

ARLINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Item C-1-c

Legislative Breakfast

December 13, 2017

The Arlington School Board sponsored a legislative breakfast on Wednesday, December 13, 2017, at Wakefield High School, 1325 S. Dinwiddie Street, Arlington, Virginia, with public remarks beginning at 8:31AM.

Present were:

Reid Goldstein, Vice Chair

James S. Lander, Member

Tannia Talento, Member

Nancy Van Doren, Chair

Dr. Patrick K. Murphy, Superintendent

Melanie Elliott, Clerk of the Board

The breakfast was also attended by local legislators and legislative aides, as well as School Board members and staff from the Alexandria and Falls Church school systems.

Mr. Lander, APS Legislative Liaison, convened the meeting and welcomed all attendees. He thanked Chef Renee Randolph and students from the Arlington Career Center Culinary Arts Program who provided breakfast.

Ms. Lilla Wise, Legislative Liaison for all three divisions, presented a summary of the Arlington School Board Legislative Package. Funding issues include opposition to new unfunded mandates, support for continuing the Cost of Competing factor, and support for additional funding for the At-Risk Add-On. New issues include support for the establishment of a School Health Advisory Board, amendment of the Code of Virginia to require annual certification for religious exemption from compulsory attendance, and allowing local school boards to prohibit guns at all school-related functions regardless of setting. Continuing issues include returning control of the school calendar to local boards, opposition to transferring local taxpayer funds to other jurisdictions or to private providers for student attendance outside of their home school division, and opposition to diversion of public education funds to non-public schools.

Dr. Lois Berlin, Acting Superintendent, Alexandria City Public Schools, shared her division's support for the At-Risk Add-on funding. Dr. Peter Noonan, Falls Church City Public Schools Superintendent, spoke to the importance of allowing local divisions to set the school calendar, noting in particular the negative impact that starting after Labor Day has on students enrolled in IB or AP classes. Delegate Patrick Hope asked increased use of opioids or heroin throughout the country, and the school leaders spoke to efforts that have been made to address this epidemic.

The legislators then shared areas of particular interest. Delegate Hope is working on legislation related to school shaming by inadvertently drawing attention to students who cannot pay for lunch. Senator George Barker is working to the shortage of teachers in the state as well as other areas of interest. Delegate Rip Sullivan is working on a safe haven concept for reporting assault or abuse. He also spoke to internet safety and teaching children how to differentiate between good and bad sources of information on the web. Other topics discussed included managing students' screen

time, the availability of financial aid for DACA students, and strengthening educational opportunities at juvenile detention centers.

In closing, Ms. Wise thanked all of the participants and invited continued dialog and collaboration. The educators and legislators thanked Ms. Wise and Mr. Lander for facilitating the discussion and supporting efforts on behalf of students. The meeting concluded at 9:35 AM.

ATTEST:

Melanie Elliott, Clerk
Arlington School Board

Barbara Kanninen, Chair
Arlington School Board