

Memo to: Arlington School Board
 From: Advisory Council on School Facilities and Capital Programs (FAC)
 Re: **Revisions to Policy E-3.31 Safety and Security**
 Date: January 25, 2025

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 and adequacy. 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 E-3.31 Safety and Security, and offers the following recommendations and comments:

Last year, a reorganization of Arlington Public Schools’ (APS) central office functions shifted responsibilities for “safety” and “risk management” (among other duties) to the Department of Facilities & Operations (F&O). F&O manages and maintains almost 5.0 million square feet of space in 43 buildings and more than 350 acres of land. Its “safety” mandate covers building and equipment safety responsibilities such as playground inspections and fire alarm testing. Its remit for “risk management” covers APS’ Risk Management Plan, which includes assessing potential risks, recommending hazard mitigation strategies, and facilitating the contractual transfer of risks. The proposed draft amended policy E-3.31 does not reflect the realities of the reorganization. All substantive edits recommended below are intended to rectify this oversight.

Suggested Edits

Line	Text/Edit Recommendation	Comment
11	... the Administrator's	clerical error
25-27	The Superintendent or designee is responsible for the direction and supervision of Arlington Public Schools’ functions and shall appoint members, <u>staffing, and budget</u> to Arlington Public Schools’ “Safety Audit Committee.”	The Superintendent is ultimately responsible for this task. If he wants to delegate tasks, he can. Creating a committee with tasks as important as safety, security, emergency management, and risk management requires staff and budget resources. Quotation marks are not needed.
34-66	B. <u>Life Safety, Security, and Emergency Management Responsibilities</u> Strike the lead paragraph and add: <u>The Office of School Support oversees School Safety & Emergency Management (SS&EM). The mission of SS&EM is to safeguard APS’ students, staff, and community while on</u>	Edits are intended to clarify the role of SS&EM. Attention needs to be paid to the different “safety” remits of SS&EM and F&O.

	<p><u>school property. This mission is supported by County partners, including Arlington County Emergency Management, Arlington County Police Department, and Arlington County Fire and Rescue Department. SS&EM responsibilities include:</u></p> <p>1. Developing and maintaining <u>life safety, security, and emergency management plans; and policies to include threat assessment management.</u></p> <p>***</p> <p>5. Assisting students, employees, supervisors, visitors, and volunteers to assess and manager specific hazards and risks <u>emergencies upon request.</u></p> <p>6. <u>With the Department of Facilities & Operations, p</u>roviding administrative support and implementing decisions of Arlington Public Schools’ <u>APS’</u> Safety Audit Committee.</p> <p>7. Strike the last sentence. This directive would be appropriate for a PIP that better explains the membership and duties of the Safety Audit Committee.</p>	
68-80	<p><u>C. Physical Asset Safety and Risk Management Responsibilities</u></p> <p>The <u>Department of Facilities & Operations (F&O)</u> is responsible for the implementation of Arlington Public Schools <u>programs covering safety of APS’ physical assets, including building and equipment safety, and APS’ risk management program, which includes oversight of insurance providers, investigations, and claims, and for assessing potential risks, recommending hazard mitigation strategies, and facilitating the contractual transfer of risks.</u></p> <p>Specific responsibilities include:</p> <p>***</p> <p><u>4. With the SS&EM, providing administrative support and implementing decisions of APS’ Safety Audit Committee.</u></p>	<p>Edits are intended to clarify the role of F&O. Attention needs to be paid to the different “safety” remits of SS&EM and F&O. For example, F&O, not SS&EM, is currently enhancing school safety by upgrading Critical Notification/Public Address Systems at 11 schools.</p>
82-87	<p><u>D. Compliance</u></p> <p>1. SS&EM may suspend or cease activities and operations that are not in full compliance</p>	<p>Edits are intended to clarify the roles of SS&EM and F&O for directives in this Policy. Attention needs to be paid to the</p>

	<p>with APS' school division <u>life safety, and security, and emergency management plans, policies, and procedures.</u></p> <p>2. Risk Management F&O may inspect and audit <u>APS facilities and properties</u> to monitor and assess health and safety <u>risks and conditions</u> for compliance with plans, policies, and procedures.</p>	different "safety" remits of SS&EM and F&O.
121-123	F. <u>Definitions</u>	The policy states that the definitions in the policy include some in the policy's PIPs. Not having the PIPs to review, it is unknown if some terms may be missing or unnecessary. That said, FAC would recommend that these definitions be moved from the policy to the appropriate PIP.
Def Ref 94-96	<i>Safety Audit Committee</i> means a core group of <u>APS health and safety professionals, instructional staff, and administrators lead by the Assistant Superintendent for Facilities and Operations and the Director of School Safety and Emergency Management, with to include public safety officials designated by the County from the community</u> who are charged with implementation of Policy E-3.31 reviewing and addressing school division health and safety.	Based on the tasks assigned in Policy E-3.31, the definition of "Safety Audit Committee" needs improvement.

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