

**Comment of the
Advisory Council on School Facilities and Capital Programs (FAC)
on the
APS School Board's Proposed FY 2025 Budget
23 April 2024**

The FAC welcomes the opportunity to provide comment on the School Board's fiscal year (FY) 2025 proposed budget for Arlington Public Schools (APS) as it affects the Minor Construction/Major Maintenance (MC/MM) program.

Now that the County Board has approved a \$0.02 increase in the tax rate, it appears from your discussions during the Committee of the Whole (COW) that the Board is considering two options to close the budget gap. As presented at the COW, Option 1 proposed no additional reduction to the MC/MM program, while Option 2 retains the Superintendent's proposed \$1.5 million cut. The FAC supports Option 1.

In our 14 March 2024 comments on the Superintendent's proposed budget, we expressed concern that the MM/CC budget has already been reduced 27 percent over the FY 2024 adopted budget.¹ The additional \$1.5 million reduction would decrease the MM/CC budget by 50 percent. As you know, maintenance of existing facilities has been deferred in recent years given the priority to construct more seats. Since that need has abated, we are anxious to provide APS resources to begin to catch up on needed maintenance. These expenditures are investments meant to prolong the life of our facilities. A cut of the magnitude proposed in Option 2 should not be supported.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit these comments.

Cynthia Hilton
Acting Chair, FAC

¹ With an inflation adjustment, the cut is ~30%.