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# Advisory committee recommends renaming Cale Elementary

**BILLY JEAN LOUIS**

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**5 MIN READ**

Thursday, September 12, 2019, at 6:12 PM



Paul H. Cale Jr. (left) speaks with Waltine Eubanks before a meeting at the Albemarle County Office Building.

Credit: Billy Jean Louis/Charlottesville Tomorrow

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Paul H. Cale Jr. wanted Albemarle County Public Schools Superintendent Matt Haas to shake his hand.

After a nearly seven-minute meeting at the Albemarle County Office Building on Wednesday ended, Cale Jr. walked across Lane Auditorium and called to Haas as he was exiting the auditorium.

Cale Jr. is the son of former Superintendent Paul H. Cale, who led county schools from 1947 to 1967 and was the namesake of Cale Elementary School. Wednesday was the fourth meeting of an advisory committee charged with recommending whether the school system should rename the building after a presentation last year included an article that implied that Cale Sr. argued against integration.

Cale Jr. told Charlottesville Tomorrow that Haas never offered to meet with him. Wednesday, after the 12-person committee recommended that the school be renamed, was the first time the pair shook hands.

"I would like to think in 30 or 40 years, what if someone came up and question what he did when he was superintendent? He had to [know] how much he hurt the family," Cale Jr. said. "I would just think that the common decency, you go up and shake my hand and say, 'It's nothing personal to you.'"

Haas will be taking the committee's input under advisement, according to the county schools' spokesperson Phil Giaramita, and will be making his own recommendation to the School Board on the Sept. 26 School Board meeting.





Paul H. Cale Elementary School is named for a longtime superintendent of Albemarle County Public Schools.

Credit: Elliott Robinson, Charlottesville Tomorrow

The process was set in motion in October when Lorenzo Dickerson, web and social media specialist for county schools, showed the School Board a video he created that highlighted segregation in American schools and the challenges of the first Black students who integrated the county's public schools.

The presentation, which was not created specifically for the board, referenced a 1956 article in Commentary magazine that, through extensive paraphrasing, stated that Cale Sr. argued against integration in the wake of the U.S. Supreme Court's 1954 Brown v. Board of Education ruling. Afterward, some School Board members called for a review of building names.

Cale Jr. said he doesn't see how "an open-minded person could read" all the information about Cale and still vote to rename the school.

“That’s the shocking part of it,” he said. “The make-up [of the] committee, to me, was not representative of that school. ... Shouldn’t you have somebody who has lived in the county when he was superintendent? I know there are not many of us still alive, but there are some.”

Thursday afternoon, Haas wrote in a statement to Charlottesville Tomorrow that he “was surprised by Mr. Cale’s comments about my interest level in his views, and I certainly understand his disappointment. I am well-acquainted with his views, having read all of the extensive emails he has sent to me and to the School Board dating back to last October. ... I also was in the audience to hear from him and his family when they spoke to the community advisory committee for more than an hour in July, as well.”

Although the recommendation to rename the school disappointed supporters of Cale Sr., others said they were pleased with the committee’s work.

“His name will no longer be associated with education,” said M. Rich Turner, chairman of the Legal Redress Committee of the Albemarle-Charlottesville NAACP chapter. “They made the decision based on the fact that he has made statements that had a [racial] overtone. I’m glad they made the statement that they will no longer have his name associated with the school.”

Berdell McCoy Fleming, who serves on the executive board of the local NAACP, also said renaming the school is the right decision.

“In listening to Superintendent Haas in line of what the Albemarle County Schools feels is appropriate as far as the vision for naming schools for where we are now in this era, it was important that we really reconsidered changing,” McCoy said.

McCoy, a 1964 graduate of the Black-only Burley High School, said from her experience knowing Cale Sr. while attending county schools, the committee’s recommendation is the “best” decision.

