

ARLINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
School Board Meeting
November 30, 2017

Item C-1-b

The Arlington School Board convened on Thursday, November 30, 2017, at 6:04 PM at 1426 North Quincy Street, Arlington, Virginia.¹

Present were:

Barbara Kanninen, Chair
Reid Goldstein, Vice Chair (arr. 6:06 PM)
James Lander, Member
Tannia Talento, Member (arr. 6:11 PM)
Nancy Van Doren, Member
Melanie Elliott, Clerk

Also present were:

Dr. Patrick K. Murphy, Superintendent
Dr. Kristi Murphy, Assistant Superintendent, Human Resources

A. CALL TO ORDER AND CONVENE IN CLOSED MEETING:

Dr. Kanninen moved that the Board immediately convene in a closed meeting to consider the appointment of Supervisor, Special Education, as authorized by Virginia Code §2.2-3711(A)(1), seconded by Mr. Lander. The motion was adopted in a vote of 3 - 0, with Mr. Lander, and Ms. Van Doren voting affirmatively, and the Board convened in a closed meeting. Mr. Goldstein and Ms. Talento were not present at the vote.

The closed meeting adjourned at 6:21 PM.

Dr. Kanninen moved to certify that to the best of her knowledge only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements by Virginia law were discussed in the closed meeting and only such public business matters that were identified in the motion convening the closed meeting were heard, discussed or considered, seconded by Ms. Van Doren and adopted in a vote of 5-0. The voting record is as follows: Mr. Goldstein – Aye; Dr. Kanninen – Aye; Mr. Lander – Aye; Ms. Talento – Aye; and Ms. Van Doren – Aye.

The Board recessed briefly then convened in a regular open meeting at 6:30 PM.

B. MEETING OPENING

Also present were:

¹ Videos of regular School Board meetings can be viewed on the APS Web site at the following link: <https://www.apsva.us/school-board-meetings/view-school-board-meetings/>
DVDs of all regular School Board meetings are also available for viewing in the School Board office.

John Chadwick, Assistant Superintendent, Facilities and Operations
Linda Erdos, Assistant Superintendent, School and Community Relations
Cintia Johnson, Assistant Superintendent, Administrative Services
Dr. Tara Natrass, Assistant Superintendent, Teaching and Learning
Leslie Peterson, Assistant Superintendent, Finance and Management
Lisa Stengle, Executive Director, Planning and Evaluation

1. Call to Order
2. Presentation of Colors by the Arlington Career Center JROTC
3. Recognitions

Ms. Talento recognized Arlington Career Center students who won the Virginia School Boards Association (VSBA) Video contest. Students receiving the award were Flor Caceres-Godoy, Alex Heil, Sean Manlove, Jacob Perez, and Bettel Solomon. Dr. Kanninen announced that APS also received two awards on sustainability at the VSBA convention, including first place in the Green Schools Challenge by achieving the highest score for the Platinum Award. Discovery Elementary School was also recognized by VSBA for its sustainable design.

4. Announcements

Dr. Kanninen announced the following meetings:

- December 6, 2017 Work Session on The Whole Child and Wellness, 7 PM, Rm. 101
- December 13, 2017 Legislative Breakfast, 8 AM, Wakefield High School Rm. A134

Ms. Talento invited all to the Dec. 14, 2017 School Board meeting to honor Mr. Lander for his years of service on the School Board. She also announced that three APS staff members were recognized at the County's 40 Under 40 event.

Dr. Murphy announced the CCPTA Reflections event and the Martin Luther King, Jr. Visual and Performing Arts contest. He encouraged all to follow the progress of APS initiatives by visiting the Engage web page, and confirmed that input is being solicited for the 2018-19 Calendar. He shared information about the 2019 budget, the acceptable use policy, and school options and transfers. He invited the community to school events and shared important dates in the next few months.

Dr. Kanninen announced that the Board will act on the Consent agenda before the Public Hearing on the Superintendent's Proposed Middle School Boundaries.

