STRATEGIC PRIORITIES UPDATE

OVERVIEW

Horizon 2020, the Albemarle County Public Schools' Strategic Plan, consists of one, overarching goal for our system:

All students will graduate prepared for citizenship, post-secondary education and workforce entry levels as evidenced by multiple indicators of lifelong learning competencies.

Within the Horizon 2020 plan, the Albemarle County School Board has identified five objectives for the school division:

- **We will engage every student**
- **We will implement balanced assessments**
- **We will improve opportunity and achievement**
- **We will create and expand partnerships**
- **We will optimize resources**

Central staff reports on the division's progress toward meeting these goals and objectives multiple times throughout the year, and each biennium the school board reviews, revises and adopts strategic priorities that will push the division toward achieving success and meeting the challenge outlined in the Horizon 2020 motto of "Unleashing Each Student's Potential." In the fall of 2015, the board adopted the following strategic priorities for the 2015-2107 biennium:

- **All students will graduate prepared for citizenship, post-secondary education, and workforce entry levels as evidenced by multiple indicators of lifelong learning competencies.**
- **Increase the number of students accruing college credits and career pathway credentials prior to graduation.**
- **Increase the efficacy of our instructional staff by developing the pedagogical expertise essential to contemporary learning.**
- **Achieve a fully-funded capital and operational budget that meets the school system's needs for learning space modernization, instructional innovation, digitized learning, and competitive recruitment and retention of personnel. Optimize the use of all allocated fiscal resources to meet the goals of the division.**

The following report will serve to update the school board on the key strategies that are being implemented to achieve success on each priority, and will report on several formative indicators of our progress so far this biennium.

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Team19—Team19 is an innovative program launched by Albemarle High School in the 2015-2106 school year. AHS selected approximately sixty incoming freshman who were identified as having become disengaged from their school experience. Using a model of blended instruction originally developed in the MESA program, these students were placed into an interdisciplinary learning experience in which their four core classes are blended together and team-taught by a group of teachers focused around authentic learning experiences. The model so far has been highly successful as evidenced through students expressing a higher level of engagement and interest in school. This model also affords these students more opportunity to participate in elective classes, and so far this year, students have shown increased attendance, improved academic performance, and lower rates of discipline referrals. By their junior year, it is anticipated that these students will be moving into honors and/or AP level courses, and the program plans to expand with each incoming group of freshmen.

ACPS Portrait of a Graduate—It has been a number of years since ACPS hosted community focus groups centered around the skills and competencies that our students need to possess to be successful in the world after high school. Central staff is working to partner with local community, business and education leaders to affirm that we understand the tools that are most crucial to student success upon graduation. The Horizon 2020 plan along with community feedback will help us to paint a picture of and ACPS graduate and to also develop benchmarks at different grade bands that will ensure our students are making progress toward this goal beginning in elementary school.

Multi-age instruction—Agnor-Hurt Elementary School has embarked upon a redesigned instructional delivery model that breaks down the barriers that traditionally exist between our grade levels in elementary schools. Their multi-age instructional model is already showing many positive impacts for the participating students including the flexibility to move between content groups for enrichment and/or re-teaching, shared control of the classroom environment between teachers and students, the development of an atmosphere conducive to risk taking, and a stronger sense of community and family among a diverse group of students. The mutli-age, team-teaching model also provides myriad instructional benefits for participating teachers such as a greater ability to differentiate instruction to meet student needs, a strong model of collaboration that gets passed along to students, and increased avenues for parent and community communication. The popularity of this program among families is evident and there is potential for expansion with within Agnor-Hurt and in other schools in the division.

College Workforce Readiness Assessment—Albemarle County is again using the College Workforce Readiness Assessment. The CWRA is a nationally normed performance task that is designed to measure students' proficiency with 21st century skills. A sample of high school students will take this test this year allowing us to compare results from testing that took place three years ago. Information on the CWRA can be found [here](#).

