

ARLINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Closed Meeting and School Board Meeting Minutes
April 13, 2023

The Arlington School Board convened on Thursday, April 13, 2023 at 5:32 PM at 2110 Washington Blvd., Arlington, Virginia.¹

Present were:

Reid Goldstein, Chair

Cristina Diaz-Torres, Vice Chair

Mary Kadera, Member

David Priddy, Member

Bethany Zecher Sutton, Member (Participated in the closed meeting only from Arlington, Virginia using Microsoft Teams due to personal reasons)

Also present were:

Dr. Francisco Durán, Superintendent

Dr. John Mayo, Chief Operating Officer

Michael Hodge, Assistant Superintendent, Human Resources

A. CLOSED MEETING ON PERSONNEL ACTIONS

Mr. Goldstein called the meeting to order and *moved that the Board immediately convene in a closed meeting to consider as many as 7 appointments, 2 changes in position/salary, 8 classification specifications, 20 resignations, 2 resignations with prejudice, 1 termination, and 6 retirements as authorized by Virginia Code 2.2-3711(A)(1).* The motion was seconded by Mr. Priddy, and it was adopted in a vote of 5 – 0, with Ms. Diaz-Torres, Mr. Goldstein, Ms. Kadera, Mr. Priddy, and Ms. Zecher Sutton voting affirmatively.

The closed meeting adjourned at 6:15 PM and the Board reconvened in an open meeting.

Mr. Goldstein moved to certify that pursuant to 2.2-3712(D) of the Code of Virginia, to the best knowledge of each School Board member, only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements by Virginia law were discussed in the closed meeting just held, and only such public business matters as were identified in the motion convening this closed meeting were heard, discussed, or considered. The motion was seconded by Mr. Priddy and was adopted in a vote of 5 – 0. The voting record is as follows: Ms. Diaz-Torres – Aye; Mr. Goldstein – Aye; Ms. Kadera – Aye; Mr. Priddy – Aye and Ms. Zecher Sutton – Aye.

Mr. Goldstein called for a recess and the Board reconvened in an open meeting at 7:02 PM.

Also present were:

Dr. Francisco Durán, Superintendent

Catherine Ashby, Assistant Superintendent of School and Community Relations

Dr. Tyrone Byrd, Interim Chief Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Officer

Kimberley Graves, Chief of School Support

Stephen Linkous, Chief of Staff

Dr. Gerald Mann, Chief Academic Officer

Dr. John Mayo, Chief Operating Officer

Christine Smith, Division Legal Counsel

Claudia Mercado, Clerk

B. REGULAR MEETING OPENING (7:02 PM):

¹ The recording of School Board meetings is posted on the APS Web site following the meetings. Regular meetings are also broadcasted on Comcast Cable Channel 70 and Verizon FIOS Channel 41.

1. Call to Order
2. Presentation of Colors: Arlington Career Center Space Force JROTC Cadets Corps
3. Recognitions: Washington-Liberty High School Jazz Ensemble

Dr. Pam Farrell, Supervisor of Arts Education, introduced the Washington-Liberty High School Jazz Ensemble under the direction of Mr. Alex Robinson, Band Director. Dr. Farrell applauded Mr. Robinson for his 38 years of services to APS. She also took the opportunity to invite the community and the Board to the County-Wide Jazz concert on April 19.

C. CONSENT ITEMS (7:19 PM):

Ms. Diaz-Torres moved for the adoption of the consent agenda, seconded by Mr. Priddy. The motion was adopted in a vote of 4 – 0, with Ms. Diaz-Torres, Mr. Goldstein, Ms. Kadera, and Mr. Priddy voting affirmatively. Ms. Zecher Sutton was not present at the time of the vote. The following items or actions were approved as a part of consent:

1. Minutes: None
2. Personnel Actions

P/E-SCALE PERSONNEL

- 3 Appointments
- 1 Retirement
- 1 Termination
- 8 Classification Specifications
 - Specialist, Threat Assessment
 - Coordinator, School Health Services
 - Dean of Students
 - Chief, School Support
 - Chief, Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Student Support
 - Director, Security and Risk Management
 - Director, School Safety and Emergency Management
 - Executive Director, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

T-SCALE PERSONNEL

- 1 Appointment
- 1 Change In Position/Salary
- 16 Resignations
- 1 Resignation With Prejudice
- 2 Retirements
- 1 Classification Specification
 - Counselor, Intervention

A-SCALE PERSONNEL

- 2 Appointments
- 1 Resignation

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SUPPORT SERVICES PERSONNEL

- 1 Appointment
 - 1 Change In Position/Salary
 - 3 Resignations
 - 1 Resignation With Prejudice
 - 3 Retirements
3. Special Education Annual Plan Application
 4. Perkins Grant Application
 5. Revisions to School Board Policies F-2 Goals and I-9.1.5 Exemplary Projects

