
MESSAGE FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

February 19, 2026

Members of the Albemarle County School Board,

I am pleased to present the Fiscal Year 2026/27 Draft Funding Request for Albemarle County Public Schools. This proposal reflects our shared commitment to ensuring that every student experiences engaging, challenging, and equitable learning opportunities while maintaining responsible stewardship of public resources. At its core, this budget is about one central purpose: ***building our students' future*** - preparing them with the knowledge, skills, and support they need to thrive in a rapidly changing world.

The proposed FY 2026/27 budget totals \$336.9 million, including both the School Fund and Special Revenue Funds. The School Fund operating budget of \$311.3 million represents a 9.5% increase over the current year and is driven primarily by non-discretionary increases, including contractual agreements and new school building costs needed to sustain high-quality instructional programs.

This budget is firmly aligned with our Strategic Plan, *Learning for All*, and advances our three core goals: supporting thriving students, strengthening, affirming, and empowering communities, and ensuring equitable and transformative resources. Each of these priorities contributes to building students' future—academically, socially, and physically—so that every learner graduates prepared for college, career, and civic life.

Several key priorities shape this proposal:

Investing in our employees. Competitive compensation and benefits, along with improved working conditions, are essential to attracting and retaining the high-quality educators and staff who shape students' daily experiences and long-term success.

- *Maintaining strong instructional programs.* Baseline adjustments and operational investments ensure continuity in the services, materials, and supports that sustain effective teaching and learning.
- *Expanding opportunities for students.* The opening of Mountain View Upper Elementary School and the Albemarle Career Exploration Academy at Lambs Lane will provide modern learning environments and innovative pathways that help students explore interests and prepare for their futures.
- *Strengthening targeted supports.* Investments such as Math and Data Support Specialists and Special Education Specialists are designed to improve outcomes, address achievement gaps, and ensure that every student receives the support necessary to succeed.

At the same time, we have worked diligently to preserve long-term financial sustainability. The budget reflects disciplined planning, careful evaluation of proposals, and, where necessary, reductions or reallocations to balance priorities with available resources. Our goal is not only to meet today's needs but also to ensure that future students inherit a strong and stable school system.

This proposal is also the result of extensive engagement. Advisory committees, employees, students, and community members provided valuable feedback through meetings, surveys, and public input opportunities. Their perspectives have helped shape a budget that reflects our community's values and our shared belief in the importance of public education.

We recognize that we are operating in a challenging fiscal environment. Even so, I am confident that this budget represents a thoughtful and balanced plan—one that protects our core commitments, invests strategically in our students, and continues the steady work of ***building their future***.

I respectfully submit this draft budget for your consideration and look forward to working together in the weeks ahead to refine and adopt a final plan that serves our students, staff, and community well.

Sincerely,



Matthew S. Haas, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools
Albemarle County Public Schools