

**ARLINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
School Board Meeting  
March 25, 2020

**Item C-1-a**

The Arlington School Board convened on Thursday, March 25, 2020 at 7:10 PM at 2110 Washington Blvd., Arlington, Virginia.<sup>1</sup>

**Present were:**

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

**Also present were:**

Cintia Johnson, Interim Superintendent  
Bridget Loft, Assistant Superintendent, Teaching and Learning

A. **CLOSED MEETING: NONE**

**B. REGULAR MEETING OPENING:**

1. Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

Ms. Talento announced that Ms. Van Doren and Dr. Kanninen were participating electronically from their homes in Arlington to help minimize the risk of exposure to the Coronavirus for themselves, their families and the community.

2. Announcements

Ms. Talento acknowledged the difficult circumstances and challenges facing the community and the country. She commented on how the Board will conduct business going forward, holding virtual meetings to act on items that need to be approved in a timely manner. She highlighted changes to the meeting agendas and confirmed that while no public comment will be allowed at this time, APS is working on a way to allow virtual comments in the future. She encouraged the community to write to the Board with concerns.

Mr. Goldstein commented on praise from the community for the way APS had been managing the crisis, including the responsiveness of teachers and staff to all families. Ms. O’Grady also appreciated community efforts to help support the schools during this difficult time. Ms. Van Doren noted in particular the

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<sup>1</sup> 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.

challenges this situation causes for individuals and family members with health issues, as well as struggles for families working from home. Dr. Kanninen also acknowledged the challenges facing families with the cancellation of school. Ms. Talento thanked her Board colleagues and the Superintendent for their support and teamwork in moving forward with the changes that had to be implemented.

3. Interim Superintendent’s Announcements and Updates

Ms. Johnson thanked the Board and staff for their work during the pandemic. She shared information about efforts to address the emergency and reviewed the calendar going forward. She provided updates on plans for graduation, Special Education services, grading, exam schedule changes, and SOL testing. She also shared information about the Grab-and-Go Meal distribution program and how families can stay connected during the closure. After highlighting school activities, she updated the Board on the work of the Chief Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Officer. In closing, she confirmed the budget calendar is being revised.

The group briefly discussed how the state may be adjusting graduation requirements related to the SOLs, possible reopening plans, and ways to celebrate graduating students. Ms. Talento also noted challenges for meetings of advisory groups during the closure, and efforts to set up virtual open office hours.

**C. CONSENT AGENDA: (8:00 PM)**

*Ms. O’Grady moved to adopt the consent agenda, seconded by Mr. Goldstein. The motion 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 following items or actions were approved as a part of consent:*

1. Minutes:

- a. February 11, 2020 Work Session on Annual Update, Projections and FY 2021-2030 Capital Improvement Plan
- b. March 5, 2020 Committee of the Whole on Budget
- c. March 12, 2020 Closed Meeting

2. Personnel Actions:

P/E-SCALE PERSONNEL

- 1 Appointment
- 3 Resignations

T-SCALE PERSONNEL

- 4 Appointments
- 4 Resignations
- 1 Retirement

SUPPORT SERVICES PERSONNEL

- 1 Appointment
- 3 Changes In Position/Salary

- 1 Termination
3. English Learner Brief
4. Policy Review Brief
5. 2020-2021 Barcroft School Calendar
6. ~~Education Center Reuse final design and construction contract Award~~ REMOVED FROM AGENDA
7. Perkins Grant

Ms. Talento announced that under consent the Board approved the Barcroft Calendar and the Perkins Grant, and also received the Policy Review and the English Learners Briefs.