Digital Portfolios—Albemarle County Public Schools has partnered with Indiana University's Creativity Labs and the Maker Ed on the "Open Portfolio Project." Five teachers at Monticello High School are currently working with the project which is designed to "investigate the utility of portfolios as a central tool for lifelong learning and as a compelling alternative to contemporary assessment practices for the broader community of makers, K-12 education, higher education, and the STEAM workplace." This work will help us to change the mindset around the type of work we are asking children to undertake in our classrooms as we ask ourselves what type of products would be worthy of inclusion in a digital portfolio. This work is more important than ever as 80 colleges and universities have joined the Coalition for Access, Affordability and Success which is moving toward college applications that are rooted in students' "virtual locker" of work that represents their secondary school experience. It is hoped that this project will expand to Burley Middle School sometime this school year.

FORMATIVE INDICATORS

Formative indicators of our progress toward this goal can be found in appendix A.

GOALS FOR THE END OF THE SCHOOL YEAR

- Continued study of the Team19 model at Albemarle High School with plans for expansion at AHS and the possible development of similar programs at other county high schools.
- Completion of the ACPS Portrait of a Graduate
- Continued study and possible expansion of the multi-age classroom initiative.
- Completion and study of the CWRA results

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Implementation of college/career planning software—Central staff is currently in the process of procuring access to an online college and career planning tool. We anticipate that such a tool will provide a dynamic platform for students to use that walks them through the cycle of self-discovery, career exploration, academic planning and college and career preparation. This tool will also potentially provide a number of resources that will enable our students to take ownership of their academic planning while also providing the school division with tools that will help us to track the level of college and career readiness that we provide for our students. We are currently in the planning phase and hope to have a tool procured, rolled out and available to students and school counselors by the beginning of the 2016-2017 school year.

Expansion of the pathways programs in our high schools—The Arts and Letters Pathway was developed and implemented at Albemarle High School in the 2014-2015 school year. The pathways program provides students an opportunity to choose from over ten areas of concentration in areas such as creative writing, theater, band, orchestra and art. Students enroll in a pathway during their freshman or sophomore year, follow a prescribed course of study in their area of concentration and also complete internships, community service and a capstone project related to their concentration. Students who are participating in this program show their commitment to excellence in these areas and gain valuable, authentic experience as they prepare for life after high school. This year the arts and letters pathway program has expanded to Western Albemarle High School. Plans are in the works to create a new series of pathways focused on STEM education that will launch in the 2016-2017 school year.

Work experience and internships—Beginning this school year, the for-credit internship courses in all Albemarle County High Schools have been revamped to bring clear, consistent expectations to the requirements students should meet as they participate in internship programs. All internship experiences are now supervised by our high school career specialists who have developed instructional modules for all students to complete. In addition to this, career specialists are implementing practices to track more informal experiences such as mentorships, job shadowing, apprenticeships and employment experiences in which our students are participating. These practices will allow us to develop a much clearer picture of the types of experiences our students are participating in, and will allow us to determine the percentage of unique students who are enhancing their education through these types of experiences.

FORMATIVE INDICATORS

Formative indicators of our progress toward this goal can be found in appendix B.

GOALS FOR THE END OF THE SCHOOL YEAR
- Develop an implementation plan for college/career planning software

- Develop tags in PowerSchool to begin collecting data on students who have completed one of the items outlined in the key metric
- Adopt a strategy for communicating with our graduates about their K-12 experience
- Implementation of the STEM pathways program

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Lead Innovation Fund for Teaching—A budget initiative will be proposed with the Superintendent's funding request to support the Lead Innovation Fund for Teaching (LIFT). LIFT is designed to support professional learning through development and extension of contemporary teaching expertise and competencies that are essential to addressing a continuum of student learning needs across all curricula. In combination with the Professional Development Reimbursement Program that reimburses teachers for work on individualized goals for professional learning, LIFT funds will be used to develop in-depth competencies specific to objectives of the division's Board-adopted *Horizon 2020* Strategic Plan, *Educational Technology* Plan, and the *Federal Programs* plan. This initiative restores professional development funding reduced during the recession.

LIFT funds will provide differentiated professional training based upon multiple sources of information including students' learning performance and teacher needs assessment and feedback. Training will be designed to ensure instructional strategies are transferred into practice in the classroom with support from instructional coaches, technology staff and master teachers in our schools.

