




## ESOL Education In Albemarle County

A Publication for ESOL Residents in Albemarle County

### The American Philosophy of Education

	
<i>Education in Albemarle County</i>	
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The United States Educational System is very different from many other countries. It is a decentralized system with control of school policy and procedures in the hands of local officials called a School Board. Also underlying the educational philosophy are the principles of equality, individualism, and freedom.

**Equality**

The educational system is based on the belief that as many people as possible should have access to as much education as possible. Therefore, in public schools, students from all backgrounds are admitted and educated. Parents are not charged for education, books, transportation, etc. There are special programs available for low income families and special needs children.

**Individualism**

Another goal of the American educational system is to teach students how to learn and to help each individual reach his or her maximum potential. Because of the emphasis on the individual student, the focus

of instruction is not memorization. Instead, teachers want students to explore, experiment, and analyze. Students are encouraged to ask questions, think for themselves, and express their own opinions. The goal of education is to help students identify their strengths. In order to do this, schools require students to take a wide range of courses, including some non-academic subjects such as sports and music. Because of this, academic specialization comes later than it does in other countries.

**Freedom**

Students have much more freedom in American schools. For example, uniforms are rarely used and students may be given tests to complete at home. It must be remembered that with these freedoms come responsibilities. The students are evaluated on all aspects of their work, including the ability to handle the freedoms that they are given.

**Local Control Through the School Board**

The School Board acts as the



**Cale Elementary School, Located in Albemarle County**

governing body over the county schools. In Albemarle County the members are elected and preside over the school system for a limited term. They make decisions regarding policies, instruction, funding, facilities, etc. The seven members of the Albemarle School Board represent each of the six magisterial districts in the county and there is one at-large member. Both Charlottesville and Albemarle have their own School Board, so each school system may have different policies and rules.

### Elementary, Middle, High, and Other School Options

**School Structure**

Formal schooling usually lasts for about 12 years. Most school districts require a year of Kindergarten. To attend Kindergarten, children must be five years old on or before September 30th. Each of the school years is called a grade and the term **K-12** refers to Kindergarten through 12th grade.

Pre-school and frequently the first or second year of formal schooling are collectively termed **Early Childhood Education**. Formal primary education is called **Elementary Education** and ranges from first grade through grade 4, 5, or 6, depending on state and district regulations. The next level of education is often organized separately into a unit called **Middle School**, which begins at grade 5 or 6

and ends at grade 8. Regular **Secondary Education** is called High School, beginning at grade 9 and ending at grade 12.

**Pre-School Preparation**

The majority of U.S. children now begin their education prior to entering regular school, and some states now require enrollment in pre-school. Most of these programs require tuition; however, there are tuition-free options for low income families such as the Federal Government's Head Start Program and the Albemarle County Bright Stars Program. Bright Stars classrooms are at five elementary schools in the county. It is a pre-school program for four-year-olds who have some degree of educational, financial, medical, or emotional needs.

For an application please contact Stone-Robinson, Greer, Agnor-Hurt, Cale, or Scottsville Elementary Schools.

**Elementary School**

Albemarle County has sixteen elementary schools. Charlottesville has six neighborhood elementary schools. Typically students in elementary schools remain in one room with one teacher during the school day. Some may be "pulled out" for special classes at scheduled times each day. County elementary schools start with one year of Kindergarten, and then first through fifth grade. Charlottesville City elementary schools also start with one year of kindergarten, and after that with first grade through fourth grade.



**Albemarle High School**

## Elementary, Middle, High, and Other School Options, Continued



**CATEC, The  
Charlottesville  
Albemarle  
Technical  
Education Center**



### *How Can I Help My Child in School?*

In American schools parents are encouraged to actively participate in their child's education by:

- Reading daily with their child, either in English or home language
- Providing a quiet time and place for school work
- Visiting their child's school
- Attending parent-teacher conferences
- Becoming members of the Parent Teacher Organization (PTO)
- Attending school activities, such as field trips, fun fairs, and other events
- Attending Open Houses and Back to School Nights
- Carefully reviewing all communications sent home with your child and any student work, tests, etc.

### Middle School

Albemarle County has five middle schools (grade 6 through 8). Charlottesville students attend Walker Upper Elementary School in the 5th and 6th grade and Buford Middle School in the 7th and 8th grade. In middle school, teachers have 20 to 30 students in a classroom, with a new set of students coming in each class period.