Mr. Goldstein announced that under consent, the Board approved the Special Education Annual Plan as required by the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) which provides a detailed description of how federal entitlement funds under the Individuals with Disabilities Act [IDEA] 611 and 619 are spent. In addition, the School Board adopted revisions to School Board Policies F-2 Goals and I-9.1.5 Exemplary Projects to clarify language and align these policies with current practices. Consequently, the Superintendent approved the Policy Implementation Procedures (PIPs) related to this policy. In addition, the Board approved budget-neutral adjustments to three leadership positions effective July 1. APS reimagined the role of the Chief Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Officer, creating a Chief of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Student Support position to oversee Diversity Equity and Inclusion as well as Student Support, moving Student Services and School Climate and Culture from School Support. This adjustment will allow APS to better support student mental health, address student behaviors and support diversity, equity and inclusion within one office. School Support will focus on oversight of principals and directors of Elementary and Secondary Education in addition to school safety, including all School Safety Coordinators with a Director of Safety and Emergency Management. The changes will allow APS to better support students, address mental health needs and behaviors, and improve safety and security across schools. Lastly, the School Board appointed Ms. Alice Blount-Fenney as the Director of Internal Audit effective July 1.

D. ANNOUNCEMENTS (7:23 PM):

1. Board Announcements:

- April 18 – Closed Meeting, 5:30 PM, Board Room
- April 18 – Budget Work Session #5, 6:30 PM, Board Room
- April 25 – Closed Meeting, 5:30 PM, Board Room, Tentative
- April 25 – Public Hearing on the School Board Proposed FY 24 Budget, 7 PM Board Room
- April 26 – Policy Subcommittee Meeting, 8 AM, Board Conference Room
- April 27 – School Board Meeting, 7 PM, Board Room

As noted at the March 30 School Board meeting, Mr. Goldstein announced that the Arlington Education Association (AEA) filed a request seeking certification as the Exclusive Representative for licensed personnel and support personnel. The licensed personnel unit includes non-administrative employees with a license from either the Virginia Department of Education or Virginia Department of Health Profession such as teachers, school counselors, specialists, librarians, ITRTs, school psychologists, social workers, speech pathologists, and department chairs. The support personnel unit includes all employees except administrative personnel, licensed personnel, and confidential personnel. The certification election was scheduled from April 24 to April 27 via a secret ballot over email. Notice of Election was sent to its bargaining unit employees via email on March 28 and was posted in common areas at each worksite.

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Mr. Priddy expressed his gratitude for Mr. Robinson's service to APS and being an amazing teacher, fondly remembering that Mr. Robinson was the band teacher when he was in middle school. Mr. Goldstein and Ms. Kadera shared about events at their liaison schools.

2. Superintendent's Announcements and Updates

Before sharing the Superintendent's announcements, Dr. Durán paused to honor the life of Mr. Ben Burgin, Assistant Director of Design and Construction, a dear colleague who passed away during Spring Break. Feeling a profound sense of loss, Dr. Durán acknowledged that Mr. Burgin will be remembered as someone who cared for others, his dedicated contributions to the school system, and his strong support for APS and colleagues. The Superintendent extended his deep condolences to his family and friends, specifically to his wife, Ms. Jennifer Burgin, a teacher at APS. Lastly, Dr. Durán announced that a celebration of life event was planned on May 20 at the Columbia Baptist Church. On behalf of the School Board, Mr. Goldstein also shared his condolences to Mr. Burgin's family noting he was an exemplary individual.

The Every Student Counts school year initiative highlighted elementary English Language Arts and students writing novels, an activity that brings writing, reading and the arts together to help students develop foundational skills for their continuing education. Dr. Durán acknowledged that in April APS recognized Month of the Military Child, Arab American Heritage Month, Occupational Therapy Month, Autism Awareness Month and School Library Month, as well as National Assistant Principals Week (April 4-8), Public School Volunteer Week (April 17-21), and Week of the Young Child (April 1-7). Furthermore, Dr. Durán was excited to announce that APS was kicking off a volunteer campaign, Spring into Service!, to partner with local businesses and organizations to recruit more volunteers to serve as mentors, afterschool tutors and reading buddies and identify community members and other individuals who have the skills, time, and commitment to support students. In addition, he announced that the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) gave approval for students to carry Naloxone (Narcan) as an over-the-counter medication. Therefore, as part of the opioid prevention and education efforts, APS was moving forward with a plan to allow students to safely carry naloxone in schools by May 26. An overview of the next steps included reviewing policies and policy implementation procedures (PIPs) to provide clear guidance, creating a new parent/guardian consent form and agreement to ensure that students who carry naloxone are trained and follow strict safety protocols, and continuing to monitor, review and revise school policies and practices as additional guidance is released. Dr. Durán then presented information and key dates related to the 2024-2030 Strategic Plan. He noted that APS was seeking parents, community members, students, teachers, administrators, and staff to serve on the 2024-2030 APS Strategic Plan Steering Committee and encouraged the community to collaborate with APS on the development of the new Strategic Plan. To conclude, the Superintendent raved about his spring school visits and shared about his experiences at some of the schools.

