



## Board-to-Board, January 2026

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*A monthly report from the Albemarle County School Board to the Albemarle County Board of Supervisors*

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***Albemarle County Public Schools Among Highest Rated School Divisions in Virginia***—Albemarle County Public Schools (ACPS) ranks among the highest rated school systems in the Commonwealth of Virginia. That is according to data released by the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) through its new School Performance and Support Framework, which rates schools based on 2024-25 Standards of Learning (SOL) data, attendance records and performance data for all public schools in Virginia.

Two-thirds (66.6%) of all ACPS schools met or exceeded Virginia standards, on par with the statewide results of 66%. However, one-third (33.3%) received the Distinguished designation, significantly outpacing the statewide results of 23% receiving that designation. ACPS also ranks among the jurisdictions with the highest percentage of Distinguished schools among those with populations above 100,000.

Read the full article: [Albemarle County Public Schools Among Highest Rated School Divisions in Virginia](#)

***School Board Member Graham Paige Retires***—After 10 years of service on the Albemarle County School Board, Samuel Miller District representative Graham Paige will retire from his seat effective Dec. 31, 2025.

A lifelong resident of Esmont, Virginia, a graduate of Jackson P. Burley High School and a teacher for 25 years, Paige brought to the board a deep knowledge of the county and of education. During his time on the board, he has championed closing the achievement gap, investing in teachers and staff, and strengthening instructional direction and support.

Paige was elected to serve as the Samuel Miller District representative in 2015. In July 2020, he became chair of the board after then-At Large Representative Jonno Alcaro stepped down from the role. Paige helped guide the board through the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent recovery efforts and remained chair through the end of 2022.

During his tenure, school board members worked with Albemarle County Public Schools (ACPS) staff to write and adopt the division's current strategic plan, *Learning for All*; expand mental health support for students by increasing school-based mental health professionals; and strengthen services for English Learners by expanding staffing and supports, among other initiatives.

Read the full article: [School Board Member Graham Paige Retires](#)

***ACPS and AEA Reach Tentative Collective Bargaining Agreement***—The Albemarle Education Association (AEA) and Albemarle County Public Schools (ACPS) are excited to announce that after several months of contract negotiations, the parties have achieved a tentative collective bargaining agreement.

The tentative agreement contains provisions related to paid parental leave for employees, expanded planning time for elementary teachers, a paid bereavement leave category, a partial payout of accrued, unused sick leave, and guaranteed annual salary increases. The provisions reflect priorities brought forward by the AEA bargaining team, derived from information gathered from the bargaining unit members.

With a tentative agreement approved by the negotiating parties, the document must now be ratified by the AEA union members and the School Board. ACPS staff plans to bring the agreement to the School Board for consideration in January.

Read the full article: [ACPS and AEA Reach Tentative Collective Bargaining Agreement](#)

***ACPS and ACPD Update School Resource Officer Memorandum of Understanding***—Albemarle County Public Schools (ACPS) and the Albemarle County Police Department (ACPD) have finalized an updated School Resource Officer (SRO) Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for our high schools. This agreement reflects our shared commitment to keeping schools safe, welcoming, and inclusive for every student.

The updated MOU is based on input gathered through meetings, community conversations, engagement sessions, and a divisionwide SRO Program Family Survey held last spring. Families and community members told us they want schools that are safe and supportive—places where officers are visible, approachable, and respectful.

Highlights of the updated MOU include:

- **Building community:** The updated MOU strengthens the partnership between ACPS and ACPD and promotes positive, respectful relationships between SROs, students, and staff.
- **Defined roles:** SROs are law enforcement officers who support safety and emergency response. They do not handle routine discipline.
- **Training and accountability:** SROs complete state certification and ongoing training in mental health awareness, de-escalation, disability awareness, cultural understanding, and bias prevention.
- **Student privacy:** Student information is protected under federal and state law (FERPA) and shared only when allowed by law or during an emergency that affects health or safety.
- **Transparency:** ACPS will post the current MOU and other program information on its website and update it during each review cycle.
- **Respect for all families:** ACPD has no legal authority to enforce federal immigration laws and is not responsible for immigration detention orders. ACPD also does not ask about the immigration status of victims and witnesses, including ACPS students and families.
- **Ongoing review:** ACPS and ACPD will meet regularly to review the SRO program and share public updates with the School Board.

***ACPS Marks Topping Out Milestone for New ACE Academy***—Albemarle County Public Schools (ACPS) marked a major construction milestone on November 5 with the topping out of the new Albemarle Career Exploration (ACE) Academy – Lambs Lane Campus, a facility expected to serve up to 400 high school students each day beginning in fall 2026.

When complete, the 60,000-square-foot campus will house studios in fields such as business, engineering, robotics, health sciences, architecture, transportation, education and culinary arts. The building will also include an Innovation Hub, Learning Commons, outdoor courtyard and flexible instructional spaces shaped by student input. Sustainable design features include energy-efficient systems and environmentally conscious materials, along with building elements that bring natural light into learning spaces to support a healthy learning environment.

Read the full article: [ACPS Marks Topping Out Milestone for New ACE Academy](#)

***ACPS to Expand Preschool Programming in Partnership with United Way of Greater***

***Charlottesville***—Albemarle County Public Schools (ACPS), in partnership with the United Way of Greater Charlottesville (UWGC), expanded early learning opportunities for more than 100 preschool-age students across the county in mid-November.

As a sub-recipient of the grant, ACPS is able to expand preschool services. In addition to the 45 students previously enrolled in Community Development Institute (CDI) at Agnor, Crozet and Greer elementary schools, ACPS will offer an additional 57 seats, including 20 seats at Woodbrook Elementary, 18 seats at Agnor Elementary, and 18 seats at Greer Elementary, to eligible families.

Through this collaboration, ACPS and UWGC strive to close opportunity gaps, strengthen early learning pathways, and give every child the best possible start. Together, they are building a foundation not only for kindergarten readiness but also for long-term success in school and in life.

Read the full article: [ACPS to Expand Preschool Programming in Partnership with United Way of Greater Charlottesville](#)

***ACPS, Community Partners Provide Holiday Meal Support to More Than 260 Families***—Albemarle County Public Schools (ACPS) and Communities in Schools (CIS) partnered with several local community organizations to provide families with support and supplies for the Thanksgiving holiday through its “Mobile Markets” initiative. Three Mobile Markets were staged at each of our CIS-supported schools to serve more than 260 families from across the county.

With support from schools, volunteers and community partners across Albemarle County, this year’s Mobile Markets ensured that hundreds of families will have the ingredients they need for a holiday meal. ACPS officials say the continued collaboration among local organizations remains essential in meeting the needs of students and families.

Read the full article: [ACPS, Community Partners Provide Holiday Meal Support to More Than 260 Families](#)