### High School

Albemarle County has four high schools, Albemarle, Western Albemarle, Monticello, and Murray. Students who live in the city attend Charlottesville High School. These five schools contain grades 9-12 and offer students a strong base for entering higher education, as well as for entering the workforce. Upon completion of high school, students graduate and receive a High School Diploma.

### K-12 ESOL

Federal and State law requires that all ESOL students be carefully evaluated for English language proficiency and

provided with appropriate curricula and instruction. Initial evaluation is performed at the time of registration and student progress is assessed throughout the school year. Albemarle County serves approximately 800 children representing 54 languages and 70 countries in the K-12 system. ESOL children register at the International and ESOL Program office, 907 Henry Avenue. For information on the ESOL curriculum please visit:

<http://www.k12albemarle.org/intlang>

### Other Schooling Options

American parents have the option of sending their children to private schools as well as teaching them at home. Private schools offer many different types of programs as well as a more individualized educational program. Unlike public schools, the parents must pay tuition for their children to attend. The Central Virginia area has many fine private schools. For a listing of local private schools, check the yellow pages under Schools-Private. Home-schooling is

also an option, but parents must follow specific guidelines and procedures for their child to receive credit for their education. For more information about home-schooling please visit: [www.homeschool.com](http://www.homeschool.com).

### Special Education

U. S. law requires a free and appropriate education for all handicapped children who need some form of special support for diagnosed disabilities beginning at birth and continuing until age 21. Students who complete programs in **special education** also receive certificates (if the program is not equivalent to secondary curriculum) or diplomas (generally equivalent to secondary graduation). In addition to providing programs for students with disabilities, many schools also offer special advanced classes for some 2.4 million school-age students that are accelerated learners. These classes are often referred to as **Gifted and Talented Programs**.

## Vocational Education

Vocational education is a work-oriented education. It provides technical and academic training for careers in different occupational fields. The length of the curriculum varies from one month to three years.

### Areas of Training

Students can specialize in: Automotive, Masonry, Bricklaying, Carpentry, Computer Repair and Maintenance, Cosmetology, Culinary Arts, Early Childhood Education, Health, and Catering, and other career-related

subjects.

### Student Enrollment

Vocational education is available to high school-aged students and any interested adults. It provides a wonderful training experience for those looking to work immediately following graduation as well as for those looking to change careers.

### Benefits of Vocational Education

Students completing vocational courses are more likely to find jobs in

their field of training and are less likely to be unemployed over time than those with a more general background. Another benefit is that vocational education is relatively inexpensive and financial aid is available for those who qualify.

### Enrollment Requirements

Applications for enrollment are available at the Center and through the schools. For more information, please contact CATEC at: (434)973-4461 or at [www.catec.org](http://www.catec.org).

## Adult ESOL Education and Other Classes



**Adult Education and English as a Second or Other Language classes are available through the Charlottesville and Albemarle School Systems**

There are several organizations that offer English, GED, and other continuing education classes to adult ESOL students.

### Adult ESOL

Throughout the year Albemarle County Adult Education offers a variety of day and evening ESOL classes ranging from general English at all levels to pronunciation, conversation, writing, and TOEFL preparation. Many local workplaces also offer classes to employees through the Albemarle County program. Most classes charge a small fee; however, some require tuition. Homework help and ESOL enrichment for the children of adults attending classes are available at certain sites. For

more information please visit us at [www.k12albemarle.org/Adult](http://www.k12albemarle.org/Adult), or call (434)296-3872 ext. 2.

Among other places, ESOL instruction is also offered to adult students at the following locations:

#### **Charlottesville Adult Education:**

[www.avenue.org/adulted](http://www.avenue.org/adulted)

Phone: (434) 245-2825

#### **International Center at UVA:**

[www.virginia.edu/iso.ic](http://www.virginia.edu/iso.ic)

Phone: (434) 924-7983

#### **Church of the Incarnation:**

Phone: (434) 973-4381

### GED Programs

The GED (General Educational Development) credential is awarded to those who did not graduate from high

school, but complete a special supervised study and examination program. Albemarle and Charlottesville offer several classes to those who are interested in obtaining their GED credential. For more information about Albemarle County classes please contact: (434) 296-3872. For Charlottesville classes, please contact: (434) 245-2825.

### Continuing Education Programs

A wide variety of special interest courses ranging from Computer Skills to Photography are offered by the Albemarle Continuing Education program. For information contact: Community Education at (434)975-9451 or [www.opendoors1/org.Albemarle](http://www.opendoors1/org.Albemarle).