Ms. Kadera expressed her appreciation for the library media staff and reminded everyone how lucky Arlington is to have access to wonderful community libraries. She encouraged the community to volunteer at the schools and support students. Ms. Diaz-Torres appreciated the update about Narcan and reminded families that it is available free of cost through the Department of Human Services. Looking forward to the important work ahead, she encouraged the community to participate in the 2024-2030 APS Strategic Plan Steering Committee.

E. PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA AND NON-AGENDA ITEMS (7:50 PM):

The following speakers addressed the Board:

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| Name: | School or Affiliation: | Topic: |
|--------------|--|--|
| Josh Folb | | Expressed his condolences to the family of Mr. Burgin and requested better pay for employees |
| June Prakash | President, Arlington Education Association | Expressing concern about Syphax personnel and decisions being made without employees' input |

F. MONITORING ITEMS (7:59 PM)

1. Special Education Update 2023

Ms. Heather Rothenbuescher, Director of Secondary Special Education, presented an overview of APS Special Education Services, noting that Office of Special Education coordinates more than 200 staff members who are in the schools' providing services. Dr. Kelly Krug, Director of Elementary Special Education, presented information on Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC), Supports for Assistive Technology, Parent Resource Center (PRC), and Extended School Year (ESY). In addition, Dr. Krug presented results from the parent survey highlighting areas of strength and opportunities to strengthen Special Education Services. Based the survey feedback, the Office of Special Education will be hosting a four-day seminar on Special Education Law compliance and the role of Local Education Agency (LEA) representatives. Lastly, Dr. Krug presented about the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) recommendations and the goal to achieve inclusive environments. Speaking about the Strategic Plan objective to achieve at least 80% of students with disabilities to spend 80% or more of their school day in a general education setting by 2024, Ms. Rothenbuescher summarized data on where APS stands on this objective and shared areas of improvement. She then highlighted that moving into next year, all schools that are below 50% will be required to have a goal in their action plan to increase their percentages. Moreover, Ms. Rothenbuescher presented information on plans for Medicaid reimbursements and professional development opportunities.

The Board discussed the recommendation for an action plan for the schools below the 50% goal. They also discussed staffing concerns, some of the barriers faced at the schools, and disparities on the LRE data and managing expectations among schools. Ms. Kadera suggested more collaboration on assistive technology for general education students as a literary support.

G. ACTION ITEMS: NONE

H. INFORMATION ITEMS (8:44 PM):

1. Barcroft Elementary School HVAC Replacement Construction Contract Award

To begin, Mr. Jeffrey Chambers, Director of Design and Construction, thanked Dr. Durán and the Board on the kind remarks regarding Mr. Burgin and the condolences extended to the Facilities and Operations Department.

The FY 2023-32 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) included the renovation of the Barcroft Elementary School HVAC as a Major Infrastructure Project; therefore, renovations would include a new HVAC system and replacement of ceilings, lighting and repainting areas of construction. Thus, Mr. Chambers recommended awarding contract 95FY23 to Shapiro & Duncan, Inc., in the amount of \$9.426 million.

Referencing procurement terms, Mr. Chambers clarified for Ms. Diaz-Torres that a non-responsive bid means that the bidder does not fulfill the requirements of the request for proposal (RFP). The Board discussed

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sustainable practices, funding of the alternate scenarios, and the use of COVID State and Local Fiscal Recovery Fund (CSLFRF).

2. Revisions to School Board Policies J-5.3.2 Home Instruction and J-15.32 Records Management

Mr. Steven Marku, Director of Policy and Legislative Affairs, presented proposed revisions to School Board Policies J-5.3.2 Home Instruction and J-15.32 Records Management which added references to Virginia Code and other federal laws, as well clarifying language to standardize procedures. He also presented community feedback.

The Board briefly discussed community feedback.

I. NEW BUSINESS: NONE

J. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 9:06 PM.

ATTEST:

Claudia Mercado, Clerk
Arlington School Board

Reid Goldstein, Chair
Arlington School Board

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