

ARLINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Work Session on Return to School Planning
August 13, 2020

Item C-1-b

The Arlington School Board convened on Thursday, August 13, 2020, at 6:38 PM. This meeting was held by electronic communications due to the COVID-19 Pandemic emergency, using Microsoft Teams.

Present were:

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

Also present were:

Dr. Francisco Durán, Superintendent
Raj Adusumilli, Assistant Superintendent, Information Services
John Chadwick, Assistant Superintendent, Facilities and Operations
Catherine Ashby, Assistant Superintendent, School and Community Relations
Bridget Loft, Assistant Superintendent, Teaching and Learning
Leslie Peterson, Assistant Superintendent, Finance and Management
Dan Redding, Assistant Superintendent, Human Resources
Arron Gregory, Chief Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Officer
Brian Stockton, Chief of Staff
Lisa Stengle, Executive Director, Planning and Evaluation
Amy Maclosky, Director, Food Services
Bobby Kaplow, Director, Extended Day
Ben Harris, Assistant Director, Extended Day

A. CALL TO ORDER

Ms. O’Grady called the work session to order and announced that the meeting was being held electronically due to the COVID-19 Pandemic emergency.

B. NEW BUSINESS:

Student Appeal SY21-01

Ms. O’Grady moved that in the case of Student Appeal SY21-01, the Board grant the appeal. The motion was seconded by Ms. Talento and adopted in a vote of 4 - 1. The voting record is as follows: Dr. Kanninen – Aye; Ms. O’Grady – Aye; Ms. Talento – Aye; Ms. Van Doren – Aye; and Mr. Goldstein – Nay.

Student Appeal SY21-06

Ms. O’Grady moved that in the case of Student Appeal SY21-06, the Board grant the appeal. The motion was seconded by Ms. Van Doren and 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.

C. WORK SESSION:

Dr. Durán explained that the work session would focus on four areas: childcare and meal services, planning and temporary assignments for staff unable to telework, cost projections, and a residency exception during COVID-19. He then provided an overview of plans being developed to provide childcare for staff and families. He also outlined required changes to meal services that will be implemented to meet the requirements of the National School Lunch Program. Next, plans to provide alternative work assignments for staff who are unable to telework were shared. These staff include select Food Services staff, bus drivers and attendants, and Extended Day staff. Dr. Durán confirmed these employees will be reassigned to support childcare and food services or will be assigned to schools to provide support as needed. He also confirmed that staff training will be provided for these employees and he reviewed communications that have been sent regarding this plan.

Cost projections for the closure were also shared, including revenue losses, expenses related to health and safety, technology and instructional needs, and the CARES Act funding. Dr. Durán explained the source of funding to be used for Extended Day and Food Services staff who are assigned to alternative work. In closing, he presented a recommendation for the Board to approve a residency exception to policy that accommodates families who are not able to stay at their residences in Arlington due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Board members commended staff for their ongoing work to adjust processes to ensure smooth functioning as schools prepare to open. Staff responded to questions on food distribution and ways to make sure food is accessible to families facing challenges, confirming that they will be as flexible as possible and will adjust processes as needed. Ms. Maclosky explained how families can participate in the meals program and confirmed that staff will provide ongoing outreach to families to make sure they understand the meal options available to them.

Staff then shared details of the proposed hybrid model, and the group discussed how to ensure families can access needed information. Dr. Durán confirmed that staff is working to address concerns and is providing support to all families. Ms. Loft explained the instructional model being developed, noting it will foster engagement, collaboration, and community, regardless of the form of the instruction. She also confirmed that student need is guiding considerations. Also discussed were efforts to ensure that students with disabilities receive appropriate support and that best practices are implemented. The group then discussed coordinating with County groups supporting the community and the informational sessions being developed for parents to support virtual learning. Dr. Durán also confirmed that the same criteria that have been used to date will remain in place to inform decisions as plans to reopen move forward.

Options available to staff who have health concerns about returning to work were also reviewed, and staff also provided information related to the current cost projections and additional work being done to refine the projections. Board members expressed concerns about the financial challenges being faced. Dr. Durán and Ms. Peterson confirmed that staff continues to gather information about the status of finances and outlined ongoing plans to update the Board on the status of the budget. The group also discussed continued collaboration with the County to address fiscal challenges.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:33 PM.

ATTEST:

Melanie Elliott, Clerk
Arlington School Board

Monique O’Grady, Vice Chair
Arlington School Board