

Advisory Council on Teaching and Learning (ACTL)

Meeting
November 5, 2025



ACTL Attendance

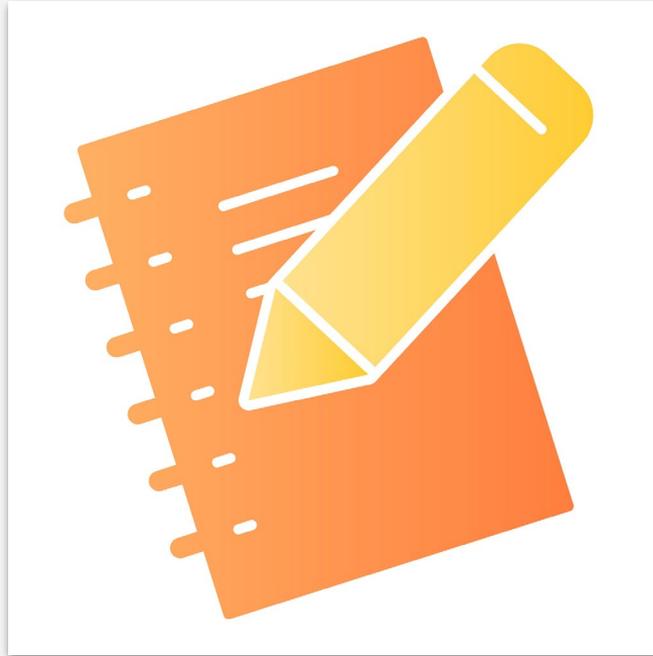
Agenda

- Welcome and Minute Approval
- APS Legislative Package
- Science Subcommittee Draft Recommendations
- Artificial Intelligence
- Engaging with your community

Objectives

- Gain an understanding of the APS Legislative package and priorities.
- Provide recommendations to the Science Subcommittee.
- Begin to discuss and identify areas to bring forward to the School Board around AI.
- Follow-up from ways to engage your community and gather feedback.

October Minutes Approval



Legislative Package

Steven Marku

Arlington Public Schools

Director of Policy and Legislative Affairs

Introduction

- The Arlington School Board believes high-quality public schools are fundamental to keeping our local community and Commonwealth strong. The Arlington School Board represents Arlington County and will manage resources, set policies, and make curriculum decisions that are in the best interest of our community.
- The Arlington School Board opposes legislation that would impose new unfunded mandates on public schools.
- The Arlington School Board supports streamlining the requirements for state-mandated teacher training to make them less burdensome on teachers and opposes new teacher training mandates while that process is ongoing.

Student Achievement

- The Arlington School Board supports the development of content-area learning assessments in languages other than English that are present to a significant extent in the student population in Virginia. The Arlington School Board also supports accreditation and accountability systems that reflect research regarding the length of time it takes English Learner students to acquire content area academic language skills.
- The Arlington School Board supports modifying the state's accountability and accreditation system, the School Performance and Support Framework, to weight growth as heavily as mastery for elementary schools and more closely to mastery for middle schools.



Funding

- The Arlington School Board supports the implementation of the recommendations in the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission (JLARC) report on Virginia's K-12 Funding Formula, particularly those that will provide the greatest benefit to jurisdictions across the Commonwealth, including:
 - Directing the following changes to the Standards of Quality (SOQ) formula: (i) reinstate the non-personal cost categories removed in FY09 FY10 and (ii) reinstate the federal fund deduction methodology used prior to FY09;
 - Modifying the SOQ formula to better reflect the actual costs that school divisions face and fully funding this new formula;



Funding

JLARC (continued)

- Replacing the current SOQ formula calculations for special education and English Learners, including any associated calculations for benefits and payroll taxes under other SOQ accounts, with student-based funding calculations that are based on actual average school division expenditures; and
- Replacing the current cost of competing adjustment with a more accurate adjustment based on a Virginia cost of labor index that better accounts for differing labor costs across school divisions in calculating compensation funding through the Standards of Quality formula.



