

ARLINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Work Session on the Capital Improvement Plan
March 14, 2016

Item C-1-a

The Arlington School Board convened on Monday, March 14, 2016 at 7:33 PM at 1426 N. Quincy Street, Arlington, Virginia.

Present were:

Emma Violand-Sánchez, Chair
Nancy Van Doren, Vice Chair
Reid Goldstein, Member
Barbara Kanninen, Member
James Lander, Member
Melanie Elliott, Clerk

Also present were:

Dr. Patrick K. Murphy, Superintendent
John Chadwick, Assistant Superintendent, Facilities and Operations
Connie Skelton, Assistant Superintendent, Instruction
Deirdra McLaughlin, Assistant Superintendent, Finance and Management
Ben Burgin, Assistant Director, Design and Construction
Lionel White, Director, Facilities Planning
Zachary Larnard, Facilities Planner
Meg Tucillo, Facilities Planning

- Welcome and Introductions

Dr. Violand-Sánchez called the meeting to order and welcomed all attendees, including members of the Advisory Council on School Facilities (FAC).

Chair Kelly King described the FAC's discussions of the CIP process and feedback from the subcommittee on high school capacity. She shared analysis of data collected from community forums, and summarized key takeaways by school level and theme. For high school planning, the FAC felt that 2018 will be a critical year, and discussed the possibility of building an additional comprehensive high school. Feedback on middle school issues included concerns about the impact of delaying the new school at Stratford. For elementary capacity, the group discussed how the new elementary school at Jefferson will affect crowding, and how the Reed facility might be used to relieve crowding. The FAC encouraged the Board to consider lessons learned from each project moving forward, and noting the complexity of boundary changes, recommended the Board begin to look at them early.

Board members appreciated the feedback from the FAC and briefly discussed some of the suggestions and recommendations. While the FAC's efforts focused on facilities, Ms. King noted the Board should also consider programmatic changes as plans evolve. Dr. Violand-Sánchez agreed that these discussions should include input from the Department of Instruction as well as the communities where the schools are located.

- CIP Process Stage

Mr. Chadwick presented an update on the status of the CIP process, first reviewing the schedule and engagement timeline. He summarized data from the three community forums held as well as responses received in various feedback forms. He confirmed that based on feedback received, staff will look to revise the process to better reach the community.

- Instruction

After highlighting suggestions from the Master Planning Committee in 2014, Ms. Skelton presented feedback from the community forums related to Instruction. She noted that based on this feedback, APS is developing a new vision for the high school experience. Options already being implemented include alternative schedules, virtual learning, and the Arlington Tech program. She recognized the importance of focusing on the whole child, which is supported by initiatives such as APS early childhood programs and strong neighborhood schools.

- Projected Enrollment/Seat Deficits

Mr. Chadwick reviewed projected enrollment and seat deficits through the 2025-26 school year, sharing data in terms of immediate, short-term, mid-term and long-term needs. He then reviewed projected seat deficits by level based on current capacity. Staff responded to Board questions related to the data, noting that it was based on spring projections.

- Priority Needs

Next, Mr. Chadwick presented immediate priority needs, which will be addressed by moving the Arlington Mill program to the Fenwick building and implementing classroom conversions in secondary schools. He outlined short-term needs at each level, and reviewed projects that the School Board has already funded, which will begin to address these needs. These include new schools at Wilson, Stratford, and Jefferson, and the Abingdon renovation/addition. Responding to questions, Mr. Chadwick shared more detail on high school programs and how they can be useful in addressing capacity needs. For middle schools, he confirmed that interior renovations will be made to add capacity while the new middle school is built.

- Capacity-Generating Options

Short-term options to address high school capacity were shared, such as interior renovations, boundary adjustments and program moves. For the mid-term, suggestions from community forums were shared, such as adding grade-level academies or using the Education Center space. Also suggested were additions at high schools, leased space for smaller programs, and building a new comprehensive high school. Mr. Chadwick noted that this would be challenging, as APS does not own a site that could accommodate a school. Board members discuss options to develop the Career Center/Fenwick site and how that could affect Henry Elementary School. Staff provided additional information on grade level academies, parking issues, and the costs of structured parking and costs of purchasing additional land. The Board briefly discussed flexible options such as scheduling two shifts in a school, online learning and internships, and stressed the importance of strong communication as all options are considered.

John Naland, Washington-Lee PTA President, summarized survey data gathered from teachers and parents. These groups were interested in expanding options at the Career Center and establishing a 9th grade academy. Feelings were mixed on redistricting, and the community did not show much interest in options such as double-shifts or year round school, noting concerns that students would be left unattended part of day.

Mr. Chadwick then reviewed mid- and short-term options for elementary and middle schools. Boundary changes will need to be considered, and a strong community engagement process will be implemented. He also described options for Reed, as well as considerations in determining whether to build additions or a new school for elementary capacity. He confirmed that APS is working with the County to look closely at the Aurora Highlands site as a possible location for capacity. Board members discussed various topics related to the elementary and middle school options, including expanding choice options and programs, the space available at Reed, and how that space might be used. They also briefly discussed non-APS property such as Aurora Highlands and Lubber Run, and whether these sites should be considered.

- Funding Considerations

Funding considerations were reviewed, focused on students and instruction as the first priority, and addressing the most critical needs within debt capacity. Mr. Chadwick also reviewed funding in the FY 2015-2024 CIP and how those funds have been used to date. He then outlined bond funding information that will be considered in developing the FY 2017-2026 CIP.

- Next Steps

Highlighting the CIP timeline, Mr. Chadwick spoke to next steps. He reviewed the 2014 process, noting that the final CIP included both specific projects and funds to be used for some projects that would be defined through an additional process. He confirmed the funding amounts that have been dedicated for Jefferson, Stratford and Wilson. Staff agreed to revise the CIP funding chart to make it more understandable for the community. The group discussed the challenge of developing a CIP and identifying the specific projects to be built before the funding needed can be accurately determined. They also discussed how delaying the Stratford project would affect bond funding, and staff agreed to provide detailed information on this option. Board members were open to developing a CIP similar to the 2015-2024 CIP, identifying funding and seats needed but also including flexibility to determine the specific components as more information becomes available. They recognized that the suggested projects may be more costly than the funding available, and the Board and staff will need to determine what projects best address needs. The Board also recognized that Facilities staff will be challenged to manage all of the projects.

- Guidance from the Board

Board members agreed that the top priority is to address high school crowding, which should include internal renovations at current schools. The Board would like to hear more about the possibility of using the Education Center to address crowding. Other suggestions included considering relocatables and considering a new school to add elementary capacity in north

Arlington. Looking at the Reed site was also supported by the Board, and they asked for more detailed information on possibly delaying the Stratford project by one year.

In closing, Dr. Murphy reviewed the upcoming meetings and confirmed staff will take Board feedback and develop option sets to address high school needs as the top priority.

The meeting adjourned 10:25 PM.

ATTEST:

Melanie Elliott, Clerk
Arlington School Board

Emma Violand-Sánchez, Chair
Arlington School Board