



**A** *we believe...* **ision**

**FOR PUBLIC EDUCATION**  
*in Alamance County*

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*We envision a public school system that is a national model for its curriculum and community engagement to empower all Alamance County students with equal opportunity for civic engagement, a meaningful quality of life and skills for economic success -- for themselves and our community.*



# Executive Summary

From September 2012 through April 2013, a diverse group of citizens from Alamance County, members of our community and representatives of our educational system, came together through an in-depth process of open dialogue, engaged learning, individual reflection and constructive discussion to develop and document a vision for public education in Alamance County.

## *We believe . . . .*

We believe that education is the foundation for individual success, economic prosperity, improved quality of life and perpetuation of our democratic society.

## *We envision . . . .*

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*We envision a public school system that is a national model for its curriculum and community engagement to empower all Alamance County students with equal opportunity for civic engagement, a meaningful quality of life and skills for economic success -- for themselves and our community.*

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We envision Alamance County public school students actively engaged in learning that enables each child to achieve their highest potential. All Alamance County students will learn in safe, modern facilities with exceptional teachers utilizing curriculum that will be a national model for core academic subjects, arts, communication, critical thinking, social skill development, service to others, and enriching extracurricular activities. Our public schools will be led by elected officials, administrators, teachers, parents, students and community leaders dedicated to achieving excellence through open discussion and constant improvement of our children's educations.

## *We recognize . . . .*

We recognize that our public schools need community support to be successful. The community members who helped develop this Vision for Public Education in Alamance County support our elected officials, students, teachers and administrators in their mission to educate all students to meet high academic standards and become responsible citizens in a rapidly changing world. No less should be expected of us and we stand ready to serve.

## *We expect . . . .*

We expect that the Alamance-Burlington Board of Education and school administration will utilize this Community Vision for Public Education in Alamance County to develop a detailed, practical, strategic plan that will be implemented in our public schools. Effective implementation will require strong community involvement. We expect the ABSS leadership to create excellence in our public schools by working together as a team, being strong advocates for education and building connections to the community. The children of Alamance County deserve no less.

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## Beliefs

### *We believe . . . . in our children.*

We believe that education is the foundation for individual success, and that education should provide the knowledge, experiences and skills for future careers, further educational opportunities and continued and constructive participation in our democratic society.

We believe that all Alamance County children, regardless of circumstances, must have equal opportunity to realize their full potential and to prepare themselves to successfully face the challenges of the future and be productive members of society. For this to happen, we must invest in safe learning environments and a challenging, dynamic, analytical, practical and flexible system of education. Students should have the opportunity to develop strong creative and innovative thinking, problem solving, life skills and leadership skills.

We believe that the children of Alamance County, when educated by exceptional teachers, using the best methods, in great facilities with commensurate support and expectations from families, community leaders, and the community-at-large, can achieve exceptional post high school successes.

We believe that the children of Alamance County deserve our investment in public education.

### *We believe . . . . in Alamance County.*

We believe that educating Alamance County children will prepare good citizens, a talented workforce and strong leaders. By developing critical thinking and leadership skills in our children, we can create a dynamic, creative and diverse workforce in order to allow Alamance County to be competitive in an evolving and constantly changing global economy. Education improves the quality of life for our citizens by enabling financial independence, promoting individual health, sharing our cultural talents and heritage, encouraging commonly held values, and instilling an appreciation for our community - its past, present and future.

We believe that Alamance County, bolstered by an excellent public school system that helps its students reach their greatest potential, can become one of the most desired destinations for new business and industry, and the most desired place to live, work and raise a family.

We believe that investing in public education is an investment that provides a foundation for the economic success of Alamance County and the improvement of the quality of life for all its residents.

We believe that Alamance County deserves our investment in public education.

### *We believe . . . . in our democratic society.*

We believe that education provides the foundation for a sustainable democratic society. A democratic society requires an informed citizenry that will fully participate in decision-making and public discourse while promoting its values. Public education in Alamance County can convey our history and culture to future generations by preparing them to be responsible, engaged, productive members of our society.

