

Memo to: Arlington School Board  
 From: Advisory Council on School Facilities and Capital Programs (FAC)  
 Re: Revisions to Policy B-3.6.30 School Board Advisory Committees  
 Date: December 1, 2024

The FAC assists the School Board in the continuous, systematic review of school facilities and the Capital Improvement Program, including related funding, by advising on matters regarding the capital program and facility maintenance. The School Board has invited the FAC to review and comment on Board policies and implementation procedures that are scheduled for revision as they relate to our advisory role. The FAC’s SY 24-25 work plan specifically includes this charge as a priority task.

With this perspective, the FAC has reviewed Policy B-3.6.30 School Board Advisory Committees, and offers the following recommendations and comments:

In general, the FAC is mindful of the School Board’s initiative to appoint a working group to evaluate the current school board advisory committee structure and make recommendations for revisions to enhance effectiveness in alignment with the APS 2024-30 Strategic Plan. We recommend that revisions to this policy be tabled until the working group recommendations are received and addressed. Meanwhile, we agree that the current policy is dated and needs to be updated.

**Suggested Edits**

Line	Text/Edit Recommendation	Comment
26	“not exceed six <u>consecutive</u> years.”	Advisory groups are having trouble filling rosters. The SB should welcome former members who are willing to return, given their expertise based on prior service.
30-32	“Chairs and vice-chairs/co-chairs are appointed by the School Board for one-year non-renewable terms. <del>The chair is the prior vice chair/co chair.</del> <u>and Secretaries for a one-year renewable terms. The chair is the prior vice-chair/co-chair.</u> ”	All officers of advisory groups should be appointed by the SB.
49	“A School Board ...”	Editorial.
55-58	<del>5. Before the end of each fiscal year, each committee presents a status report of its work to the School Board. Committees may report more frequently as established in their reporting schedule.</del>	Text is largely duplicative of lines 86-88. See line 87 comment below. Item “6.” should be renumbered “5.”.
87	“Each committee will forward a report of its work to the School Board for review and consideration <u>before the end of each fiscal year or more frequently as established in their reporting schedule.</u> ”	See comment above. This change consolidates advisory group reporting requirements in one location. It may also be worth consolidating this directive with the “evaluation” charge at the end of the policy. See comment for lines 250-254.
121	“ ... in the continuous, systematic review of school facilities, <u>including fields, vehicles, and other properties maintained and operated by</u>	FAC’s advisory oversight role should be clarified to include all APS owned and/or controlled physical property.

	the Department of Facilities and Operations, and ...”	
123-124	“Making recommendations to the School Board on the <del>biannual</del> <del>biennial</del> <del>school facilities and student accommodation plan</del> [TBD] which informs the ten-year capital improvement plan and	Editorial. In 2022, the name of the AFSAP was changed to the Pre-CIP. This year, concern has been expressed that the content of the Pre-CIP was too extensive and that returning to a report more in line with the former AFSAP may be appropriate. It is unknown at this time what APS staff may choose to name the 2025 version of this report.
212-216	“The Joint Facilities Advisory Commission (JFAC) is an advisory body jointly chartered and appointed by the Arlington County Board and the Arlington School Board to provide input to both Boards on <del>capital facilities needs assessment, capital improvement plans,</del> and long-range facility planning for both the Arlington County Government and Arlington Public Schools.”	As currently chartered, the FAC and the JFAC missions are virtually identical when it comes to APS facilities. There is no need for such overlap, especially in light of difficulty in recruiting and retaining citizen volunteers. The SB and CB need to determine how to differentiate the purposes of each advisory group. Meanwhile, the proposed edit suggests that JFAC focus on long-range planning that has been defined in various forums to mean post 10-years (after the life-cycle of current CIPs).
218-224	<del>The Advisory Committee on Transportation Choices is an advisory body jointly chartered and appointed by the Arlington County Board and the Arlington School Board for the purpose of advising the Joint Committee on Transportation Choices, which will develop and implement programs that further transportation choices for Arlington Public Schools students, families, and staff. The mission of the Advisory Committee on Transportation Choices is to advise the Joint Committee on Transportation Choices on strategies and plans of action that will develop and promote those transportation choices.</del>	We understand that the Advisory Committee on Transportation Choices has been replaced by other advisory groups and that these are no longer jointly chartered.
237-238	“task force for a thorough study of a particular topic <del>(e.g. boundaries, capital improvements at a particular building, school naming, etc.)</del> .”	These examples, except “school naming,” are within the FAC’s remit. If work is needed on these topics, the request should come to FAC and, if FAC needs to form a subcommittee to respond to the request more effectively, it can. Meanwhile, examples (if they are provided) should be topics that lie outside the focus of all standing APS advisory groups.

<p>243-248</p>	<p><del>Superintendent's Committees</del>  <del>In accordance with Policy C-30, the Superintendent or designee may appoint committees made up of students, community members, and staff to assist and advise staff in the work of the school system. The Superintendent will regularly provide updates from these committees to the School Board and will report on the progress, findings, and/or recommendations from these committees as appropriate.</del></p>	<p>This provision is beyond the scope of this policy. If not otherwise stated in Policy C-30, it may be appropriate to add this provision there.</p>
<p>250-254</p>	<p><del>Evaluation</del>  <del>The School Board monitors the implementation of this policy through monitoring reports and other internal reports as designated by the School Board to ensure that reasonable progress is being made toward achieving the School Board's goals and that the operation of the school division is consistent with its policies.</del></p>	<p>Would recommend deleting this section which is duplicative with direction for evaluation reports included above (see lines 86-89) or beyond the scope of this policy (e.g., "that the operation of the school division is consistent with its polices."). Alternatively, the SB should consider combining all directions about "evaluation" into one section. For example, consider modifying the text of lines 86-89 as follows and moving the section to the end of the policy at line 250.</p> <p>"Evaluation of Committee Work  Each committee will forward a report of its work to the School Board for review and consideration <u>before the end of each fiscal year or more frequently as established in their reporting schedule to ensure that reasonable progress is being made toward achieving the School Board's direction to each advisory committee.</u> In addition, the Superintendent will annually report to the School Board on the outcomes of the <u>advisory committees'</u> contributions toward the Strategic Plan."</p>

\*\*\*

Thank you for your consideration of our comments. Please contact Cynthia Hilton, Chair, FAC, if you have any questions.