

The Arlington School Board seeks the advice and insight from members of the community regarding the Arlington Public Schools budget.

Purpose

The Budget Advisory Council:

- Makes recommendations on policies and practices related to the presentation and preparation of the operating budget and the financial management of the school system;
- Makes recommendations to the School Board on budget priorities before the Board gives its annual budget direction to the Superintendent and at other times as appropriate;
- Advises on the degree to which the Superintendent's Proposed Budget supports best fiscal practices and the School Board's priorities;
- Assists in educating the community about the budgeting process and the contents of each year's budget;
- Provides, upon the Board's request, study and recommendations on special topics or issues;
- Presents an annual written report of the Council's work as part of the School Board's annual budget process. The report may raise issues and concerns that the Council has related to the budget, and
- Collaborates as appropriate with ACI and the Facilities Council.

Membership

The Council shall be comprised of 15 Arlington citizens who are not APS employees and who exhibit a broad range of interests, including knowledge and interest in budget matters.

Membership shall be for two years. Terms are staggered so that approximately one-half of the members are appointed each year, creating over time a durable committee with school budget background and expertise.

The School Board appoints all members in the spring each year. The School Board also appoints members from the Council to serve as the Chair and Vice Chair of the Budget Advisory Council. Appointments of these positions are for a two-year term effective May 1 of that year, and are based upon the recommendation of the outgoing Budget Advisory Council Chair and the Superintendent or his or her designee.

Advisory Council members may not serve more than six years on the Council. The School Board may invite various civic organizations to suggest persons for membership on the Council.

The following organizations may name a representative to the Advisory Council for a period of one year:

- County Council of PTA's (CCPTA)
- Advisory Council on Instruction (ACI)
- Civic Federation

Operations and Procedures

General

The Assistant Superintendent, Finance and Management Services is the staff liaison to the Advisory Council and provides the staff support necessary for the Council's mission.

Guidelines for Meetings

- All meetings of the Council shall be open to the public.
- Advisory council members are expected to attend all meetings. Upon recommendation of the Chair, a member may be removed from the Council by the School Board for failure to attend three meetings in one year, in which case the School Board shall appoint a new member.
- Copies of the approved minutes from all advisory council meetings shall be forwarded from the staff liaison to the School Board.

Guidelines for Communications Within the School System

The Advisory Council shall communicate with school communities through the Advisory Council's designated liaison to the County Council of PTA's.

Guidelines for Working with School System Staff

While the Advisory Council may do independent study and research, it coordinates its work with staff and does not duplicate or overlap staff work. Committee members communicate with school system staff members through the staff liaison. All notices and announcements from the Advisory Council to the public shall be routed through the staff liaison for approval and dissemination.

Guidelines for Communication Outside the School System

The School Board encourages the free flow of ideas and opinions within and among citizen advisory groups. However, members of the advisory councils or committees shall not represent their personal actions, views, statements, etc. as those of the committee. In communicating with the media, members of the general public, other individuals or institutions, members must exercise caution to ensure that, unless authorized by the committee, they specifically indicate that any expressed opinions or views are, in fact, their own.

Also, careful management of information requests is desirable to prevent overburdening other institutions, parents, or the general public with data requests. Any official communication or request for information to the Advisory Council from the media or other institutions shall be routed through the Staff Liaison to the Chair.

Evaluation

The Budget Advisory Council will present an annual written report of the Council's work to the School Board as part of the School Board's annual budget process. The report may raise issues and concerns that the Council has related to the budget.

Exceptions

The School Board may make exceptions to these procedures, as it deems appropriate.

References

SBP 10-6 School Board Advisory Committees