



**Reid Goldstein**

**School Board Organizational Meeting – July 2, 2018**

Good afternoon – thank you all for coming today.

Thank you to my Board colleagues for electing me as chair and having the faith that I will be able to shepherd the SB's business through this coming year.

Thank you to Dr. Murphy and his staff for their willingness to accommodate another Board chair.

Thank you to all attending for your continuing interest in all things APS.

Thank you to our County Board colleagues - we've had and will continue to have a strong relationship of close collaboration.

A special and heartfelt thank you to our outgoing Chair Barbara Kanninen for fairly and efficiently, patiently and productively, guiding us through a year of big changes and major initiatives, and at a rapid pace. Board chair is a thankless job - I say this from experience because I neglected to thank her on many occasions when she has led all of our accomplishments to fruition - the big ones: the budget, the Capital Improvement Plan, the boundary adjustments; and the innumerable small ones that keep moving the work along. Barbara, thank you for your great work as chair! I'm sorry for all those times I called you and failed to say, "How can I help you?" I guess it's my turn to get those phone calls now. By the way, colleagues, my phone is broken.

We have a year coming up of big issues and dynamic activity - yes, another big year. Probably, our most visible issue is our relentless enrollment growth. We are expanding at the rate of a middle school every year. We have nearly 10,000 more students now than 10 years ago. We anticipate 8,000 more students in the next 10 years.

This enrollment growth brings with it a host of issues:

- Hiring high quality teachers and staff
- Finding space for expansion
- Finding money for expansion
- Investing in seat expansion in the right places, and at the right time
- More and better communications – both internally and externally
- Engaging more new families and bringing them into the APS world
- Doing new things, by necessity, while doing the old ones, too
- Stretching finite resources.

The School Board, the Superintendent, the staff, our colleagues in County government, and members of the community have all been focused on, assisting with, and fretting over the impacts of enrollment growth. It's a thorny problem, but we have a lot of very smart and capable people working on it – both on our staff and in the community. And we are grateful for their help. I think everyone has come to the realization that enrollment growth is not a statistical blip and will not soon plateau. It is a challenging set of circumstances. We are lucky in that we are an affluent community who values and supports education highly. We are challenged by being one of the geographically smallest counties in the nation, yet very densely populated, meaning we have little available land to grow our school facilities.

There is a lot of attention, money, planning, construction, and angst focused on our capacity planning. But, while it consumes a lot of attention and resources, we cannot lose sight of the fact that the chief activity of Arlington Public Schools is not our capital expansion program. Our chief activity is creating successful outcomes for our students. We accomplish this by recruiting and retaining a high-quality workforce, by focusing our financial resources on low class sizes, and by providing a significant array of services to our students. Student success has earned APS an enviable reputation. Student success is what we are, we need to be, and we will continue to be focused on.

Arlington Public Schools has the talent, the resources, and the motivation to make student success happen, and we are blessed with an active and supportive community who will assist us.

All of the components are in place for us to move forward to continued success.

Let's do it!

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