

ARLINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Work Session on Compensation
May 19, 2021

Item D-1-b

The Arlington School Board convened on Wednesday, May 19, 2021 at 6:04 PM. The 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
Cristina Diaz-Torres, Member
Reid Goldstein, Member
David Priddy, Member
Melanie Elliott, Clerk

Also present were:

Dr. Francisco Durán, Superintendent
Jeannette Allen, Interim Assistant Superintendent, Administrative Services
Marcus Gregory, Assistant Superintendent, Facilities and Operations
Leslie Peterson, Assistant Superintendent, Finance and Management
Dan Redding, Assistant Superintendent, Human Resources
Heather Kazemi, Vice President, Segal

Dr. Durán expressed his excitement and commitment about starting the complex yet critical work to review compensation at APS to offer market-competitive salaries.

Review Current Pay Plans

Regarding the current pay plan, Mr. Redding explained that it is a complex document with some inconsistencies and noted that it does not fully support the goals of APS to attract and retain quality educators and staff in a fiscally sustainable manner.

Mr. Redding briefly reviewed APS Policy G-3.2.1 and the 2018-2024 Strategic Plan. He explained the current pay plan which has 10 pay scales, detailing the differences between scales, pay steps, educational levels, and retirement options. In addition, Mr. Redding spoke about the different T-Scale levels, highlighting that the original intent of the various levels was to encourage higher educational attainment. He explained that longevity steps were introduced in the 1980s to extend the pay plan past the previous maximums and to reward staff for their loyalty and longevity in APS. Furthermore, he reviewed the 25-year pay progression, noting step increases and holds.

Strategies for the Future

To support APS’s strategic plan and School Board policy, Ms. Kazemi presented four recommended goals to keep at the forefront of the compensation review and for each goal, she proposed strategies, short-term actions, and long-term actions. The four goals are:

1. Market competitive and livable wages
2. Consistent, predictable pay growth opportunities
3. Internal equity
4. Fiscal sustainability

Ms. Kazemi also presented the proposed changes to the pay scales for FY 2022 to FY 2025, emphasizing the major structural changes in FY 2023 to meet the four recommended goals and other staff recommendations. Mr. Redding shared the estimated implementation costs and the average employee market adjustment.

Next Steps Discussion

The Board discussed their positions regarding the compensation review and where APS should rank in compensation competitiveness. Moreover, they discussed how to align salaries with the proposed pay scale, costs to implement recommendations, and backtracking pay for people who have already obtained doctorate degrees. They also discussed how to creative put together a compensation package that includes non-monetary benefits, considers taxpayer buy-in through community engagement, finding efficiencies in staffing, early retirement options, and appropriate compensation for hourly employees. Dr. Kanninen expressed interest in possibly updating policies related to Human Resources to reflect expected goals and Mr. Goldstein inquired about a workforce analysis.

To conclude, Dr. Durán reiterated his commitment to putting an action plan in place to consider compensation and Ms. O’Grady thanked staff for their work and looked forward to receiving more information on this topic.

The meeting adjourned at 8:08 PM.

ATTEST:

Melanie Elliott, Clerk
Arlington School Board

Monique O’Grady, Chair
Arlington School Board