staff

- **Increased Coherence:** Learning targets and success criteria for professional learning are increasingly aligned to the Educator Performance Appraisal (EPA) and the Framework for Quality Learning (FQL) to support positive instructional outcomes.
- **Literacy Instruction:** In alignment with the Virginia Literacy Act (VLA), LETRS and VLP modules have become the standardized approach to building teacher capacity to deliver high-quality literacy instruction for all.
- **Effective Learning Environments:** Responsive Classroom (elementary) and Developmental Designs (secondary) multi-day workshops and ongoing support provide teachers and staff the opportunity to build their capacity in leveraging the principles and practices of each program to create positive learning environments.
- **New Teacher Induction:** The ACPS Induction Program has expanded to provide guaranteed support for veteran teachers new to the division, in addition to supporting novices in their first three years in the profession.
- **Culturally Responsive Education:** CRE Micro-Credential Pathways have been infused as a core element of the guaranteed support provided to teachers new to the division as well as to novice teachers.

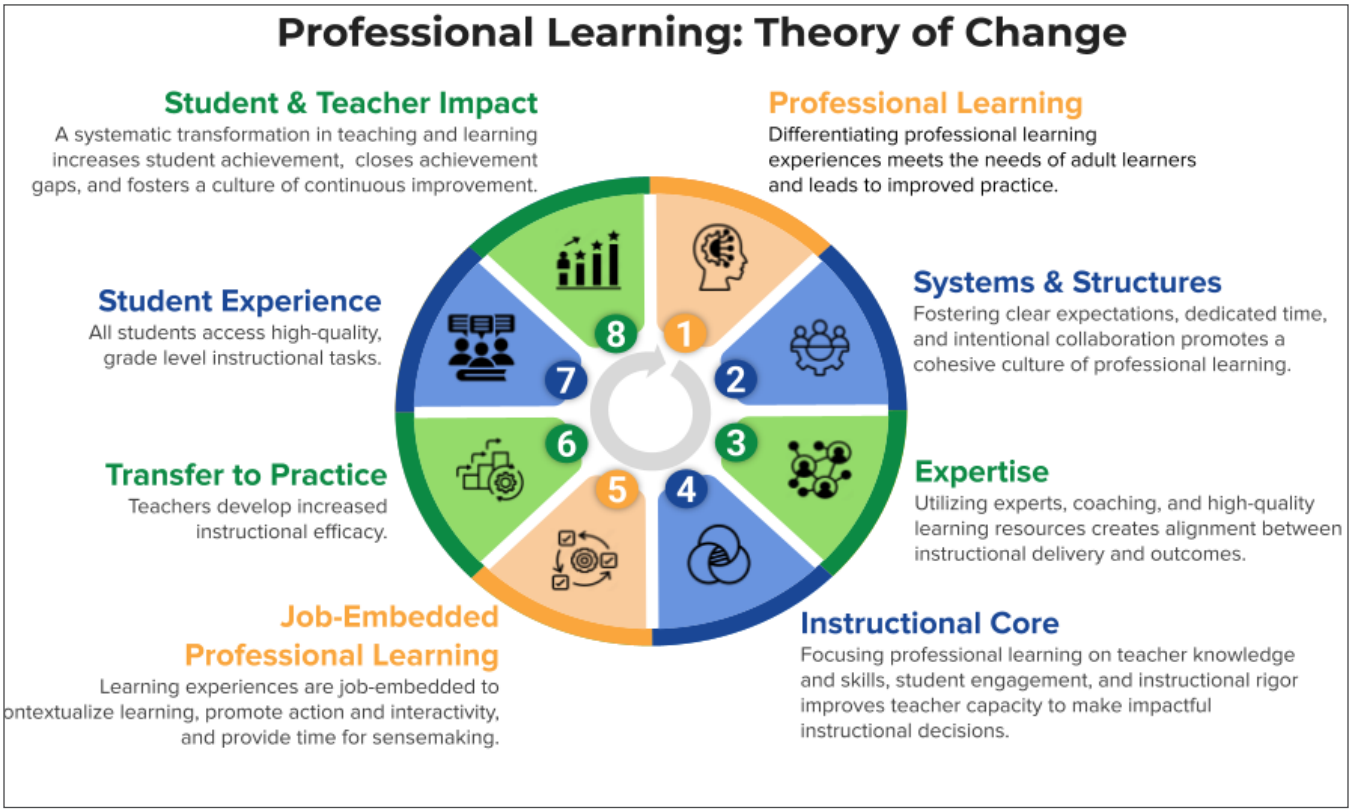
> Every student deserves a great teacher, not by chance but by design.
>
> Fisher, Frey & Hattie, 2026

Increase in Collaboration between the Department of Professional Learning and Stakeholders

- **Strategic Alignment:** The Department of Professional Learning partners with school and department leadership teams to develop annual Professional Learning Plans, shifting from isolated single training sessions to cohesive experiences that promote transfer of learning into practice around prioritized goals.
- **Curricular Adoption Support:** In collaboration with school and division leadership, school-based Content Advisory Team (CAT) members in both Elementary Literacy and Math provide centrally designed, locally delivered professional learning experiences each month to support implementation of adopted instructional materials with integrity.
- **Investment in Teacher Leadership:** The Department continues to support certification of teacher leaders as local professional learning facilitators to ensure sustainable implementation of core initiatives, most recently investing in a cadre of 15 LETRS Vol. 2 Facilitators.