“[Haas] has a vision for making sure that all children are looked at in their cultural connection, [and] that we have to be careful of how we make decisions naming schools. ... I think he really made a good statement as far as what has to be thought of instead,” she said.



In a news release, Haas thanked the committee for taking “what is, for many, an emotional and difficult issue. Their work was thoughtful and valuable.”

Haas added that the committee “has done outstanding work in compiling their valuable research,” and that included many “contributions from Mr. Cale and his family.”

Haas also said he will be reviewing and considering all of the material before preparing his own recommendation to the School Board.

The committee’s findings, according to a news release, argued that Cale Sr. didn’t speak publicly against segregation or tried to integrate schools faster. The committee also found that the School Board at the time was against integration.

The committee also said Cale Sr. aimed to improve education during his tenure, but the article and the continued “segregation of county schools long after the Supreme Court decision and after Charlottesville city’s integration of schools made the continued use of the name of Cale Elementary School controversial,” according to the news release.

Dennis S. Rooker, a former member of the Albemarle Board of Supervisors, chaired the 12-person advisory committee and said in a release that the decision was not about Cale Sr. personally.

“This is about present and future students, teachers and other members of the community,” Rooker said. “It is on that basis that our committee reached a consensus that the name of the school be changed.”

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PUBLIC EDUCATION

# Equity in mind as Albemarle moves away from traditional high schools

01  
Lingering disparity





# Lingering disparity

Sadie Carfagno aims to publish her children’s book, “Noah’s Voyage: Helping kids understand Pectus Excavatum,” by the winter break.

It was Carfagno’s project while she was attending Center I, Albemarle County Public Schools’ specialty high school model.

County school officials hope other pupils get the same opportunity as Carfagno. The committee commissioned to find a spot for Center II already has eyed a property on Galaxie Farm Lane, just across from Monticello High School, to house 400 students.

But as the division prepares to expand the model, laying out plans to ensure the student body at the specialty program mirrors the demographics of all county schools, as well as making sure the program is equitable, has been discussed deeply.

According to the division's records, nearly 80% of the 42 students at Center I this academic year identify as white. Of the remainder, none of the students is Latino.

“It’s an issue,” said Phil Giaramita, spokesman of county schools. “It’s a concern.”

In the division as a whole, 13% of students are Latino, and in the past 14 years, the Latino student population has grown from 601 in 2005 to 1,844 in 2018, according to division records.

In the previous academic year, ⅓ of the 21 students who took part in the pilot program were nonwhite students, according to the division.

The division is reimagining strategies to bring more children to Center I, including diversifying all of its academies, Giaramita said.

“Now it’s the time when we’re talking about another center that’s going to have 400 kids,” he said. “Now is the time to get up to speed on all these strategies.”

The administration previously relied on guidance counselors to tell students about the specialty program, he said. The division will continue to use counselors’ help, he said, but the plan is to also send direct messages to all families about the program.

The early stage of the centers is a critical time to develop strategies to diversify the student population there, as disparities linger at other established programs.

At the division’s 8-year-old Math, Engineering & Science Academy, for example, 1% of Black students took part in the program, according to an equity report released this year. Latino students accounted for 4% in the same program, the report also stated.

INTERVIEW :

Haisell Franco

▶

0:00 / 1:50

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Musician Jehki Grooms, a senior at Albemarle Public Schools, plays the piano on a recent afternoon at Center I.


Credit: Mike Kropf Charlottesville Tomorrow

“One of the things we have to understand better is why is it that Latino students and Black students or mixed-race students are not applying to these academies,” Giaramita said. “We need to have a better understanding of why that’s the case and how do you address that.”

Albemarle High School houses the largest population of Black students, but it has a lower percentage of them taking part in its academy than at Western Albemarle High school, which has the smallest population of Black students in the county, an equity report revealed.

Providing transportation is not the major factor to address equity concerns in the career academies, the report noted.

“The division must consider recruitment and selection processes to achieve greater equity,” according to the report.

