

MEMORANDUM

April 2, 2019

To: APS School Board Members
Dr. Patrick K. Murphy, Superintendent
Dr. Tara Natrass, Assistant Superintendent Teaching and Learning

From: Meredith Purple and Dana Milburn
Advisory Council on Instruction Co-Chairs

Subject: Advisory Council on Instruction
Budget Input from Subject-Matter Committees

We presented input from the membership of the Arlington Public Schools Advisory Council on Instruction (ACI or the Council) on the Superintendent's Proposed Budget for Fiscal Year 2020, summarized¹ in our comments and slides at the April 2, 2019 School Board work session. We also invited Committee Chairs of all ACI's committees to provide input on the budget from their committees' perspectives, and provide their input below.

Arlington Special Education Advisory Committee:

Thank you for collecting feedback regarding the budget. ASEAC is concerned about the deferred hiring of school psychologists and social workers (tier 2), the increase in general education class sizes (tier 1), and the reduction in special education coordination time (tier 3). We urge the School Board to fully fund these items.

ESOL/HILT Advisory Committee:

The ESOL/HILT CAC does not support the following reductions:

- Eliminate HILTEX teacher transition positions (2.00 FTE): This will decrease the amount of co-taught classes for students who are transitioning from ESOL/HILT to general education. These classes provide much needed support to ELs during a critical transition period.
- Eliminate HILT Supplement Positions (3.00 FTE): These are positions that directly support English Learners in the classroom and are expected to help close the achievement gap.
- Eliminate Equity and Excellence Coordinator position in Department of Teaching and Learning (1.00 FTE) and Eliminate Equity and Excellence Coordinator positions at the High Schools (2.500 FTE): These positions provide significant support to students by ensuring that our schools

¹ The charts showing all member input from the March 6, 2019, ACI meeting are available in their entirety on the ACI website.

are inclusive and equitable places that value and appreciate diversity not just of ELs but of all students.

- Eliminate ESOL/HILT Administrative Assistant Position: This position is needed in order to ensure that the ESOL/HILT office can maintain consistent support of a growing population of ELs.

English Learners are about 26.8% of the total student population; that is roughly one in every four students. While we understand that there are budget constraints, we believe that reductions that do not affect the varying needs of our growing population of ELs should be considered before the aforementioned eliminations.

Gifted Services Advisory Committee:

GSAC advocates for full-time RTGs in all schools and encourages the School Board not to make a cut to RTGs.

Keeping TJHSST spots is important, even if a sliding scale transportation fee is implemented.

GSAC does not support a cap on the number of AP/IB assessments as these are part of advanced curriculum choices available to all advanced learners.

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ACI Budget Input Process

- Background information presentation on planning factors in advance of the release of the Superintendent's Proposed Budget
- Members were asked to watch the Superintendent's budget presentation and review the proposed budget prior to the relevant ACI meeting
- Presentations by Dr. Barbara Kanninen and Dr. Tara Nattrass on the budget overview and Department Teaching and Learning specific items
- Work in small groups to identify recommended or supported budget cuts and areas not to be cut, along with informal discussion and question/answers
- Gallery walk review of charts capturing small group work
- "Dots" show member input on other groups' work/charts
- ACI did not "vote" on any recommendations, nor did the group necessarily come to a group consensus on a many items



Themes

- Interest in finding creative/ “outside the box” solutions to budget challenges (Innovation/Boldness)
- Support for budget cuts in administrative or operational areas rather than in positions and areas immediately impacting students and instruction (Operational Excellence and Student Success)
- Strong emphasis on student well-being and direct student support (Student Well-being)
- Equity was a significant consideration for many recommendations (Equity)



Supported cost reductions or revenue increases

Extremely strong group support for the following cost reductions or revenue increases:

- End use of APS vehicles for commuting
- Increase HS student parking fees
- Cap on IB/AP assessments funded by APS
- Implement MS/HS activity fee
- Tier One budget cuts (except for class-size increase)



Supported cost reductions or revenue increases

Additional items with broad support:

- Reduce funding for postage
- Reduce funding support to the Supt.'s office
- Eliminate substitutes-clerical
- Eliminate a Financial Analyst position
- Eliminate district funding of crew
- Eliminate meltwater services
- Reduce administrative services printing and duplication
- Eliminate replacement computer equipment
- Eliminate Adobe suite/MS Office
- Eliminate Asst. Dir. Assessment position



Non-Supported cost reductions or revenue increases

Extremely strong group disapproval for the following proposed cost reductions or revenue increases:

- Reduction of guidance counselors in HS
- Postponement or reduction in school psychologists and social workers
- Elimination of Outdoor Lab



Non-Supported cost reductions or revenue increases

Strong disapproval for the following cost reductions or revenue increases:

- Reduction in FTE headcount at MS
- Reduction or elimination of RTGs
- Elimination of Library Assistants (ES)
- Elimination of Vocational Teachers (HS)
- Reduction in Special Education Coordination time
- Elimination of ITCs (HS)



Lack of consensus cost reductions

Split opinions in the group for:

- Elimination of transportation and tuition costs for APS students attending TJHSST (with slight preference for retaining funding/not making the cut)
- Class-size increase (Tier 1) (with slight preference for retaining funding/not making the cut)
- Move MS Pathways to New Directions
- Eliminate printing of report cards (slight preference for making the cut)



Additional Comments

- More money for SPED & ESOL social workers for wrap-around services
- Look at clerical & coordinator positions- do you need both?
- Look at sports transportation costs
- Look at exemplary projects
- Why are we only looking at DTL—what about Central Office?
- What are the redundancies we should know about?
- How do we get info to assess efficiency issues?
- Look at: bell times, alternate schedules, year-round, double shifts
- Bring Montessori assistants back
- TJ access cuts—with Amazon coming, Seriously?!?

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