TPA Study—Central staff is currently conducting a study of the Albemarle County Public Schools Teacher Performance Assessment tool. The purpose of the study is two-fold, with the primary goal being to determine what practices are currently most effective in improving teacher performance in the classroom and providing teachers with effective feedback to allow for their professional growth. A secondary outcome of the study will be to help the division determine our needs for professional development and provide guidance to programs such as LIFT that will increase teacher efficacy and in turn increase student learning.

Project Based Learning—Project Based Learning is one of the areas identified in the Albemarle County Public Schools' seven pathways that ensure lifelong learning competencies. During the summer of 2016, Albemarle County Public Schools will be partnering with the Buck Institute for Education, the global leader in project based learning, to train teachers in PBL techniques in order to increase the number of students who experience this type of instruction. Seventy teachers and administrators, primarily from our middle schools, will complete the three day PBL 101 workshop this summer and will begin to deliver PBL experiences to their students in the 2016-2107 school year. The PBL partnership will be studied that year and, if successful, hopes to expand in the future.

HR Screening Interviews—HR screening interviews began in the 2013-2014 school year as a way to help provide school principals with a pre-screened pool of top level candidates for open teaching positions. This process has expanded this year to one that begins in December and runs through the completion of the hiring process in the summer. Screening interviews rank candidates on a scale of 1-5 with five being the top score a candidate can receive. Principals have access to screening interview

scores and are encouraged to focus their hiring efforts on candidates who receive a score of four or five. This process will be enhanced further as we are beginning a longitudinal study that will focus on the relationship of a candidate's screening score, their actual performance once hired and their level of retention with ACPS.

FORMATIVE INDICATORS

Formative indicators of our progress toward this gDevloal can be found in [appendix C](#).

GOALS FOR THE END OF THE YEAR

- Full funding for the LIFT budget initiative
- Completion of the TPA study
- Implementation of the Buck Institute Partnership
- Development of the longitudinal HR study of screening interviews

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Digital Learning Initiative—The digital learning initiative is in its first year of full one-to-one implementation in grades 6-12. Division staff members are continuing to build our a hybrid learning environment of both curated and division created resources that are housed in Blackboard and are available to all of our instructional staff members. A project was recently launched to conduct a minimum of two "technology walks" in every classroom to determine where we are, as a school system, on our path towards highly engaging, digitally-enhanced learning.

Learning Technology Integrators—Five full time Learning Technology Integrators (LTI's) began their work in secondary schools at the beginning of the year. In addition to providing classroom support around the integration of technology to our teachers, LTI's have been working with building administrators to develop Learning Engagement Goals. These goals work in conjunction with school Strategic Improvement Plans to determine how digital learning and technology can be used to move a school forward in meeting its academic, professional development and school climate goals.

Universal Broadband Access—Albemarle County Public School's Department of Accountability, Research and Technology (DART) is currently in the final stage of a pilot program evaluating residential equipment needed to deliver the ACPS public wireless network to all homes county-wide. Plans are for the initial phase of this rollout to begin later this school year with a focus first on high need areas of the county, with full rollout and coverage complete within three years. Once complete, ACPS will have effectively closed the digital divide for all of our students.

Legislative Priorities—The Albemarle County Public School legislative agenda includes three items that directly reflect the board's desire to see greater budgetary support directed to public schools by the Commonwealth of Virginia. The board has expressed its desire for the General Assembly to authorize a JLARC study of the Standards of Quality to better reflect the needs of modern learners. In addition the board has requested that legislation be passed to reduce the property tax burden by empowering local governments to generate revenue across a broader base. Finally, the board has requested that the composite index calculation formula be reformed to reflect the real property tax monies that are actually received by a locality. These priorities, if enacted by the General Assembly, will serve to enhance the educational opportunities we are able to afford our students in Albemarle County.