 [Giaramita said](#) to qualify for a program like MESA, students must take certain math courses in the seventh and eighth grade that position them to succeed in the academy.

“That means the division [needs] to start talking to kids not when they’re in high school,” he said. “We need to talk to them in the sixth and seventh grade to say, ‘If you’re interested in engineering, or math or science, you need to be taking these high-level courses in middle school.’”



INTERVIEW :  
**Phil Giraramita**

 0:00 / 16:25

# A different way of learning

Carfagno, a graduate of Western Albemarle High School, said she did all the writing for her children’s book at Center I.

“Students at Center I went about learning in a different way,” she said. “It’s more of a professional environment, where you have meetings and projects that you have to do in groups or independently.”

Located at 1180 Seminole Trail, in the former Comdial building, the rooms at Center I are different from a traditional high school. Instead of desks, the facility boasts a number of studios, including a video and audio production room and an art and a multipurpose room.

Students work on capstone projects and can enroll in English and government dual credit courses. Projects range from computer programming, engineering and animation, to photography, visual art, video and music.

Last year, Carfagno was among 21 students who took part in the pilot program. There, she received help from community members and her supervisor to complete her book.

“[I’ll get copies] of it to the University of Virginia pediatric surgeon [who] inspired me to write about pectus excavatum [a chest wall deformity] for the UVa’s Children’s Hospital,” Carfagno said.

Now a freshman at Virginia Commonwealth University, Carfagno said she doesn’t think she would’ve been able to finish her novel if she was attending a traditional high school full time.

“I think it would have been much harder,” said 18-year-old Carfagno.



Located at 1180 Seminole Trail, in the former Comdial building, the rooms at Center I are different from a traditional high school. Instead of desks, the facility boasts a number of studios, including a video and audio production room and an art and a multipurpose room.

Credit: Mike Kropf \ Charlottesville Tomorrow

## Center origins

[Center I was developed to elevate capacity issues at Albemarle and Western Albemarle high schools. The county opted to have Center I instead of building a new high school because it’s cheaper, according to school officials.](#)

Part of having Center I is being smart with taxpayer’s money, said high school center planner Jeff Prillaman.

Prillaman added that the way learning is designed at the center gives students the opportunity to take something they’re excited about and do it at a higher level.

“Let’s say that you’re into music. Right now, one of your eight classes you take around music. This year, you can go to the center where you can devote time every other school day to your passion.”

Some students know what they’d like to pursue after high school, and the division’s job is to cultivate those children’s passions while they’re still maintaining graduation requirements, Prillaman said.

“It’s [kind of] like a checklist,” he said. “It’s not a multiple-choice test. This is more, I can do this. Check. And whatever the standards are for that class. Can you do it or not? You have to demonstrate it through your work and portfolio.”

Those needing transportation ride a school bus from their traditional high school, or base school, Prillaman said, to Center I.

Students opting for Center I alternate days between the center and their traditional high school. Those on free or reduced-price lunch are provided lunch at Center I.

“It’s whatever you would qualify for at the base school carries over to where you locate to,” Prillaman said.

Center I admitted 42 seniors this year. Next year, it will expand to sophomores and juniors, which is projected to increase enrollment to more than 250. Of the 250, there’ll be 25 to 125 at the facility every day. Programs tailored to sophomores and juniors via Center I’s Information and Communications Technology Academy include cybersecurity, game design and media communications.

“The center is just a piece of a bigger puzzle,” Prillaman said. “Every school will have its own career pathway available to them. We might have entrepreneurship at Western Albemarle High.”



ARTICLE :

Center I

## How different is Center I from CATEC?

Students were not awarded an industry certificate last year at Center I.

Prillaman said Center I is different from the Charlottesville Albemarle Technical Education Center in that CATEC has industry connections — for instance, CATEC has an internship program for automotive students.

