

**ARLINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
Organizational Meeting, School Board Meeting and Closed Meeting  
July 1, 2020

**Item C-1-c**

The Arlington School Board convened on Wednesday, July 1, 2020, at 9:03 AM. This meeting was held by electronic communications means due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, using Microsoft Teams.<sup>1</sup>

**Present were:**

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

**Also present were:**

Dr. Francisco Durán, Superintendent  
Raj Adusumilli, Assistant Superintendent, Information Services  
Catherine Ashby, Assistant Superintendent, School and Community Relations  
John Chadwick, Assistant Superintendent, Facilities and Operations  
Cintia Johnson, Assistant Superintendent, Administrative Services  
Bridget Loft, Assistant Superintendent, Teaching and Learning  
Dan Redding, Assistant Superintendent, Human Resources  
Lisa Stengle, Executive Director, Planning and Evaluation  
Arron Gregory, Chief Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Officer

**A. CALL TO ORDER**

Ms. Talento called the meeting to order and announced that Ms. Van Doren and Mr. Goldstein were participating electronically due to the COVID-19 pandemic. She then led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**B. ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING**

Ms. Talento welcomed viewers, including County Board Chair Libby Garvey and members Katie Cristol, Christian Dorsey and Matt De Ferranti, and County Manager Mark Schwartz.

1. School Board Code of Conduct

*Ms. Talento moved that the School Board adopt the Code of Conduct, seconded by Ms. O’Grady. The motion was adopted in a vote of 5 – 0, with Mr. Goldstein, Dr.*

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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.

Kanninen, Ms. O’Grady, Ms. Talento, and Ms. Van Doren voting affirmatively. All Board members then signed the document.

2. Election of the Chair of the Board:

Commenting on Ms. O’Grady’s dedication as a Board member, Ms. Van Doren appreciated her respect for others, her ongoing commitment to students, and her focus on equity and ensuring that APS meets the needs of all students. In addition, she acknowledged Ms. O’Grady’s efforts to address the opportunity gap, her advocacy for a Chief Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Officer, and her service as liaison to the Arlington Special Education Advisory Committee. Confirming Ms. O’Grady’s thoughtful leadership, *Ms. Van Doren nominated Ms. O’Grady for Chair for the 2020-2021 school year.* The motion was seconded by Dr. Kanninen. 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.

3. Election of the Vice-Chair of the Board:

Recognizing Dr. Kanninen’s calm, caring, and informed approach to the Board’s work as well as her experience, Ms. Talento stated her belief that Dr. Kanninen would effectively complete the leadership team and support the work of the Board through unprecedented times. *Ms. Talento nominated Dr. Kanninen for Vice Chair for the 2020-2021 school year,* seconded by Mr. Goldstein. 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.

*Ms. Van Doren moved for adoption of organizational items 4 through 14,* seconded by Dr. Kanninen. 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 following items were approved:

4. Appointment of the Clerk of the Board:

Melanie Elliott was reappointed Clerk of the Board for the 2020-2021 school year.

5. Appointment of the Deputy Clerk of the Board:

Claudia Mercado was reappointed Deputy Clerk of the Board for the 2020-2021 school year.

6. Approval of Payment of Claims

7. Supervision of Construction

8. Adoption of Schedule of School Board Meetings for the 2020-2021 School Year

9. Adoption of Proposed Schedule of Pay Dates for the 2020-2021 School Year
10. Adoption of Existing Policies and Regulations
11. Adoption of Proposed Guidelines on Executive Session Confidentiality
12. School Board Member Liaison Assignments for the 2020-2021 School Year
13. School Board Speaker Guidelines
14. Audit Committee Chair

Ms. O’Grady announced that, as part of the organizational items, the School Board re-adopted existing policies for the administration of Arlington Public Schools. A current copy of the policy manual is posted publicly and can be accessed through the APS website. In compliance with § 22.1-253.13:7 of the Code of Virginia, which requires that copies of policies be available to citizens who do not have online access, paper copies of the policies are available in the Board Office for viewing, and the Department of School and Community Relations can also help citizens obtain access to copies. She also highlighted additional items that were adopted as part of this action, including Board liaison assignments and the Speaker Guidelines for public comment at Board meetings.

## **SCHOOL BOARD MEETING**

### **C. ANNOUNCEMENTS: (9:19 AM)**

Ms. Talento thanked her colleagues for their support through an extraordinary and challenging year, which included hiring a Superintendent, adopting elementary program moves, and dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic and emergency closing. She commended the Board for working together and appreciated their receptiveness to community feedback. She thanked Ms. Johnson for her service as Interim Superintendent and the Executive Leadership Team for their efforts throughout the year. Ms. Talento also thanked the Board office staff for their support and looked forward to Ms. O’Grady and Dr. Kanninen’s leadership. In closing she highlighted areas she will continue to focus on and affirmed her commitment to doing her best to serve the children of Arlington.

Ms. Van Doren recognized past and future challenges, and confirmed she will focus on what is essential and important for supporting student learning and well-being. She encouraged APS to take bold steps to ensure that all children learn to read proficiently, as it is a top equity issue. Thanking the APS leadership and staff for their work, she also appreciated her Board colleagues for working together. She acknowledged Ms. Johnson’s service as Interim Superintendent and looked forward to Dr. Durán’s leadership. In closing, she recognized Ms. Talento’s guidance as Chair through a difficult year, and thanked the Board and staff for their efforts, and looked forward to better times ahead.

