

ARLINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Item C-1-b

Work Session on Arlington Public Schools and School Resource Officers
September 3, 2020

The Arlington School Board convened on Thursday, September 3, 2020, at 6:33 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
Catherine Ashby, Assistant Superintendent, School and Community Relations
Cintia Johnson, Assistant Superintendent, Administrative Services
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
Dr. Jeannette Allen, Director, Administrative Services
Deputy Chief Penn, Arlington County Police Department
Lt. Eliseo Pilco, Arlington County Police Department
Cpt. Darrin Cassidy, Arlington County Police Department
Sgt. Steve Troyano, Arlington County Police Department
Sgt. Kyle Anderson, Arlington County Police Department
Cpt. Scott Linder, Arlington County Police Department

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. She welcomed all participants.

Dr. Durán provided an overview of collaboration between APS and the Arlington County Police Department (ACPD) and School Resource Officers (SROs) and highlighted the APS-SRO Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that was updated in 2018. He then confirmed that APS is reviewing this partnership and noted that the County is also exploring alternatives in law enforcement practices. He then introduced Dr. Allen and Lt. Pilco, to present an update on SROs.

Dr. Allen provided an overview of the SRO MOU, describing key elements of the MOU and services that SROs provide to the schools. Dr. Allen and Lt. Pilco then shared highlights from this collaboration. Dr. Allen also provided data on student suspensions, law enforcement involvement, and data from the Your Voice Matters and Virginia School Climate surveys. Recent legislative changes that affect the SRO program were also shared and Dr. Allen reviewed plans for moving forward in areas such as legislative positions and Restorative Justice.

Mr. Stockton summarized community input received on SROs in the schools and shared the key themes communicated. He confirmed that this input will inform the evaluation and reexamination of the SRO MOU. A timeline for this review was presented and Mr. Stockton confirmed that staff is establishing a work group to conduct this review. He outlined the recommended makeup of the work group, which will support community engagement in the process, and shared a proposed Charge for Board consideration. Dr. Durán then summarized next steps for this work.

Ms. Van Doren, Board liaison to this initiative, recognized community interest and concerns and confirmed that background work is already underway. Board members noted racial aspects of the criminal justice system and the different experiences and perspectives of community members and encouraged APS to be open to all points of view. Responding to questions, staff provided additional information on the data presented, a description of SROs' work in the schools, and plans for the work group. Board members provided suggestions for the charge, timeline, and areas of concern to be explored by the work group. They also recognized the importance of listening to all community members and respecting differences of opinion. The Board also appreciated staff work on this initiative, especially during this challenging time. Ms. O'Grady thanked her Board colleagues for their support for this work and acknowledged the collaboration between ACPD and APS. Dr. Durán also appreciated this effort and confirmed this work will go forward to address concerns and improve relationships and experiences of students and families.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:38 PM.

ATTEST:

Melanie Elliott, Clerk
Arlington School Board

Monique O'Grady, Chair
Arlington School Board