“Kids who want to go to CATEC already go there,” he said. “There are things that CATEC does not offer. This goes back to the 16 career cluster. You want to be a teacher or social worker? CATEC does not offer anything like that.”

Additionally, he said CATEC doesn’t have the space set up to offer programs offered at Center I.

“We want kids to graduate [and] be college-ready and career-ready,” he said.

## Diversifying Center I’s population


Michael Craddock, director of Center I, said diversifying Center I is critical.

Enrollment records for fall 2018 indicated that 65% of the county’s student population was white, 11% Black, 13% Latino, 6% identified as two or more races and 5% Asian.

Craddock said the current recruiting plan includes visiting every freshman seminar class, so all ninth graders can hear the message directly from him and won’t have to rely on the counselors.

As he visits these classes, he passed out his contact information once students express interest in the Center.



 [Related article: The population of Latino students tripled in Albemarle schools in the last 14 years. This is what they say the need.](#)

“I’ll connect with parents and students if they want to come in for a tour,” he said.

Craddock’s second strategy is to go out in the community to do some evening open houses and ensure there’s onsite translation available so that everyone feels welcome, he said.

“They have tech set up, and there’s someone translating to them as they’re listening to me and they can hear it in real time,” he said of his strategy to attract Latino students.

Other strategies include providing four or five out-of-the-school options for more local community presentations, emailing all parents and sending a video that showcases the types of opportunities offered at Center I.

“My hope is that everyone is aware and can have enough information to make a decision whether it’s for them or not,” Craddock said.

Giaramita said these programs have been opt-in, meaning the division doesn’t recruit for them.

“We simply say the application is now open,” he said.

The challenge with Center I is there’s not enough information in the community to inform parents, Giaramita said.

“This year, and in the future at Center I, they offer classes that you can get both college and high school credit for,” he said, adding that the plan is to better promote what’s offered at Center I to attract more students.

EXTERNAL\_LINK :

**The population of Latino students tripled in Albemarle schools in the last 14 years. This is what they say they need.**



Programs tailored to sophomores and juniors via Center I’s Information and Communications Technology Academy include cybersecurity, game design and media communications.

Credit: Mike Kropf \ Charlottesville Tomorrow

# But what’s the barrier for Latino students?

Josue Sarmiento, a Honduran immigrant attending AHS, said Center I hasn’t been advertised at all in the school.

A language barrier is not preventing Latino students from attending Center I because the programs offered there don’t require a high level of understanding of the English language, he said.

“No one talks about it,” Sarmiento said.

Students at Center I were recommended by school staff individually, he added.

“It has not been advertised to everyone,” he said. “I think that’s why.”

Chances are students taking these courses might be recommended by their teachers to enroll at Center I based on their interests, he said.

Sarmiento, 18, has served as a leader on the school’s Latinx Club for two years. He said other local organizations have attended club meetings to educate the Latino community about their programs. He would have appreciated the same efforts from Center I representatives, he said.

“If they want to be inclusive, they have to advertise it to the Latino community or any other community that’s needed,” he said, adding that he’s assuming there are many students who might be interested in Center I.

Giaramita said the division should’ve attended a Latinx Club meeting. Craddock said he’s scheduled to give a presentation to the Latinx Club on Dec. 4, and he also will give a presentation to the Monticello High School Latino community.

But for Haisell Franco — who immigrated from El Salvador to the U.S. five years ago — a language barrier could be one of the main reasons some Latino students may opt out of Center I, she said.

“Sometimes, as Latinos, we don’t really get involved in those kinds of stuff because we’re scared to be around somebody else [who] speaks English correctly,” Franco said. “And we’re going to say something wrong.”

Franco acknowledges that she has an accent and thinks it’s cool.

“But there are people who are scared to talk,” she said.

Jeffry Sarmiento, an 11th-grader at AHS, doesn’t think a language barrier is preventing Latino students from attending Center I.

Instead, he recommends the administration to have a Spanish speaker to assist those whose first language is not English.