Funding

- The Arlington School Board supports expanded funding to provide professional staff and services for student mental health needs, including:
 - Continuing funding for state grants available to schools to provide telehealth services, including mental health;
 - Developing specific ratios for school psychologists and school social workers, working towards 1 per 500 students;
 - Continuing funding for state grants for schools to train and provide Youth Mental Health First Aid, Teen Mental Health First Aid, and similar programs to increase the knowledge of school staff and students regarding mental health concerns and helping individuals access relevant resources; and
 - Lowering the ratio for school counselors to 1 per 250 students.



Funding

- The Arlington School Board supports increased funding to help school divisions reduce chronic absenteeism, provide more social workers, reduce bullying, and support SLIFE (Students with Limited or Interrupted Formal Education).
- The Arlington School Board opposes eliminating the 0.5 cap on the Local Composite Index for the Virginia Preschool Initiative.
- The Arlington School Board supports maintaining the “hold harmless” funding for localities to replace the income lost from the repeal of the grocery tax.



Funding

- The Arlington School Board supports extending the Halifax Model of 1% sales tax for school construction and modernization to all school divisions.
- The Arlington School Board opposes any diversion of public education funds to non-public schools including funding lab schools or utilizing tuition tax credits, tax deductions, or vouchers as a means of reimbursing parents for their children's K-12 education expenses.
- The Arlington School Board supports backstopping any federal funding cuts, particularly relating to support for schools in with higher levels of economic need, English Learners, teacher development, and adult education.



Teacher Recruitment and Retention

- The Arlington School Board supports the implementation of the recommendations in the JLARC report on Virginia's K-12 Teacher Pipeline. The recommendations include various ways to reduce barriers to licensure and to admission to higher education teacher training programs.
- The Arlington School Board supports increasing evidence-based incentives for potential teacher candidates to enter or re-enter the profession.
- The Arlington School Board supports expanding the application of licensure reciprocity for endorsements to a teaching license.



Other Critical Issues

- The Arlington School Board supports policies and practices that protect individual rights and protect students and employees from discrimination due to gender expression, gender identity, sexual harassment, and transgender status.
- The Arlington School Board supports current policy regarding eligibility for in-state college tuition for Deferred Action Childhood Arrivals and Temporary Protected Status students and opposes any attempts to modify or curtail this policy.
- The Arlington School Board supports legislation to expand universal free meals at schools for all students.



Other Critical Issues

- The Arlington School Board supports legislation that requires gun owners to keep their weapons and ammunition safely in locked storage when not in use to ensure that they do not fall into the hands of children who can use them to harm themselves or harm those in the schools and the community. Further, the Arlington School Board supports legislation that would make it a crime for failure to do so.
- The Arlington School Board opposes requiring schools to audit their libraries, classrooms, or curricula for content or to take away schools' control over their libraries, classrooms, or curricula.



Science Subcommittee

- Larry Fishtahler, Science Subcommittee Chair
- Dat Le, Supervisor, Science Office



Science Subcommittee Thoughts and Comments



Community-Based Information	
How will this initiative fit in my school community?	
What information do I need from my school community to provide useful input on this initiative?	
With whom from my school do I need to engage to gather this input? (Are some voices typically missing? Are there hard to reach populations to consider?)	
What about this initiative works/would work well in my school community?	
What challenges to my school community does this initiative (and/or its implementation) present?	
What does my school community need to best support this initiative?	

Science Subcommittee

Thoughts and Comments



<i>Thematic-Based Considerations</i>	
How would my school community give/receive personalized, timely feedback on this initiative to families?	
How will this initiative impact teachers' heavy workload?	
Given the impact on teacher workload, how might this initiative impact the ability to provide timely, personalized feedback to families?	
Are there best practices demonstrating this initiative in any APS schools? If so, where?	
How can other schools replicate the best practices? What impact will doing so have on the school community?	
Do existing research or best practices from other school systems across the country support this initiative?	
How will this initiative promote consistency across all APS schools?	
How will students be engaged to offer their perspective and express their needs?	

How will this initiative impact students (e.g., workload, graduation requirement, etc.)?

Will this initiative adequately prepare elementary students for middle school, middle school students for high school, and high school students for college/career/other post-high school experience? What does the initiative need in order to do so?