Program Evaluation—The part-time program evaluation position has been filled and program evaluation will begin this school year. The initial areas of focus for program evaluation that have been presented to the school board include selected intervention and prevention services, personalized

learning and the community public charter school. As we enter the budget season, it is becoming clear that healthcare costs are continuing to rise, suggesting that this area may need to be added to the areas under consideration for program evaluation. This position will help us to measure our return on investment and determine whether or not our limited funds are being spent in the most cost-effective manner.

FORMATIVE INDICATORS

Formative indicators of our progress toward this goal can be found in appendix D.

GOALS FOR THE END OF THE YEAR

- A fully-funded, needs-based budget
- Completion of at least one program evaluation
- Initial roll out of the universal broadband initiative

Priority One-- All students will graduate prepared for citizenship, post-secondary education, and workforce entry levels as evidenced by multiple indicators of lifelong learning competencies.	
Formative indicators	***Mid-year update***
Archiving/sharing individual student performance-based assessments with students and parents	• *Performance task results will be shared with parents via the parent portal in PowerSchool* • *Schools will be developing plans to communicate information about the performance task program to parents*
Creating digital portfolios to tag mastery of lifelong learner competencies	• *Developing digital portfolio ideas with high school principals* • *Exploring the new digital portfolio tool being developed by the coalition for access, affordability and success* • *Adoption of college/career planning software*
Progress on LLLC's reported to the board on a annual basis	• *Complete and ongoing. See the* state of the division report *for access to results*
Increase number of students engaged in community-based learning and virtual/blended learning courses	• *Career specialists are working this year to more closely monitor all students who are participating in community-based learning opportunities. Data on this will be available at the end of the year.*
Increasing the number of virtual course offering	• *See* state of division
Increase in the number of courses taught through an interdisciplinary PBL model	• *Partnership with the Buck Institute will be implemented with summer with a focus on middle school teachers. 70 teachers will be trained in the development and delivery of project based learning units*
Integration of entrepreneurial learning opportunities	• *Total number of students enrolled in entrepreneurship.—63 in high school, 35 in middle school. Up from last year.* • *Students have access to other opportunities such as start-up weekend hosted at WAHS, upcoming three day workshop in collaboration with the iLab at UVA in which 50 HS students will participate* • *Students participating in local innovation*

	events such as Tom Tom Founders Festival and Charlottesville Maker Faire
Increase in number of students participating in redesigned elective experiences—arts pathways, cte, stem, world languages	• *Total CTE enrollments is 4822 compared to 4285 last year*
Development of elementary world languages in two more school by 2016	• *Meriwether Lewis and Woodbrook Elementary Schools are scheduled to begin next year*
Increase in partnerships for more work/career learning opportunities	• *Career specialists have revamped and aligned the internship curriculum. New monitoring and reporting systems are in place to track student opportunities in this area.*

Priority Two--Increase the number of students accruing college credits and career pathway credentials prior to graduation.	
Formative indicators	***Mid-year update***
Implementation of dynamic career planning tool	• *vendor presentations complete* • *determining potential funding sources* • *developing expectations for student/counselor use*
Students leaving middle school with advanced math credits	• *646/995 = 64.9%*
Students leaving middle school with cte electives	• *687/995 = 69%*
Students by demographic with advanced cte/stem participation	• *Working on a way to disaggregate this data.*
Students completing work-based, independent study or practical learning experience	• *Data is currently being collected by our career specialists and will be available at the end of the school year.*
Middle school students earning hs credit before ninth grade by demographic	<table><tr><th>Subgroups</th><th>HS Credit in MS</th></tr><tr><td>All Students</td><td>646</td></tr><tr><td>Black (Gap Group 2)</td><td>5.1</td></tr><tr><td>Hispanic (Gap Group 3)</td><td>6.5</td></tr><tr><td>White</td><td>77.6</td></tr><tr><td>Asian</td><td>5.7</td></tr><tr><td>Students with Disabilities</td><td>6.2</td></tr><tr><td>Economically Disadv</td><td>13.4</td></tr><tr><td>Limited English Prof</td><td>1.4</td></tr></table> **Percentages of total students earning a HS credit in MS, not percentage of all 8th graders*
8th graders in standard level vs 6th graders in standard level	• *This is hard to produce because at least one middle school has been removing course levels in language arts classes.*
Study adding more career pathways	• *STEM pathways will be added at AHS beginning in the 2016-2017 school year*