Giaramita said the division ought to look into Jeffry Sarmiento’s recommendation.

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## The climate at Center I

Every week, Carfagno spent one day at her traditional high school, and the next at Center I. She said having a full day and the freedom with her time allowed her to be efficient.

“It’s so much better at Center I,” said Carfagno, an aspiring medical illustrator. “I feel like I got to meet and understand people so much more and understand who they are and connect with them and be able to do [a] project with them.”

Carfagno’s tasks on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays included attending classes at Western Albemarle, her traditional high school. On Tuesdays and Thursdays, she attended Center I the whole day, usually from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

There’s no bell schedule at Center I.

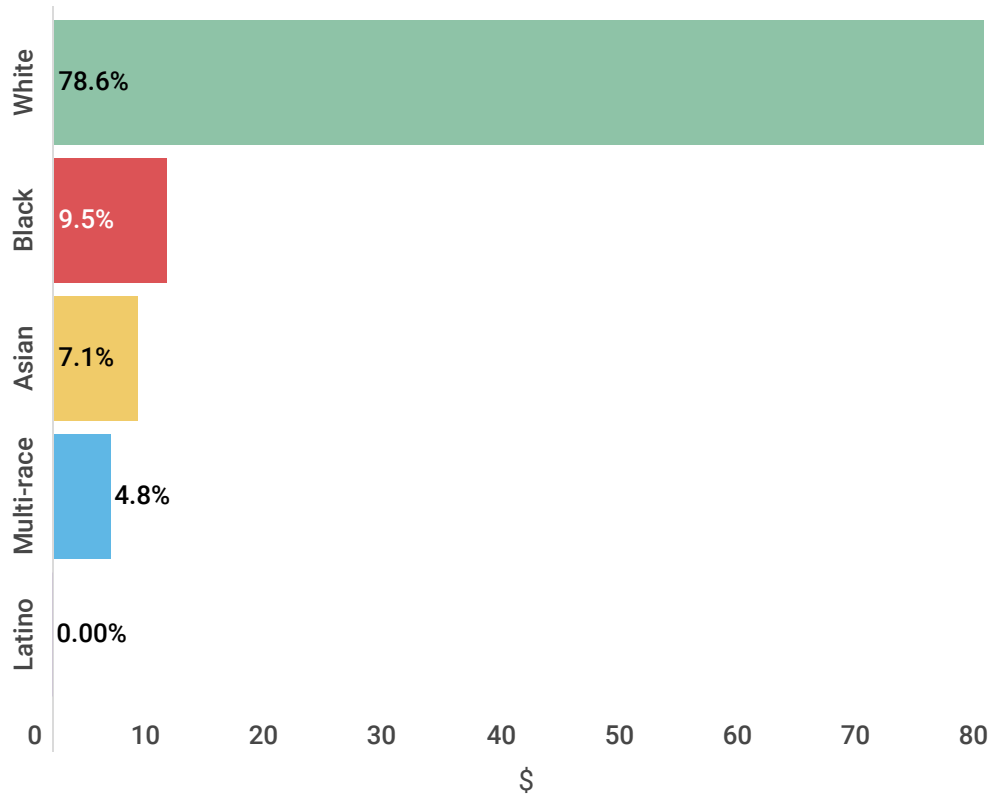
“The kid will talk to the mentor, and he [or] she will help us figure out how to manage our time effectively,” she said. “You can decide when to spend a good hour on one project, or when it’s more important to spend time on another project that day for a couple of minutes and the mentor helps how to accomplish those things and earn those credits.”

If Carfagno didn’t feel inspired to write on a given day, she would look at suggestions from her mentor and edit her book. She would also brainstorm on how to make visual components to her novel to make it more interesting.

Carfagno said each student is able to use his or her strength to teach each other. Her peers created a musical performance for their midterm, in which some used wood to make instruments and a stage, among other items.