D. CONSENT AGENDA: (6:55 PM)

Mr. Goldstein moved that the Board adopt the consent agenda, seconded by Mr. Lander. The motion was adopted in a vote of 5 – 0, with Dr. Kanninen, Mr. Goldstein, Mr. Lander, Ms. Talento and Ms. Van Doren voting affirmatively. The following items or actions were approved as a part of consent:

1. Minutes:
 - a. September 12, 2017 Work Session on Middle School Boundaries
 - b. September 21, 2017 School Board Meeting
 - c. October 5, 2017 School Board Meeting
 - d. October 27, 2017 Committee of the Whole

2. Personnel actions

P/E-SCALE PERSONNEL

- 3 Appointments
- 1 Change In Position/Salary

T-SCALE PERSONNEL

- 2 Appointments

A-SCALE PERSONNEL

- 4 Appointments
- 2 Resignations (With Prejudice)

SUPPORT SERVICES PERSONNEL

- 2 Appointments
- 3 Changes In Position/Salary
- 2 Resignations
- 2 Retirements

3. Receive Briefing Reports:
 - a. APS Internships Update
 - b. Annual Food Services Update

4. Appointment of Members, Career Center Working Group

5. Appointment to the Joint Facilities Advisory Commission

Dr. Kanninen announced that as a part of consent, the Board appointed Heather Rothenbuescher as Supervisor, Special Education. She also announced that the Board appointed Kathleen McSweeney as Chair of the Career Center Working Group and Cristina Diaz-Torres to the Joint Facilities Advisory Council. The Board also received the APS Internships Update and the Annual Food Services Updates.

C. PUBLIC HEARING ON THE SUPERINTENDENT’S PROPOSED MIDDLE SCHOOL BOUNDARIES: (7:00 PM)

Dr. Sarah Johnson, Planner, provided a brief review of the middle school boundary process and the Superintendent's proposed boundaries. She then described an updated option that has been prepared based on feedback from the School Board.

The following speakers addressed the Board concerning the boundary changes affecting the Court House/Clarendon neighborhood, thanking the Board for the revised option that supports alignment and allows children from that area to go to Swanson Middle School:

Dima Hakura, parent
Sameer Bagai, parent
Reem Akkad, parent
Neerja Sharma, parent
Preeti Desai, parent
Sunjeev Sikand, parent
Scott Pedowitz, parent
Ross Shaufelberger, parent
Amy Decker, parent

The following speakers addressed the Board concerning the boundary changes affecting High View Park/Waycroft, thanking the Board for the revised option that supports proximity, diversity and alignment and keeps children from this neighborhood together:

Margarite Gooden, parent
Jessica Buckwalter, parent
Alison Broadbent, parent
Alexandra Bocian, parent

The following speakers addressed the Board, thanking them for the opportunity to provide input, stating that proximity is the most important criterion to consider, and urging the Board to support options that focus on walkability:

Marlene Girdis, McKinley parent
Colin Sheldon, parent
Francisca Winston, parent
Christina Headrick, parent
Jamie Brys, parent

The following speakers addressed the Board, stating concerns about the lack of diversity in the proposed boundary options and encouraging the Board to revisit the recommendation and address this issue:

Richard Gibson, parent
Emily Vincent, parent

The following speakers addressed the Board, asking that families in the East Falls Church neighborhood not be moved to Williamsburg, but left in the Swanson district, stating concerns about safety, proximity and alignment that would result from this change:

Dawn Jessen, parent
Hemant Sharma, parent
Erin Donohue, parent

The following speakers also addressed the Board:

Lisa Blackwell, parent: recognizing the strength of APS schools and suggesting that APS consider moving all students from each elementary school to the same middle school.

Anthony Panza, parent: asking the Board to reconsider previous changes to high school boundaries to keep students together.

Terry Randall, parent: urging the Board to adjust boundaries to equalize enrollment among all of the middle schools.

Long Westerlund, parent: asking for a middle school immersion program in central Arlington, as it is difficult for many families to travel to Gunston.

Dan Plafcan, parent: appreciating the deliberative, informed process undertaken and the work that has been done but stating concerns that Kenmore and Swanson may become overcrowded based on the proposed options.

Mary Giliberti, parent: Asking the Board to include grandfathering for 8th graders in these boundary changes so students can remain at their current school.

Dr. Kanninen thanked the speakers for their comments and staff for their work. She outlined next steps, confirming that the Board will continue to review information and feedback received and will vote on Dec. 14. The Board will also continue to look at projections and consider boundary refinements to address crowding. Mr. Lander appreciated the community input, and encouraged families to continue to engage with the Board and their principals, especially as their children transition to the next level. Ms. Van Doren affirmed that the Board received a large number of emails and messages and she thanked staff for the Engage web site that facilitated communication. She recognized some remaining community concerns that the Board will continue to address, and asked families to continue to be engaged.

Mr. Goldstein also appreciated all of the feedback received, and confirmed that he plans to propose a revision to the boundaries that will better balance enrollment between the middle schools. He encouraged the community to continue to be engaged. Ms. Talento thanked staff for their efforts to reach out to all communities in Arlington. She confirmed that Arlington is dedicated to providing the best education to every student, and encouraged continued engagement. In closing the discussion, Dr. Kanninen confirmed that the Board will consider this staff proposal, and changes will be shared with the public as soon as they are available. She reaffirmed that the Board will vote on this item on December 14.

