

ARLINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Closed Meeting and
Work Session on Instructional Program Pathways
February 12, 2019

Item C-1-b

The Arlington School Board convened on Tuesday, February 12, 2019, at 6:03 PM at 2110 Washington Blvd., Arlington, Virginia.¹

Present were:

Reid Goldstein, Chair
Tannia Talento, Vice Chair
Barbara Kanninen, Member
Monique O’Grady, Member
Nancy Van Doren, Member
Melanie Elliott, Clerk

Also present were:

Dr. Patrick K. Murphy, Superintendent
John Chadwick, Assistant Superintendent, Facilities and Operations
Leslie Peterson, Assistant Superintendent, Finance and Management

A. CALL TO ORDER AND CLOSED MEETING

Mr. Goldstein moved that the Board immediately convene in a closed meeting to consider the acquisition of real property for a public purpose where discussion in an open meeting would adversely affect the bargaining position or negotiating strategy of the public body, as authorized by Virginia Code §2.2-3711(A)(3), seconded by Ms. Van Doren. The motion was adopted in a vote of 5 - 0, with Mr. Goldstein, Dr. Kanninen, Ms. O’Grady, Ms. Talento, and Ms. Van Doren voting affirmatively.

The closed meeting adjourned at 7:00 PM, and the Board reconvened in an open meeting.

Mr. Goldstein moved to certify that to the best of his 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. The motion was seconded by Ms. Talento and was adopted in a vote of 5 – 0. The voting record is as follows: Mr. Goldstein – Aye; Dr. Kanninen – Aye; Ms. O’Grady – Aye; Ms. Talento – Aye; and Ms. Van Doren – Aye.

The Board took a brief recess and reconvened in the Work Session at 7:07 PM.

¹ Video clips 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.

B. WORK SESSION ON INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM PATHWAYS

Also present were:

Raj Adusumilli, Assistant Superintendent, Information Services
John Chadwick, Assistant Superintendent, Facilities and Operations
Cintia Johnson, Assistant Superintendent, Administrative Services
Tara Natrass, Assistant Superintendent, Teaching and Learning
Lisa Stengle, Executive Director, Planning and Evaluation
Sarah Putnam, Supervisor, Curriculum and Instruction
Meg Tuccillo, Consultant

Mr. Goldstein called the work session to order. Dr. Natrass then reviewed the agenda.

Setting the Context

Dr. Natrass reviewed areas of focus for the Prek-12 Instructional Program Pathways (IPP) process, such as background and context, content, and programs/schools. Considerations that will also be explored include transportation, sibling preference, application process, and locations. After highlighting guiding documents, Dr. Natrass summarized work to be done to define the elements of option programs and develop the vision and components of IPP. She confirmed that past studies will inform this work. She then highlighted how the goals in the 2018-2024 Strategic Plan, the Five Cs, and the Profile of a Virginia Graduate relate to IPP development. Operational driving factors to be considered include boundary processes, policy updates, new schools, growth and equal opportunity of access.

History of APS

Ms. Tuccillo reviewed the history of APS since 1958, describing various schools, integration, and programs that have been established by APS, such as Montessori, ESOL, H-B Woodlawn and immersion. She reviewed changes in enrollment and diversity that have occurred and described how those changes affected the schools. Highlights of the early 1990s Futures Planning Process were also shared, and Ms. Tuccillo reviewed changes to policy that have affected student selection for option programs. New school openings and boundary changes to in recent years were also noted.

Responding to questions, Ms. Tuccillo explained that expansion of Montessori and the Virginia Preschool Initiative (VPI) explains much of the growth in preschool enrollment. She shared more information on the creation of programs and option schools, and described implementation of expeditionary projects. Also discussed was how community interest led to the development of some programs and the effect of options on diversity in the schools.

Dr. Natrass spoke in more depth about the 2018-24 Strategic Plan, School Board Policy J-5.2.21 Options and Transfers, and Virginia Profile of a Graduate, and how they will guide this work. She shared highlights of these documents and confirmed that policy defines neighborhood schools and outlines key components of programs. The 2017 Community Survey that was conducted to identify a focus for the Education Center renovation will also

inform this process, and Dr. Natrass described community participation in the survey. The group briefly discussed how programs are staffed to meet the needs of the students.

Envisioning the Future

Dr. Natrass explained how education has changed over the years and summarized research that informed those changes. She summarized ten principles of modern schools, noting that education focuses on providing personalized experiences and in-depth knowledge, and on building work place skills and global competence. The group briefly discussed how this approach provides students with worthwhile experiences.

PreK-12 Instructional Program Pathways

Initial Staff Review

Dr. Natrass then shared initial work completed by staff to review the definition of options programs and options schools, to research other school districts with options, and to start developing scenarios for the PreK-12 IPP. She also shared key decision points that have been identified, including points for specific programs. Dr. Natrass then responded to questions about differences between a program and a school. Board members recognized the variety of programs and schools in APS, and Dr. Kanninen commented on some additional aspects of options to consider in this process.

The first key decision point is what programs should be part of each pathway, and Dr. Natrass reviewed current and potential types of options to be considered. The next decision point is to identify the difference between a program and a school. Staff has held preliminary discussions on secondary programs, and have looked at options such as housing programs within all schools or offering options at a hub location. Dr. Natrass explained that the working definition for option programs is that they should be open to all students, include a unique philosophical focus, and implement an instructional model that differs from offerings at other schools. Programs may also have specific requirements recognized by an outside agency and may include specialized training for staff. Dr. Natrass then reviewed the process timeline which includes a monitoring report in June.

Discussion

Board members encouraged giving division-wide staff as well as students a role in this process and providing equal access to all schools and programs. Dr. Natrass confirmed that staff is starting with a vision of the ideal that allows all students equal opportunities, and is working to incorporate logistics as the work moves forward. Dr. Kanninen suggested also considering alternate pathways, such as the current practice of allowing students to take IB courses without pursuing the IB diploma. Board members also expressed interest in the visioning process, considering transportation as plans are made, and keeping track of issues and concerns as the process moves forward. The group discussed the possible swap of school/program locations, and staff share more detail how locations will be considered in this process. Dr. Murphy cautioned that change is constant and will affect

plans as the process moves forward. Ms. Stengle also described the complexity of planning for change and the importance of looking at how all schools are affected by a change.

Board members appreciated the thorough process and encouraged a continued focus on all options to meet student needs. They also requested that participants in the process reflect the diversity in the community and include representatives from all programs. The Board looked forward to seeing the rationale for the proposals brought forward, and noted that the enrollment continues to grow. Responding to questions, Dr. Natrass reviewed how locations will be considered, decisions will be made, and how the work will fit with the upcoming boundary process. The group briefly discussed the timeline and the need to work with fidelity, as well as the School Board's role in this process.

Closing Remarks

Board members appreciated staff for their efforts and looked forward to continued work on the visioning process, and recognized there is a re-evaluation of where immersion will be located. Dr. Murphy thanked staff for their participation.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 9:33 PM

ATTEST:

Melanie Elliott, Clerk
Arlington School Board

Reid Goldstein, Chair
Arlington School Board