Science Subcommittee Process



- 5- minute presentation overview
- Breakout Groups
 - Elementary and Secondary - jot down ideas and questions - 10 minutes
 - Community Based Information and Thematic Based Considerations
- Come back together for a Q/A and discussion - 10 minutes

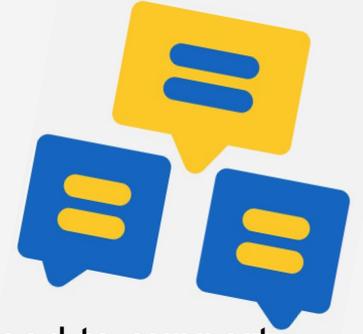
Artificial Intelligence

Recap of 2024-2025

- Year of Staff Exploration
- APS Principles and Guiding Statements, and Framework
- Jacqueline Firster, Supervisor of Digital Learning & Innovation and Melissa Hyatt, Innovation ITC
 - Presented on the Artificial Intelligence Pilot
- Spring 2025 Survey sent out to ACTL communities to better understand family awareness and gather input on what values, priorities, and questions could help guide the Division's approach
- ACTL Meeting feedback and discussion around data
- School Board Memo Created



Artificial Intelligence 2024 - 2025 Data Highlights



- 31% of families aware of the AI Pilot
- 67% of participants are at least somewhat comfortable with AI being used to support lesson planning - though about one - third express uncertainty or discomfort - suggesting there is room for more trust - building and information sharing.
- **Theme** : Participants are concerned about **how AI is being used** and whether **appropriate guardrails** and **oversight** are in place to ensure student safety.
- **Theme** : There's a strong **desire for AI integration to support** - not replace - deep learning, especially around critical thinking, ethics, and reasoning skills.
- **Theme**: It is recognized that **AI can be used as a productivity tool** that has the potential to help teachers save time, boost efficiency, and enhance creativity. Likewise, **AI needs to be used ethically, responsibly,** and **not as a substitute** for the human effect teachers can have on students.

Artificial Intelligence 2024 - 2025 Data Highlights



- **Theme** : Parents see AI as a potentially helpful tool for student learning , but emphasize the **importance of training and limits**, especially related to screen time and dependency.
- **Theme** : Participants **want clear communication** from APS on where, how, and why AI is being used. Many feel the pilot is unclear or invisible in day - to - day learning.
- **Theme**: Parents emphasize the importance of **teaching ethical AI use and digital literacy** —not just how to use tools, but how to question and understand them.

Artificial Intelligence

Key Tensions

- Innovation vs. Safety
- Awareness vs. Action
- Curiosity vs. Fear
- Efficiency vs. Quality
- Support vs. Dependence
- Policy vs. Practice
- Central Strategy vs. Local Implementation
- Digital Access vs. Human Interaction



Artificial Intelligence

Recap of 2025-2026



- Year of Empowered Learning for Staff
- Jacqueline Firster, Supervisor of Digital Learning & Innovation
 - AI Virtual Town Hall, October 8, 2025
- In-depth FAQ generated
- EdTech Subcommittee Focus - Digital Citizenship
- Device Use Work Group

Artificial Intelligence

ACTL Purpose



- Purpose: To define a shared “research” agenda that reflects ACTL and the community’s priorities for AI, outlining key areas to bring forward to the school board for action over the coming years.

Key Question: Is this what ACTL would like to focus on around AI for the year?

Artificial Intelligence

Next Steps

- Document Collection
- Guiding Questions for Exploration
- Gap Analysis
- Data Collection
- Data Analysis
- Recommendations



Engaging Our Communities



*How might I
best engage
my
community?*

1. Follow-up from September discussion - what strategy you planned to try, what you tried, and any peaks or valleys you experienced.
2. Did you use the fliers that Jill created for us to share information?
3. Did you receive any feedback from community members or questions to bring to the council?
4. What more can the leadership team do to assist with your next engagement activity?
5. Discuss what to share from today's meeting and what we want information we may want to gather from our communities.

From Ginnie: I committed to letting everyone know how my strategy went. I committed to contacting the principal and PTA president to share information and to ask how best I can get information to and from the community. We are again trying ParentSquare, so I sent our fliers from the September meeting and an introductory note about myself and ACTL. I'm hoping it will come out in a ParentSquare message soon - which is my valley because I am realizing I'll need to plan for more lead time. My peak is that the principal was immediately responsive and receptive to sharing information.

Next Month Preview

- December 3
- Subcommittee Presentations
- AI Continuation
- Summer School - potentially



ACTL Attendance