## Community Colleges

Community colleges offer programs that involve up to two years of higher education. These programs offer two different certificates for students: an Associate of Arts degree and an Associate of Science degree.

### Student Enrollment

A community college is a good place for people who do not want to go through a four year university or college to get a higher education. People of all ages and backgrounds can attend and apply for a degree. Even foreign students can get degrees in community colleges, sometimes without taking the T.O.E.F.L. exam. They just have to take a mathematics and English placement test prior to the start of their education. The placement tests are designed to determine

the students' knowledge and proficiency in mathematics and English.

### Curriculum

Community college courses focus mainly on the curriculum that helps the students with the degree that they have declared. They do not require courses that are not related, or are weakly related to the students' degrees.

### Transferring to a Four-Year College or University

Students who want to transfer their courses to a 4-year university after obtaining their Associates Degree can usually receive about 60 credit hours towards a Bachelors Degree.

### Benefits of Community Colleges

Community colleges have more

affordable tuition fees for the students than the public or private four-year institutions. Also, under some circumstances financial aid is available for those students who cannot afford the tuition and qualify for aid.

### Community Colleges in this Area

Charlottesville and Albemarle residents are fortunate to have two community colleges that are located nearby. Piedmont Virginia Community College (PVCC) is located on College Drive, near Monticello in Albemarle County, and Blue Ridge Community College is in Weyers Cave, VA.

For more information about PVCC, visit: [www.pvcc.cc.va.us/](http://www.pvcc.cc.va.us/).

For information about Blue Ridge, visit: [www.br.cc.va.us/](http://www.br.cc.va.us/)



**Piedmont Virginia Community College, Located in Albemarle County**

## Colleges and Universities

Colleges and Universities in the United States are also referred to as "Higher Education." Like elementary and secondary education, there are both public and private schools in Higher Education.

### Public versus Private Institutions

Public institutions are usually less expensive than private institutions because they receive funding from the state. Public institutions are less expensive for "in-state" residents than for "out-of-state" residents. Students are considered to be "in-state" residents if they have lived in the state for at least one year.

### Colleges versus Universities

International students should understand some important facts about colleges and universities in the United States.

The terms "college" and "university" are basically the same thing. Each is a four-year institution, offering Bachelor's Degrees, but if a student wishes to continue for a Masters or PhD degree, he/she must go to a university because colleges do not offer post-graduate programs.

### Enrollment

Admission to a college or university is not solely dependent on academic work. Normally an international student must pass the Test of English as a Foreign Language (T.O.E.F.L.). Universities set their own passing score. In addition, students must write an essay as a part of the application process. This essay is one of the most important elements in the selection

decision and applicants should put a considerable amount of time and effort into writing the piece.

### Tuition

American colleges and universities can be very expensive. Because "higher education" is costly, many students apply and qualify for financial assistance. There are many options for students who do not have enough money to attend. The Financial Aid office at the college or university that you plan to attend will have information about this assistance. For parents of future students, there are several tax-free savings plans. In Virginia, two of the plans are: The Virginia Prepaid Education Program and the Virginia College Savings Plan. For more information on either of these plans, please visit: [www.virginia529.com](http://www.virginia529.com).

### Room and Board

Most American students choose to leave their parents' homes and live at their schools. If you choose to live on campus, it is important that you remember to include the cost of "room and board" when looking at the total cost of an education. "Room and board" is the cost of the dormitory and the food plan, and it is not unusual for this cost to be equal to or greater than the tuition.

### General Education

Colleges and universities usually have a program of required courses or coursework that is designed to produce a "well-rounded" individual. For example, even though a student

plans to become an engineer, he/she must still take the required courses which may include philosophy, the arts, history, etc. It usually takes a student approximately two years to complete all of the general education requirements.


### Virginia Colleges and Universities

In Virginia, there are more than 100 colleges and universities. The State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV) is an excellent source of information about Virginia's colleges and universities. To visit SCHEV go to: [www.schev.edu](http://www.schev.edu).