We believe our democratic society deserves our investment in public education.

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## Vision Statements

Alamance County will be led and served by a public education system that is recognized as best-in-class and whose growth is driven by broad community support.

- We will treat the business of educating our students with the utmost respect, and we will be known for our uncompromising commitment to rigor and excellence in our every endeavor.
  - We will be recognized as a preferred place to live, raise families and build businesses, specifically because of the quality of our public education system.
  - We will be recognized as a national model for best-in-class public education, emulated by other school systems across the country.
  - Driven by the community itself, our schools will be respected within the County. We value a school system interwoven with the community fabric so as to:
    - command the support of our citizenry in both participation and financial commitment, and
    - enrich and strengthen our community with a quality educational foundation, active arts and healthy lifestyles.
  - Our students will be well-prepared to live, work, lead and govern in our local, national and global communities through their pursuit of higher education, careers and community service.
  - Our school system will be preferred by high quality teachers as a result of our respect for and trust in them, our community and professional support, and competitive compensation.
  - Our school system will produce well-rounded students. We value:
    - The natural, physical and social sciences and mathematics
    - The humanities, including language (English and foreign) and the visual and performing arts
    - Critical thinking skills
    - Career/vocational skills and technology literacy
    - Extracurricular activities, such as sports and clubs
    - Life skills, including health, financial literacy, communication and other social skills
    - Character development, including ethics, morality, respect, honesty and compassion
    - Citizenship and service
  - Our schools and related facilities will be safe and well-maintained, and they will support our commitment to provide best-in-class educational opportunities for our students.
  - All of our students will be appropriately supported and challenged to meet their highest potential.
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## **Fulfilling the Vision**

We recommend and expect the Alamance-Burlington Board of Education, the Alamance-Burlington School System, and the people of Alamance County to address the following priority areas:

### ***For the Community:***

It is expected that all the people from all sectors of Alamance County will know and understand this Vision. The more the community understands and keeps the Vision alive, the greater the likelihood that the Board of Education will find the support necessary to fully implement a strategic plan built upon our Vision. With greater community involvement will come greater community understanding and with greater understanding will come the community support necessary for the Board of Education to successfully implement its strategic plan.

### ***For the Parents:***

It is expected that parents will come to understand the importance of their “voice” to the success of their children. Parents must be involved in the education of their children. Parents need to seek and gain understanding on why, what and how their students are being taught and not just enter the schools when there is a problem. The schools’ administrators need to develop strategies to get parents more involved in the learning process. Teachers need to understand the importance of this relationship to the success of their students and work with parents to understand and engage accordingly.

### ***For the Board of Education:***

It is expected that the Board of Education will publicly commit to this community developed Vision for Public Education in Alamance County and will develop a thorough strategic plan containing clear and measurable goals necessary to achieve this Vision. The Board of Education should continue to engage all individuals and organizations for support as they develop their strategic plan. Once developed, it is imperative that the plan be regularly monitored and reassessed for effectiveness using community input to do so. Engaging the community on a regular basis can increase community commitment and support and together the Board of Education and the community will create a new and more improved system of public education.

### ***For Our Local Leaders:***

We expect to hold accountable the Board of Education, the Alamance County Board of Commissioners, and the Alamance-Burlington School System for the development and implementation of an Alamance-Burlington Schools strategic plan resulting from this Vision. All must come together to develop, implement and measure our progress towards achieving our Vision. Goals and strategies should have clear benchmarks. Deadlines set for each benchmark should be realistic and attainable. Progress in reaching these benchmarks should be shared on a regular basis to assure the community that progress is being made towards our Vision. We expect the Board of Education, County Commissioners and Alamance-Burlington School System to work together to find ways to fund the work necessary to achieve this Vision from federal, state and local sources.

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