Deepening of a Culture of Continuous Improvement

- **Focused Coaching Support:** Through Q1 2025, Instructional Coaches have developed job-embedded partnerships with 562 ACPS teachers,



	Knowledge Building → → →			→ → → Transfer Into Practice			
Levels of Use Overview | Deep Dive	Interest	Orientation	Preparation	Initial Application	Routine Application	Refined Application	Integrated Application
Single-Session Learning	**Conference Sessions** (e.g. Making Connections) **Pre-Service Learning** **Orientation Sessions** **Single-Session Workshops** **Single-Session Webinars** **Self-Paced Modules**						
Multi-Session Learning	**Workshop Series** **Opportunities Courses** **Cohort-Specific Series** **Co-Planning / Design**		**Book Studies** **Mini-Courses** **Micro-Credentials** **Certifications**				
Job-Embedded Learning			**Learning Teams** (e.g. school-based PLCs, cross-divisional teams, Champion Cohorts) **Job-Embedded Learning Cycles** (Coaching Cycles, Modeled Lessons, Co-Teaching, Peer Observations, Lesson Study, Novice / New Teacher Induction, New / Novice Principal Mentorship)				

including over 80% of elementary teachers. This ongoing support aligns with a combination of individual goals, PLC-level needs, school-based strategic plans, and division-level priorities.

- **Increased Use of Cohort Models:** Learning Cohorts expand the depth of implementation around division priorities. For example, a cohort of 82 teachers (18% of all elementary teachers) elected to enroll in LETRS Vol. 2, while a pilot group of secondary teachers have sought to increase vertical alignment of their literacy instruction by enrolling in LETRS Vol. 1.

NOTABLE HAPPENINGS

MOUNTAIN VIEW UPPER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL: BREAKING GROUND ON A MODERN LEARNING SPACE

ACPS reached a major milestone in February 2025 with the ceremonial groundbreaking for Mountain View Upper Elementary School, a new learning space for grades 3 through 5 designed to support the academic and developmental needs of students in this pivotal stage. The project is the result of extensive collaboration among students, families, staff, and community members, guided by the ACPS Long-Range Planning Advisory Committee's enrollment studies and community feedback.

The school's design prioritizes student well-being, belonging, and independence. Key features include natural daylight, pedestrian and bike access, and a fully accessible playground that supports inclusive play. Sustainability is a core focus, with a geothermal HVAC system and solar energy integration making it one of ACPS's most energy-efficient facilities to date.



Mountain View Elementary students join community and school division leaders in the ceremonial groundbreaking for the new Mountain View Upper Elementary School.

Mountain View Upper Elementary School is expected to open in August 2026 and will preserve continuity for the Mountain View community while providing a cutting-edge environment for future learners.

ACE ACADEMY — LAMBS LANE: EXPANDING CAREER PATHWAYS FOR ACPS STUDENTS

ACPS celebrated the start of construction on the Albemarle Career Exploration (ACE) Academy — Lambs Lane Campus in February 2025. The 60,000-square-foot facility will expand Scholars Studios programming by providing up to 400 high school students each day with hands-on, career-aligned learning opportunities in fields that match their interests and future goals.

The ACE Academy will house six of the division's 12 Scholars Studios—Savor, Venture, Solve, Thrive, Blueprint, and Impact—offering flexible lab and studio spaces, seminar rooms for collaboration with industry partners, and technology-rich environments that support real-world learning and innovation. Designed with extensive community input, the project reflects ACPS' commitment to re-imagining high school so students can explore passions, build skills, and access clear pathways to careers and further education.

Located on the centrally connected Lambs Lane campus, ACE strengthens alignment among



Mountain View Elementary students join community and school division leaders in the ceremonial groundbreaking for the new Mountain View Upper Elementary School.

Albemarle High School, Journey Middle School, Greer Elementary School, and regional community partners. Construction also includes new parking and campus infrastructure improvements. The facility is scheduled to open for the 2026–27 school year as a sister site to ACE Academy — Seminole Place Campus.

2024-25 DIVISION SNAPSHOT

ACPS serves more than 14,000 students in preschool through 12th grade in Albemarle County, Virginia, the sixth largest county by area in the Commonwealth of Virginia. A diverse locality of 726 square miles in the heart of Central Virginia, Albemarle County is a blend of primarily rural, but also suburban and urban settings.

401 McIntire Road
Charlottesville, VA 22902
(434) 296-5820
Dr. Matthew S. Haas,
Superintendent
Region 5

14,173 students

13.6% Students with Disabilities

27.6% Economically Disadvantaged

13.0% English Learners

103 Countries of Origin

78 Home Languages

23.8% AP Tests Taken

38.0% AP Course Enrollment

26.50% Dual Enrollment

0.31% IB Program Enrollment

2,792 employees

1,398 Teachers
(including classroom teachers, speech pathologists, school counselors, instructional coaches and librarians)

200 Administrators
(including principals, assistant/associate principals and central office and other leadership personnel)

1,241 Classified Staff
(including all non-teacher and non-administrative positions such as teaching assistants, bus drivers, custodians, maintenance and food service staff, human resources staff and other support staff)

DATA spotlight

1,900 Daily Breakfasts

5,700 Daily Lunches

9,404 School Bus Miles Per Day

1:1 Tablets for K-2 Students

1:1 Laptops for 3-12 Students

18.9 Avg. Elementary Class Size

21.0 Avg. Middle School Class Size

20.7 Avg. High School Class Size







Albemarle County
Public Schools