“Instead of sitting at a desk at a regular school and just listen to a teacher, we were all having discussions and learning together and learning from each other and discovering together,” Carfagno said.

## Center I Student Population



Source: Albemarle County Public Schools  
Credit: Billy Jean Louis

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Infogram

## Plans for Center II

The School Board at a recent meeting passed a resolution to ask the Board of Supervisors to transfer land across from Monticello High School to the division to construct Center II. The estimated cost for the nearly 40,000-square-foot facility is \$27 million, and it could open its doors by 2022.

Center II’s programs still are under development. The division said it has yet to determine whether it will open Center III, which would house 200 pupils, by 2024.



Carfagno said Center I taught her how to apply the materials she was learning to real life, adding she has improved her communication skills in reaching out to people in the community while writing her novel.

Plus, her project at Center I helped her get a scholarship, she said.

“[People] think that when kids are given more freedom [they’ll] goof around and not get anything done,” Carfagno said. “That’s the opposite because students get to learn about things that they’re passionate about.”



The School Board at a recent meeting passed a resolution to ask the Board of Supervisors to transfer land across from Monticello High School to the division to construct Center II. The estimated cost for the nearly 40,000-square-foot facility is \$27 million, and it could open its doors by 2022.

Credit: Mike Kropf \ Charlottesville Tomorrow

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# The population of Latino students tripled in Albemarle schools in the last 14 years. This is what they say they need.

**BILLY JEAN LOUIS**

@billyjeanlouis

**7 MIN READ**

Wednesday, November 20, 2019, at 1:51 AM



Albemarle High School ninth-grader Yatzil Romero Rodriguez was expected to assume the class officer position this academic school year. The 15-year-old said she ran for the

position in hopes of making a difference.

Credit: Ézé Amos/Charlottesville Tomorrow

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Haisell Franco immigrated from El Salvador to the U.S. five years ago.

A senior at Albemarle High School, Franco said although she's had supportive teachers, she recalled being asked not to speak Spanish in her class because "it's not professional."

"They're not respecting our language and our culture," said 18-year-old Franco. "I feel like that's kind of discrimination. ... Let us speak our language. And let us be who we are."

The Latino student population in Albemarle County Public Schools has grown from 601 students in 2005 to 1,844 in 2018, and these students are voicing the changes they would like to see in the school system.

At AHS, Latino students make up 14.6 % of the student population. On a recent afternoon, a group of AHS students advocated for the administration including Spanish in a more academic setting, having more school staff participate in events tailored to Latino students and creating opportunities that teach American children the history of immigration.



Franco said that pupils at AHS who speak English as their first language sometimes assume she and her friends are talking about them. Franco agreed there are times it makes sense to speak English, because the goal is to learn English, but there are other times where foreigners should be allowed to express themselves in their native language.

"We don't say anything because we're scared. We're from outside. We're not Americans, and that's why we don't speak," Franco said.

There are others like Franco.

Josue Sarmiento, a Honduran immigrant, said he was confronted by minority American children for speaking Spanish in the cafeteria.

Giovanni Ferrer, an 11th-grader at AHS from Puerto Rico, said there's not much the division can do because students are going to do whatever they want regardless of what the administration says.

But Sarmiento argued the division could host talks as well as develop classes that teach students about immigration. He added that would help student to not see immigrants as aliens as they've been "labeled in the government."

"All discrimination is ignorance," said 18-year-old Sarmiento, who also serves as a leader on the Latinx Club.

Phil Giaramita, county schools spokesman, said there's not a division policy or practice that determines how a teacher responds to a student who speaks a language other than English. That's a decision made by teachers on an individual basis and can be connected to any of many considerations.

Latino students have brought their concerns to Russell Carlock, a teacher and faculty sponsor of the school's Latinx Club. They said there are few places in school where they can use their language and is appreciated in an academic setting, Carlock said.