D. CITIZEN COMMENT ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS: (8:25 PM)

The following speakers addressed the Board:

Michael Lesmez and Eduardo Guasti, students: describing how the Wheels to Africa program works and encouraging the community to donate bicycles to the group.

Dixie Duncan, Wheels to Africa sponsor: sharing additional information about the program and highlighting student participation in the program over the past 12 years.

Tracy Greiner, resident: stating concerns about the APS purchase and plans for a Culpeper Street lot, and asking that the property be secured for the safety of the neighborhood.

Dr. Kanninen called for a five-minute recess, and the Board reconvened at 8:38 PM.

E. MONITORING ITEM: (8:38 PM)

1. Superintendent's 2017-18 Action Plan Update:

Dr. Murphy presented the update, reviewing the status of current initiatives, including new policies and policy revisions, new schools and program moves, operational planning projects including the FY 2019 budget, and capital initiatives. He highlighted upcoming dates and encouraged the community to continue to be engaged.

F. ACTION ITEM: (8:43 PM)

1. Middle and High School Program of Studies

Recognizing Board interest in providing intensified learning in middle school, Dr. Natrass confirmed that the goals for middle school instruction are focused on challenging and engaging students and meeting their needs. She described how staff is focused on providing a variety of opportunities to students and confirmed staff will continue to work to increase rigor, particularly for gifted students. Dr. Murphy recognized Board interest in continuing this discussion, and confirmed his commitment to work with staff and families to enrich opportunities for all students through many different mechanisms.

Responding to questions, Dr. Natrass described courses that have been strengthened to meet the needs of specific student groups. She described materials acquisition and confirmed that staff is looking to offer sign language at all middle schools.

Ms. Van Doren moved that the Board approve the proposed Middle and High School Program of Studies as presented, seconded by Mr. Lander.

Mr. Goldstein moved to table this motion at this time and vote on this item on December 14, seconded by Dr. Kanninen. Mr. Goldstein asked Dr. Murphy how long it would take to bring information forward related to increasing rigor in middle school, and if a pilot program could be implemented in fall 2018. Dr. Murphy strongly recommended acting on the Program of Studies at this meeting, so that needed information will be available for students to register for the 2018-19 school year. He explained that staff would need a significant amount of time to research and develop

a comprehensive plan to address Mr. Goldstein's request, and staff would not be able to develop a pilot program in the timeframe suggested.

Board members appreciated the concerns expressed by Mr. Goldstein and agreed with the need to address concerns, but also recognized time constraints and the need to move forward with the Program of Studies. Ms. Van Doren appreciated the work that has been done and encouraged staff to continue this effort. Ms. Talento stated that she has heard concerns about students of color being discouraged from enrolling in rigorous courses, and stated her support for increasing options for all students to participate. She looked forward to additional discussion to address these concerns. Dr. Kanninen stated her support for Mr. Goldstein's motion, and felt it provided enough time for staff to develop a plan to be shared with the Board.

Dr. Kanninen called for a vote and the motion failed in a vote of 2-3, with Dr. Kanninen and Mr. Goldstein voting affirmatively and Mr. Lander, Ms. Talento and Ms. Van Doren opposing.

Mr. Goldstein appreciated the comments of his colleagues and their support for providing intensified instruction that would benefit all students. Mr. Goldstein then proposed the following amendment:

I move that the School Board direct the Superintendent to develop new middle school course options for each core subject area to include in the 2019-2020 Program of Studies. The courses should be open to all students, with no teacher recommendation required, and provide students the opportunity to delve deeper into the subject matter, using, for example, project-based learning, intensified or self-paced study, integrated curriculum, and/or other approaches to more rigorous work. The School Board further directs the Superintendent to develop at least one such course as a pilot to be implemented in at least one middle school in SY 2018-2019. The motion to amend was seconded by Dr. Kanninen.

Ms. Talento and Mr. Lander again appreciated Mr. Goldstein's interest in strengthening the middle school program, but did not support this motion. Mr. Lander noted that staff needs to be sure students are prepared before they enroll in intensified courses, and he did not believe that this is the right mechanism to implement a pilot program. Concerns about budget implications of this proposal were also expressed. Responding to a question, Dr. Murphy stated that middle school staff has not had an opportunity to consider or provide input on this proposal. Ms. Van Doren recognized that significant work is needed to develop a pilot program, and also acknowledged concerns about subtle biases that can limit student opportunities. She confirmed her commitment to addressing this concern but did not support the proposed approach.