### International Degrees

To have your international degree and coursework evaluated please contact one of the following agencies for more information:

- **Global Credential Evaluators:** (804) 639-3660
- **Center for Educational Documentation:** (617) 983-5232
- **International Consultants of Delaware, Incorporated:** (302) 737-8715
- **International Education Research Foundation Credentials Evaluation Service:** (310) 390-6276
- **Josef Silny and Associates:** (305) 273-1616
- **World Education Services, Incorporated:** (212) 966-6311

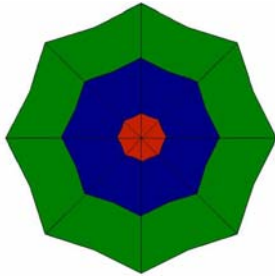
  
*"Enlighten the people generally, and tyranny and oppression of the body and mind will vanish like spirits at the dawn of the day."*  
-Thomas Jefferson



**The Rotunda, Located on the University of Virginia Grounds**

ESOL EDUCATION IN  
ALBEMARLE COUNTY

*The Web Project*



907 Henry Avenue  
Charlottesville, VA 22903

(434) 296-3872 ext. 2  
rsnider@k12albemarle.org

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**WWW.WEBESL.COM**

*"We Expect Success"*



**The Albemarle County Office Building**

This publication is part of a series of informational materials prepared by the students of the Albemarle County Adult Education *Web Project*. The *Web Project* was made possible through an English Literacy/Civics Grant awarded by the State of Virginia Department of Education.

The information contained herein is intended for general informational purposes and guidance. Mention of a particular institution, vendor, or service does not imply endorsement on the part of Albemarle County or Albemarle County Schools.

**Albemarle County Public Schools**

**Elementary Schools:**

- Agnor-Hurt**  
3201 Berkmar Drive  
Charlottesville, VA 22901  
(434) 973-5211
- Broadus Wood**  
185 Buck Mountain Road  
Earlsville, VA 22936  
(434) 973-3865
- Brownsville**  
5870 Rockfish Gap Turnpike  
Crozet, VA 22932  
(434) 823-4658
- Paul H. Cale**  
1757 Avon Street Extended  
Charlottesville, VA 22902  
(434) 293-7455
- Crozet**  
1407 Crozet Avenue  
Crozet, VA 22932  
(434) 823-4800
- Mary C. Greer**  
190 Lambs Lane  
Charlottesville, VA 22901  
(434) 973-8371
- Hollymead**  
2775 Powell Creek Drive  
Charlottesville, VA 22901  
(434) 973-8301
- Meriwether Lewis**  
1610 Owensville Road  
Charlottesville, VA 22901  
(434) 293-9304

**Elementary Schools,  
Continued:**

- Virginia L. Murray**  
3251 Morgantown Road  
Charlottesville, VA 22903  
(434) 977-4599
- Red Hill**  
3901 Red Hill School Road  
North Garden, VA 22959  
(434) 293-5332
- Scottsville**  
7868 Scottsville Road  
Scottsville, VA 24590  
(434) 286-2441
- Stone-Robinson**  
958 North Milton Road  
Charlottesville, VA 22911  
(434) 296-3754
- Stony Point**  
3893 Stony Point Road  
Keswick, VA 22947  
(434) 973-6405
- Woodbrook**  
100 Woodbrook Drive  
Charlottesville, VA 22901  
(434) 973-6600
- Yancey**  
7625 Porters Road  
Esmont, VA 22937  
(434) 286-3768
- Baker-Butler**  
2740 Proffit Road  
Charlottesville, VA 22911  
(434) 974-7777

**Middle Schools:**

- Burley**  
901 Rose Hill Drive  
Charlottesville, VA 22903  
(434) 295-5101
- Henley**  
5880 Rockfish Gap Trnkp.  
Crozet, VA 22932  
(434) 823-4393
- Jouett**  
210 Lambs Lane  
Charlottesville, VA 22901  
(434) 975-9320
- Sutherland**  
2801 Powell Creek Drive  
Charlottesville, VA 22911  
(434) 975-0599
- Walton**  
4217 Red Hill Road  
Charlottesville, VA 22903  
(434) 977-5615

**High Schools:**

- Albemarle**  
2775 Hydraulic Road  
Charlottesville, VA 22901  
(434) 975-9300
- Monticello**  
1400 Independence Way  
Charlottesville, VA 22902  
(434) 244-3100
- Murray**  
1200 Forest Street  
Charlottesville, VA 22901  
(434) 296-3090
- Western Albemarle**  
5941 Rockfish Gap Trnkp.  
Crozet, VA 22932  
(434) 823-8700

**Vocational/Technical**

- School:**  
**CATEC**  
1000 East Rio Road  
Charlottesville, VA 22901  
(434) 973-4461



**Summer 2007**