

## 2021-22 BUDGET ADVISORY COUNCIL

Wednesday, December 8, 2021

Virtual via Microsoft Teams

7:00 PM - 9:00 PM

The meeting started at 7:08 pm.

1. Ten members were present: Erik Sullivan (Vice-Chair), Melanie Bowen (Past-Chair), Nellie Carr, Julie Davis, Reginald Goeke, Olivia Hannink, Michael Lyons, Sal Tajuddin, Jennifer Wagener, and Jennifer Wheelock.
  - APS Assistant Superintendent Leslie Peterson, APS [Board Chair] Monique O'Grady, APS Department of Planning and Evaluation Executive Director Lisa Stengle, Student Zachary Levin.
2. The November minutes were approved.
3. Public comment (from Josh Folb, representing the AEA)
  - Josh encouraged people to tune into the School Board's compensation session on December 9.  
[https://go.boarddocs.com/vsba/arlington/Board.nsf/files/C9HU3A7A0E7A/\\$file/Compensation%20Study%20Presentation%20for%2012-9-21%20APS%20School%20Board%20Work%20Session%20-%20Final.pdf](https://go.boarddocs.com/vsba/arlington/Board.nsf/files/C9HU3A7A0E7A/$file/Compensation%20Study%20Presentation%20for%2012-9-21%20APS%20School%20Board%20Work%20Session%20-%20Final.pdf)
  - Teacher retention across the nation is an issue, including at APS.
  - Governor has discussed 10% teacher raise - Josh noted it would require local funding.
4. School Board Update – Monique O'Grady
  - Dr. Duran is wanting APS to be top for salaries in the region, and has proposed an increase. (Noted Compensation Study, and APS is trailing for new teachers.)
  - School Board is making compensation a priority; County Board is taking note.
  - Match for compensation from state is complicated.
  - At next meeting, Dr. Duran will discuss his views on how to use budget close out funding.
  - Teacher bonuses went out this week.
5. BAC Liaison Comments
  - ACTC: County continues to work with ART to provide free bussing; pilot program is expanding.
  - ACTL: Math curriculum changes coming. Social and emotional learning next.
  - ASEAC: Lots of discussion on transportation; also discussions on providing recovery and compensatory services for IEP students who need additional assistance due to virtual learning/pandemic last year.
6. Policy Review Update (Erik Sullivan)
  - Strategic planning and special education services policies are currently open for public comment.
  - Financial planning policies will be up for review later in winter/spring.

7. Options Schools Discussion – Guest Lisa Stengle (Executive Director of APS Department of Planning and Evaluation)

- Prior to Lisa’s arrival, Leslie discussed complexity of assessing costs of option schools. One piece could be looking at average cost per pupil county wide vs average cost per pupil at a given school. Many factors that could impact costs and will vary by school, including:
  - Seniority (and thus salary and benefit costs) of teachers at a school
  - Number of special education students and English learners
  - Percentage of capacity (example: ATS is always filled to the full class size because there’s a waitlist so the school can always fill those classrooms, whereas neighborhood schools might be under the max.)
  - Transportation is outside of an individual school’s budget
  - Resources provided by Federal government (ex: IDEA needs result in grants; Title 1 grants)
  - Immersion schools require separate curriculum - don’t know if requires more staffing or if recruitment costs are higher for teachers qualified for immersion school?
  - Free and Reduced Meal eligibility
  - Credentialing would need to be factored in (e.g. IB training)
- Lisa provided responses to some questions submitted by BAC members:
  - Data on educational outcomes of option vs neighborhood schools? Collect same data across all schools. In ES that is easier because 5 option schools are “whole” schools; but for MS & HS options (IB, immersion, world language), data is reported out through their home schools so it’s harder to separate out.
  - If outcomes for ATS are so good, why aren’t all others done the same way? ATS teaches same curriculum as other schools; one difference is that families are making choice to be there. Also ATS fills while neighborhood schools numbers can fluctuate. Selection bias could be a factor.
  - Transportation costs? Don’t know. One possible counterpoint is if APS converted option schools to neighborhood schools, could make setting boundaries difficult because some schools are so close together that boundaries might have to be set far.
  - Demand for seats? Wait lists have been centralized and families are now required to pick one school - <https://www.apsva.us/school-options/school-transfer-data/>
  - Outcomes for ATS and immersion schools were discussed. ATS has significant waiting list. Entry point for immersion schools require Spanish baseline by 3rd grade.
  - <https://www.apsva.us/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/PreK-12-IPP-June-11-Final-Rev-for-BoardDocs-06-14.pdf>
  - Would expanding size of option programs impact their educational outcomes? ATS has increased size this year so data will be interesting to see if size has any impact (although pandemic may impact data too).
  - Is there a distribution map of where kids live in relation to school? What percentage ride the bus? We do know the number of students by their assigned neighborhood school. (Spreadsheet with rough analysis sent separately after the meeting) Most

- option school attendees are eligible to ride the bus.
- Plans to create permanent virtual HS? Status of crowding at existing HSs? Decision on virtual HS should be coming soon. Lots of students already taking some virtual classes to accommodate various situations. Considering virtual as a supplement in some situations (such as go to Career Center for lab on certain days of the week but virtual on other days to save travel time, etc.)
  - Is there thought to giving preference to students from over-capacity neighborhood schools? Would require policy change to do this. Noted that transfers from over-capacity schools have been offered for nearby schools in some situations.
  - BAC members noted that cost data on option schools would be helpful to have, as this topic comes up year after year. Perhaps focusing on transportation piece, since that is perceived as the costliest area?

The meeting was adjourned at 8:51 pm.