Responding to some of the concerns expressed, Dr. Natrass clarified that staff has been working to increase rigor for gifted students and she described efforts that have been put in place over the past few years. She also stated her belief that rigor does not depend on a specific course being offered but is provided through the curriculum and in the classroom. Mr. Goldstein appreciated the comments and reiterated his support

for his motion. Dr. Kanninen supported the motion as it would allow more detail and information to be provided and would give staff guidance on how to proceed.

Dr. Kanninen called for a vote on the amendment and the motion failed in a vote of 2-3, with Dr. Kanninen and Mr. Goldstein voting affirmatively and Mr. Lander, Ms. Talento and Ms. Van Doren opposing.

Mr. Lander recognized the stresses of middle school and reviewed various changes that have been made over the years to the middle school curriculum. He again stated his belief that this work is not policy driven, but is operational so rests with staff, and asked for updates as work is done. Ms. Van Doren appreciated the work that has been done to develop the Program of Studies, and looked forward to continued discussion of instruction.

Dr. Kanninen called for a vote and the main motion was adopted in a vote of 4 – 1, with Dr. Kanninen, Mr. Lander, Ms. Talento and Ms. Van Doren voting affirmatively and Mr. Goldstein opposing.

G. INFORMATION ITEMS: (9:43 PM)

1. Summer School Fees

Dr. Natrass reviewed the Summer School Mission statement and goals. Ms. Peterson reviewed Summer School revenues from last summer, and Dr. Natrass shared information about how the APS Summer School program compares to surrounding divisions' offerings and costs. She also highlighted some suggestions being considered for cost efficiency, such as consolidating staff, using transportation hubs and online registration. She then presented the proposed summer school fees. Dr. Murphy confirmed that scholarships are available for families.

Responding to questions, Dr. Natrass confirmed deadlines related to summer school. Ms. Talento asked if a payment plan could be offered to families who have financial struggles. Ms. Peterson appreciated this suggestion and was willing to look into it, but confirmed that APS currently does not have the capacity to offer this option. Ms. Van Doren encouraged staff to look at creative and cost-efficient ways to offer summer learning opportunities and additional activities in the schools, as this would provide more opportunities for students and better utilizes facilities. Responding to questions, staff agreed to provide historical information on summer school costs. In closing, Dr. Murphy recognized the strong collaboration between APS and the County to coordinate schedules and to maximize facilities use and summer opportunities for families.

2. 2019-2028 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) Framework: (10:07 PM)

After reviewing enrollment growth over time, Ms. Stengle presented the proposed framework, which is informed by the Arlington Facilities and Student Accommodation Plan (AFSAP). Ms. Stengle then shared capacity utilization data for the current school year, enrollment and projections, and planned additional

seats, including projects in the current CIP for each school level. She then reviewed decision points for developing the 2019-2028 CIP Framework, such as further development of the planned high school seats at the Career Center and Education Center and the new elementary school at Reed. Additional decision points relate to adding elementary and middle school seats and other future capital needs as well as minor construction/major maintenance needs. In closing, Ms. Stengle reviewed next steps for the CIP process.

Responding to questions, Ms. Stengle clarified steps in the process, and the group briefly discussed how to balance moving forward with ensuring that sufficient information is available to inform decisions. Board members were interested in the timeline for receiving the AFSAP report and the group also discussed the data that will be part of this report and shared with the public. Ms. Stengle provided additional information about the annual update and the AFSAP, and how these documents inform decisions about transfers and other options to balance enrollment, particularly with upcoming boundary changes.

3. Change Order for Architecture and Engineering Services at the Career Center: (10:25 PM)

Mr. Chadwick presented the change order which supports planned work at the Career Center to provide additional capacity for Arlington Tech. He provided a project overview and explained that, because this project is being done in phases, the change order will allow APS to do needed work to add capacity. In closing, he confirmed that this change order is within the current funding available and approved previously by the Board.

Mr. Chadwick responded briefly to questions about the funding ceiling and possible additional costs that might occur. He also spoke to additional seats that may be added at this site in future phases, and confirmed that recommendations from the Career Center Working Group may affect future plans. The group recognized the importance of staying within the budget that has been defined.

H. NEW BUSINESS: NONE

I. ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting adjourned at 10:36 PM.

ATTEST:

Melanie Elliott, Clerk
Arlington School Board

Barbara Kanninen, Chair
Arlington School Board