

ARLINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Joint School Board/County Board Work Session
April 12, 2019

The Arlington School Board convened on Friday, April 6, 2018 at 4:03 PM at 2100 Clarendon Blvd, Arlington, VA.

Present were:

School Board

Reid Goldstein, Chair
Tannia Talento, Vice Chair
Barbara Kanninen, Member
Monique O’Grady, Member
Nancy Van Doren, Member
Dr. Patrick K. Murphy, Superintendent
Melanie Elliott, Clerk

County Board

Christian Dorsey, Chairman
Libby Garvey, Vice Chair
Katie Cristol, Member
Matt de Ferranti, Member
Erik Gutshall, Member
Mark Schwartz, County Manager
Krysta Jones, Aide

Teen Network Board (TNB)

TNB co-chairs Gracia Melendez and Marshal Maguire presented an update on the purpose, organization and work of the TNB. The group formed four sub-committees this year focused on Communications; Drugs and Alcohol Prevention; Volunteer, Internships, Community Service and Employment; and Peer to Peer Relationships. Ms. Melendez and Mr. Maguire described the activities of these subcommittees, then discussed several topics with the Board members. Topics discussed included the use of vaping devices, spaces for teens to gather, and how students can join the TNB. The group also discussed mental health issues, healthy relationships, and using alternate transportation to get to school. In closing, the TNB members spoke to stresses that students face.

Arlington Partnership for Children, Youth and Families (APCYF)

Dr. Sheila Fleishhacker, Chair, presented the APCYF’s three priorities during the current year: promoting youth mental health and wellness; providing transportation for access to experiential learning and physical activity; and fostering family support and community engagement. Dr. Fleishhacker then commented on budget items and proposed cuts related to these priorities, and shared data from the APCYF’s 2019 Community Report related to these priorities.

Responding to Board comments, Dr. Fleishhacker appreciated a suggestion to reach out to Fairfax County to learn about their efforts to address youth mental health issues. The group also briefly discussed findings in the Community Report and the Youth Risk Behavior Survey related to LGBTQ data and on obtaining more accurate information on the incidence of eating disorders and providing support to students who experience these disorders.

Arlington Public Schools Proposed FY 2020 Budget

Mr. Goldstein presented an overview of the School Board’s Proposed FY 2020 Budget. He thanked the APS staff and Board for their efforts, and thanked the County for their contributions to a strong

community and strong support for APS. He then highlighted School and County collaboration, sharing examples of joint projects and successes. He also outlined keys to student success including low class size, high quality staff, and robust student supports.

Looking to the proposed budget, Mr. Goldstein described ongoing enrollment growth that is and will continue to be a key budget consideration. He presented data on the cost per pupil as compared to enrollment growth, confirming that over recent years the cost per pupil has remained relatively level. After reviewing reductions in the current year's budget, Mr. Goldstein described the development of the Board's proposed budget. The Superintendent's budget included a deficit of \$42.8 million, which was reduced to \$6.8 million as a result of reductions approved by the School Board. Mr. Goldstein then summarized proposed FY 2020 expenditures in the areas of increased enrollment, new/renovated facilities, growth initiatives, compensation, and investments to support growth. He described compensation considerations and outlined the use of budget reserves to address the funding gap. Reductions were achieved by increasing class size, using one-time funds for MCM, and implementing other efficiencies. Mr. Goldstein also highlighted investments the Board chose to add to the budget, including a diversity officer, a partnership coordinator, funding for compensation studies, and the ART bus pilot. In closing, he summarized the proposed budget and reiterated key takeaways.

Mr. Dorsey thanked Mr. Goldstein and the Boards discussed several topics of interest, such as how much APS funding comes from the state, the accuracy of enrollment growth projections and how they are developed, and whether additional reductions will be needed if the budget as presented is funded. Additional topics discussed were the use of one-time versus ongoing funds, anticipated economic development in the county, and staffing challenges and competition with other local school districts. Staff also spoke to potential reductions and confirmed decisions were made with a focus on maintaining the instruction in the classroom.

The Boards discussed the proposed pilot for ART buses and how it will coordinate with current transportation. The group also discussed efforts to address equity throughout the County. APS is developing an equity policy and hiring a diversity officer. Mr. Dorsey spoke to the County's efforts to strengthen equity throughout the community, and both Boards looked forward to collaborating on this effort. Collaboration in the use of school facilities was also considered, and it was confirmed that the Superintendent and County Manager have been working together and will continue this effort to ensure as much access as possible for County programs.

Closing comments

School Board members acknowledged the growing needs of APS, and the importance of education to the community. They thanked the County Board for being champions for the schools and encouraged the County Board to help APS address the budget gap. They also encouraged both staffs to continue to collaborate to manage the challenges ahead. School Board members spoke to the risks to the instructional program that would result if some of the potential cuts must be made, and described how additional funds would be used to maintain high quality schools. Dr. Kanninen cautioned all to remember the constraints of using one-time funds, and spoke to the thoughtful use of reserves. Mr. Goldstein reiterated the thanks expressed by the other Board members for the support the County has provided, the hard work of the staff, and the community for its passion and

advocacy. He also recognized the challenge of the ongoing growth in the County and asked for continued collaboration and support from the County going forward.

County Board members also appreciated the hard work and collaboration that has taken place, and acknowledged in particular the thoughtful approach APS has taken in identifying reductions. Mr. Dorsey thanked all of the School Board members for their compassion and commitment to education, and recognized the difficult issues facing the County. He noted that by facing these issues, the community is forced to look carefully at all investments and to make wise decisions. In closing, Mr. Dorsey acknowledged that the community's commitment, and the ongoing collaboration between the Schools and the County, makes the schools excellent for all.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned 6:15 PM.

ATTEST:

Melanie Elliott, Clerk
Arlington School Board

Reid Goldstein, Chair
Arlington School Board