After congratulating Ms. O’Grady on her election, Dr. Kanninen noted the most important accomplishment of the past year was hiring a new Superintendent to support the vision of

an inclusive community that empowers all students to foster their dreams, explore their possibilities, and create their futures. She thanked Ms. Talento and Ms. O’Grady for their leadership, Ms. Johnson for acting as Interim Superintendent, and the staff for their support. Looking forward to serving as Vice Chair, she confirmed that the biggest challenge ahead is the safe reopening of school. She recognized the need to collaborate with the County to ensure the health and safety of students, staff, and families, and looked forward to working together to continue moving forward.

Mr. Goldstein congratulated the new leadership team and pledged his support as the Board navigates unprecedented times. He acknowledged the outstanding work of Ms. Talento in guiding APS through the challenges of a difficult year. He also thanked the staff and his colleagues for their ongoing support. He confirmed that going forward, he will dedicate his efforts to helping APS make needed changes in support of equity and racial justice, successfully launch and maintain our return to school, develop a mid-term Capital Improvement Plan, and continue to collaborate closely with the County Board.

Ms. O’Grady thanked her colleagues for entrusting her with the honor of serving as Chair. She recognized challenges ahead that will require APS to examine priorities and practices in light of the pandemic and the focus on racial and equity concerns. Stating her belief that Dr. Durán is the right leader for APS, she appreciated initiatives he has already begun. She acknowledged the community’s support during COVID, thanking staff, families and all for coming together. She recognized the importance of communication and collaboration to support families and affirmed her belief in the staff’s ability to support students’ social emotional and learning needs. She appreciated what she learned from her colleagues and thanked Ms. Talento for her mentorship. In closing, she recognized the women and people of color who served before her and all who helped her become the first black elected woman in Arlington, allowing her to serve the students and families in an important role.

Dr. Durán congratulated Ms. O’Grady and Dr. Kanninen and looked forward to working with the Board in the future to ensure that the students and staff are safe and supported. He appreciated the Board members and thanked Ms. Talento for working with him as he learned about APS and the work ahead. He confirmed that the focus going forward will be on doing what is needed to reopen and return to school in the safest way possible.

**D. CONSENT ITEMS: (9:46 AM)**

*Dr. Kanninen moved for adoption of the consent agenda, seconded by Ms. Talento. 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 following items or actions were approved as a part of consent:*

1. Minutes:
  - a. February 25, 2020 Work Session on Mathematics Evaluation and Academic Update
  - b. March 10, 2020 Budget Work Session #2
  - c. March 17, 2020 Budget Work Session #3
  - d. April 10, 2020 School Board Policy Subcommittee Meeting

- e. May 5, 2020 Budget Work Session
- 2. Membership in the Virginia High School League
- 3. FY 2021 Budget Development Calendar
- 4. Purchasing Resolution

**E. MONITORING ITEMS: (9:47 AM)**

1. Return to School Status Update

Dr. Durán presented the update, thanking staff and the community for their input and participation in the Return to School Task Force. He recognized the importance of collaborating with the County and complying with state health guidelines to develop a plan to return to school. Dr. Durán then shared highlights of the draft plan in terms of face coverings, personal protective equipment, and physical/social distancing. In addition, the plan will include health screening protocols, COVID response plans, and cleaning procedures. Providing more details on transportation, recess, athletics, air quality, and employees' return to work, he also reviewed next steps and work in progress to ensure returning to school is safe for all.

Dr. Durán then described two instructional models being developed for students, a hybrid in-school and distance learning model, and a totally virtual model. He outlined the instruction that will be provided in each model and provided a comparison of the two models. He then shared information about how families will be asked to select the model they will choose for their children. He then reviewed community engagement and how to receive assistance with issues and concerns. Plans to identify teacher and staff preferences for returning to school were also presented, and Dr. Durán explained that surveys will be done to determine staffing assignments. He confirmed that efforts will be implemented to ensure that health and childcare concerns are considered and confidentiality maintained. In closing, he summarized next steps and timelines going forward.

Board members appreciated the work that has taken place. Topics discussed included online learning through Virtual Virginia and confirmation of enrollment and communications to new families. Noting the complexity of the planning process, Mr. Goldstein appreciated community input and confirmed that all concerns are being considered. Also discussed were translation of the FAQs, guidance for staff and families if they contract COVID, and plans for families who do not choose an instructional model. Dr. Kanninen highlighted communication methods and shared suggestions to clarify the information provided. Ms. Loft described virtual and asynchronous learning, as well as supports that APS will provide to students. Also discussed was provision of devices for younger students, child care, and how immersion programs will be managed. In closing, the Board and Dr. Durán highlighted the best avenues for families to communicate with APS.

**G. NEW BUSINESS: NONE**

**H. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 11:17 AM.

**ATTEST:**

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Melanie Elliott, Clerk  
Arlington School Board

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Monique O'Grady, Chair  
Arlington School Board