**E. MONITORING ITEMS: (8:04 PM)**

1. Science Annual Update

Dr. Dat Le, Science Supervisor, provided the update, highlighting the program mission and profile. He described instruction and activities conducted by the Science staff, and then presented data on SOL pass rates, SOL trends, and enrollment in advanced classes. Multiple pathways for graduation requirements were described, as well as curriculum work to improve instruction, including project-based learning. Dr. Le also shared efforts to improve science laboratory safety and to build partnerships, highlighting several partnership programs. Moving forward, staff will focus on strengthening and aligning instruction to new SOLs, expanding and enhancing performance assessments, exploring watershed educational experiences, and reopening the planetarium. In closing, Dr. Le shared what has been learned, opportunities for improvement, and bright spots.

Dr. Le responded to questions about the statistical significance of the data presented, and the group discussed class size, efforts to improve laboratory safety protocols, and independent science projects. Encouraging the gap groups to participate more in science classes was also discussed, and Dr. Le spoke to how project-based learning and the outdoor lab experience can build interest and strengthen learning. Also discussed was the status of the Earth Science course and data on SOL trends. In closing, the group discussed Science Fairs and how students benefit from the experience.

2. Social Studies Update: (8:59 PM)

Ms. Kerri Hirsch presented the Social Studies update, sharing the program profile, staffing and highlights of the department's activities during the year. She then presented information about local assessments and data on student success, including SOL pass rates for 2019 and disaggregated data for different courses.

She also shared SOL trends for History and Social Studies courses, as well as data on enrollment in AP/IB and dual enrollment courses. Information on efforts to advance student success was also provided in terms of increased rigor in middle school, engaging students at all levels, and professional learning opportunities to improve instruction. She then shared plans moving forward and highlighted what the department has learned to improve social studies instruction.

The group briefly discussed the large number of courses offered in Social Studies at the high school level. Additional information was provided about the World History I and II courses, and the group discussed verified credits, 'voice and choice' options that help students learn social science skills and ensuring more culturally competent practices in course offerings. In closing, the group discussed efforts to continue collaboration and professional training during the closure.

## **F. INFORMATION/ACTION ITEMS: (9:52 PM)**

### **1. Special Education Annual Plan:**

Dr. Kelly Krug and Ms. Heather Rothenbeuscher summarized the Special Education Annual Plan, noting that it is submitted to the state each year. Components and services provided through the grant, and the proposed budgets for the relevant sections of Individuals with Disabilities Education Act were shared. Ms. Rothenbeuscher then summarized staffing that will be funded by the plan and the development process and the timeline for submitting the annual application.

Board members appreciated the proposed plan and the work staff does to support students with special needs.

*Ms. Goldstein moved to approve the 2020 Annual Application for Arlington Special Education, seconded by Ms. O'Grady. 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.*

### **2. Revised Budget Direction: (10:02 PM)**

Ms. Talento summarized the normal budget direction process and shared the rationale for the Board revising the Budget Direction at this time.

Ms. O'Grady made the following motion:

*I move that the School Board direct the Superintendent to prepare a revised, proposed FY 2021 budget that maintains our growing 28,000- student school system. The Superintendent should present the Board with a revised proposed budget at its first meeting in April or once sufficient information is available regarding projected County, State, and Federal revenues. The revised proposed budget should continue to consider our school system's needs going forward and be consistent with APS's Mission, Vision, Core Values and Strategic Plan. The*

*proposed budget should reflect our new reality and the current state of economic affairs of Arlington County again due to the Coronavirus pandemic and its effect on our local economy. We understand that our conditions are changing daily and that the Superintendent may need to bring us various budget scenarios from which we can select, given evolving local, state, and federal revenue calculations.*

*This budget direction replaces the budget direction approved on Oct. 3, 2019.*

The motion was seconded by Mr. Goldstein.

Board members spoke to the importance of this new direction, and reiterated their commitment to staff, to collaborating with the County Board, and the importance of working together to address the uncertain budget ahead.

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.

**H. NEW BUSINESS: NONE**

**I. ADJOURNMENT**

Ms. Talento encouraged all to stay at home and work to keep families safe. The meeting adjourned at 10:09 PM.

**ATTEST:**

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Melanie Elliott, Clerk  
Arlington School Board

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Tannia Talento, Chair  
Arlington School Board