Graduation rates by demographic	<table><tr><th>Subgroups</th><th>OTG</th></tr><tr><td>All Students</td><td>94.3</td></tr><tr><td>Black (Gap Group 2)</td><td>88.5</td></tr><tr><td>Hispanic (Gap Group 3)</td><td>90.8</td></tr><tr><td>White</td><td>95.3</td></tr><tr><td>Asian</td><td>100</td></tr><tr><td>Students with Disabilities</td><td>89.8</td></tr><tr><td>Economically Disadv</td><td>86.5</td></tr><tr><td>Limited English Prof</td><td>88.9</td></tr></table>
Advanced studies diplomas by demographic	<table><tr><th>Subgroups</th><th>Advanced Diploma</th></tr><tr><td>All Students</td><td>65.1</td></tr><tr><td>Black (Gap Group 2)</td><td>36.5</td></tr><tr><td>Hispanic (Gap Group 3)</td><td>48.7</td></tr><tr><td>White</td><td>70.9</td></tr><tr><td>Asian</td><td>78.3</td></tr><tr><td>Students with Disabilities</td><td>16.1</td></tr><tr><td>Economically Disadv</td><td>37.2</td></tr><tr><td>Limited English Prof</td><td>25.9</td></tr></table>
Post-graduate surveys	- *Have contacted a company about providing this. Currently evaluating the value of their product*
Increased levels of engagement as evidenced through climate surveys	- *Data on this will be available at the end of the school year.*

Priority Three-- Increase the efficacy of our instructional staff by developing the pedagogical expertise essential to contemporary learning.	
Formative indicators	*Mid-year update*
Year-over-year average tpa scores	• *Available at year end*
Increase in learning walk data for level of blooms, student engagement and choice/comfort	
School climate data will show more highly engaged and curious students	• *Available at year end*
Increase in percentage of teachers working on long-range projects with instructional coaches	• *421 teachers so far this year. Comparative data will be available at the end of the year*

Observed Bloom's Level

— Low — Middle — High

	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16*
Middle	50.8	49.3	46.2
Low	30.1	35.4	39.2
High	19.2	15.3	14.6

Level of Engagement

— Off-task — On-task — Engaged

	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16*
Engaged	57.9	58.5	61.1
On-task	41.6	40.7	38.4
Off-task	0.6	0.8	0.6

Choice & Comfort

— Observed

	2013-14**	2014-15	2015-16*
Observed	24.1	43.9	42.7

Annual SIP targets reported to board	• *Available at year end*
MS/HS innovation committee reports to board	• *Middle Schools—focused on the implementation of the Buck Institute partnership for implementing project-based learning* • *High Schools—expansion of pathways programs, Team19, open portfolio project*
Increase in personalized pd offerings and participation aligned to lllc's	• *258 workshops have been offered so far this year, with 4,626 seats filled in those workshops. Year over year data will be available in June.*

Priority four— Achieve a fully-funded capital and operational budget that meets the school system's needs for learning space modernization, instructional innovation, digitized learning, and competitive recruitment and retention of personnel. Optimize the use of all allocated fiscal resources to meet the goals of the division.

Formative indicators	*Mid-year update*
Create board legislative priorities focused on the development of more state and local resources	• *complete*
Build community support through events created in conjunction with parent advisory groups	• *not completed*
Rubric for assessing current resources to respond to demographically and culturally diverse community	• *Currently reviewing the feasibility of developing this metric*
Research and report alternative funding sources	• *Citizen Resource Advisory Committee made a* report *to the BOS on this subject.*
Develop a board-driven communication plan to build community support	• *Development of legislative priorities*
Fully implemented digital learning in all grades by 2018	• *Currently 1-1 in grades 6-12 and 1-2 in grades K-5.*
Universal broadband access by 2020	• *Initial rollout planned for later this year with full build out within three years.*
Annual HR reports on strength of candidate pool and staff retention rates	• *Longitudinal study of candidates with high screening interview scores has begun.*