"The only place they can do that is in the Spanish World Language courses," Carlock said. "Some of them don't have room in their schedule to take those classes. They're expected to come to school all day and produce only academic English [work]."

*Immigration is an excellent example of how this approach can benefit all students by studying the voices and experiences of people whose perspectives have been absent in traditional history lessons. We should begin to see some of these curriculum improvements take effect in the school next school year.*

Phil Giaramita

Spokesman of Albemarle County Public Schools

The situation could be addressed by having more courses where they're expected to learn in Spanish and speak it at an academic level, Carlock said.

"If it's a history of Latin America, they can take in Spanish, and it can be open to anyone, so if there are native language-speakers who are learning Spanish as a second language who also take that course and then learn from them from being with them where they're the expert," Carlock said.

The division's two-way emergent program at Paul H. Cale Elementary School, which has the highest Latino population in the county, 32.5 %, has been one way the administration has responded to the growth, Carlock said.

"[Students] learn half of the day in Spanish and half of the day in English," Carlock said.

Research shows, for families whose native language is Spanish, that it is the best program for supporting academic development, Carlock said. The drawback is the program exists only at Cale, although there's a demand for it.

"We have Latinx students in other parts of the county who have access to a dual language program — and it does not address the needs of the middle-school and high-school level," he stressed.

In light of the growth, the division also could build on its culturally responsive teaching as well as have a curriculum that embraces many perspectives and is representative of the

diversity of the student population, Carlock argued.

“So that students are able to see themselves reflected in the curriculum,” Carlock said, recommending the division to create spaces where the Latino culture and language is celebrated.

## Making changes

Giaramita said the division hopes to migrate the Cale’s Immersion Program to other elementary schools. There are three schools that offer Spanish language instruction: Murray, Woodbrook and Crozet elementaries. Broadus Wood Elementary will offer Spanish next year.

“These programs would be the first step towards one day offering a dual language program,” Giaramita said. “These decisions are made by each school individually, based upon the resources, interest levels and support structures in place.”

Giaramita said the other consideration is the number of families needed to make a dual language viable because program participation is voluntary — 100 students would be reasonable.

“Principals need to take into consideration whether that level of interest exists at their school,” said Giaramita, adding two social studies classes are taught in Spanish at Walton and Burley to accommodate the Cale’s immersion program.





Albemarle High School has the second highest Latino population of the county high schools, 14.6 percent.

Credit: Billy Jean Louis/Charlottesville Tomorrow

## What's causing the growth

In the last wave of immigration in the 1900s, most immigrants went to the industrial parts of the country to work in factories in the Northeast and Midwest, Carlock said.

Some of that wave bypassed the South. And part of that was because the South was still in economic dire straits after the Civil War, he added.

“Even though there was some immigration, it did not have the same impact on the southern part of the U.S. that it did on the other parts of the country,” he said.

The southern economy has been better in the last 20 to 30 years. That's attracting more immigrants, Carlock said, and the same demand for workers have resonated in Charlottesville, as well.

"Many of these workers come from Latin America, and their children identify as Latinx students," Carlock said.

## Ongoing demands

Latino students at AHS have continually asked for change. On May 1, [Yatzil Romero Rodriguez](#), who migrated from Veracruz, Mexico, became the first English as a Second Language or Other Language student elected to the Student Council at AHS.

She was expected to be one of two Latinos on the 20-member council.

And over the summer, Latinx Club members produced a short movie called "[Nosotros](#)" featuring students sharing their reasons for migrating to the U.S. as well as the stereotypes they endure.

Giaramita said social studies teachers are working on a program evaluating the current history curriculum, which will result in a more inclusive of historical events. He said he welcomes the idea of having more staff participate in events for Latino students and should feel comfortable discussing the idea with their principal.

"Immigration is an excellent example of how this approach can benefit all students by studying the voices and experiences of people whose perspectives have been absent in traditional history lessons," Giaramita said. "We should begin to see some of these curriculum improvements take effect in the school next school year."

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