

**Arlington Public Schools  
Advisory Council on Instruction  
Evelyn Syphax Academic Center (Education Center Annex)  
Wednesday, October 13, 2010**

Present were:

ACI Leadership: Donna Felipe and Tecla Murphy, ACI co-chairs; Judy Hadden, Yvonne McIntire, ACI Vice Chairs; Mark Johnston, Assistant Superintendent, Instruction (Executive Secretary, ACI).

ACI Membership: Kathryn Scruggs (AAUW, alternate); Wanda Perkins (AEA); Natalie Goldring (LWV); Tina Masciangioli (Abingdon); Janice Bitetti (Arlington Science Focus); Kathy Rehill (Arlington Traditional); Ted Black (Barcroft); Barret Hildebrand (Barrett); Tracey Kretzer (Campbell, alternate); Breana Bayraktar (Claremont); Blaise Scinto (Drew); Hans Bauman (Glebe); Sara Wilson (Henry); Jerry Hensley (Hoffman-Boston); Rebecca Hunter (Key); Beth Dowd (Long Branch); Maureen LaPiana (McKinley); Deborah Morone (Nottingham); Paula Kelso (Nottingham, alternate); Tracy Malone (Oakridge); Michael Novak (Gunston); Kevin Clark (Jefferson); Debbie Spiliotopoulos (H-B Woodlawn, HS); Karolina Walkin (H-B Woodlawn, MS); Luann Moy (Washington-Lee); Martha Hermann (Yorktown); Karen Hunt (Yorktown).

The meeting was called to order by Co-Chair Donna Felipe.

Donna Felipe: Welcome to tonight's meeting. I am Donna Felipe, a Co-Chair, along with Tecla Murphy, Co-Chair, and Mark Johnston, Staff Liaison to the Committee. Tonight's agenda will include an overview of the school system and the ACI, as well as a presentation on the budget process. The agenda will also provide time for breaking into small groups to ask questions, to discuss what the Council will be doing, and provide a learning overview. Those who have served on the Council in the past will see that although some things have changed, others are still the same. I'd like to ask all the ACI members to introduce themselves and the schools/organizations they represent.

After the ACI members had introduced themselves, Mark Johnston began the presentation.

Mark Johnston: Each year, we feel that this presentation is helpful for grounding in that it provides the basis for upcoming reports. We will give you a general overview of Arlington as well as the Department of Instruction. In the past, this presentation has been received well; we have updated information as it becomes available. We will provide the links to you. Later, we will hear from Leslie Peterson, Budget Director, who will come and present some preliminary information on the FY 2012 budget. This information will be important to you as ACI hears the advisory committees' reports with recommendations.

In the breakout session, we will provide some questions to guide you—some are on the budget. Our upcoming community budget forums are related to the information here. We also want you to think about areas about which you want to learn more.

(PowerPoint Slide entitled “Demographics”) --When we look at this slide, we see a steady trend. This has not been updated yet for 2010-11, but we don't expect any surprises. We do see that the percentage of Black students is decreasing slightly while the percentage of White students is increasing. When we look at the elementary phenomenon, we can look at local real estate information to try to explain this shift. As for free/reduced lunch students, we lost Title I funding at some schools due to the reduced numbers of these students. Some schools were over the 35% threshold for funding—now they are not. These schools include Key, Long Branch, Glebe, Science Focus, and Oakridge—their numbers of students on free/reduced lunch are all down. This may be because the economy is a little bit up. It will be interesting to see if that continues.

On the next slide (“Gifted Services”), we see an over-representation of White students and an under-representation of Black students. The percentage of Asian students has remained about the same, while Hispanic students are under-represented. Our dually-identified students (both Gifted and Special Education) total 5 percent.

Now I'd like to present Julie Crawford, Director of Special Education.

Julie Crawford: (Discussing three slides called “Students with Disabilities”) Our September 2010 data show a little over 3,059 students aged two through 22. This represents all of our programs, from our toddler program through programs serving age 22. Every APS school serves some Special Education students. The type of program depends on the needs. Some schools might have students who need monitoring only, while other schools serve students with severe needs.

The slide showing the breakdown of disabilities includes:

- 31% Specific Learning Disability
- 17% Other Health Impairment – this includes ADHD and asthma
- 16% Speech or Language Impairment
- 10% Autism – our number of autism students is growing. Over the last six years, we have doubled our services--in 2003 we served 113 students; in 2009, there were 287.
- 8% Developmental Delay – this number has declined; the regulations have been changed and the age limit was reduced
- 7% Emotional Disability – this number is down 1 percent
- 4% Intellectual Disability – now called cognitive disability—formerly was called mental retardation
- 3% Multiple Disabilities – some students have two impairments that are both so severe they can't be separated

<1% Hearing Impairment – we are seeing a striking increase – it has doubled in the last three years

<1% Orthopedic Impairment

<1% Traumatic Brain Injury

<1% Visual Impairment

Question: Can students be in two categories?

Julie Crawford: Yes; these data represent students identified by their primary disability.

We are identifying students earlier and more specifically. Some terms have been changed due to changes in Virginia regulations—for example, the “severe disability” category has been removed by the State.

Question: Where do you put in CP/physical disability?

Julie Crawford: That is at the discretion of the evaluation team; it depends on the student’s profile.

Hans Bauman: Are the numbers going up? Are there higher incidences of parents wanting to bring children in for services?

Julie Crawford: There are lots of variables, including earlier and better identification and serving students better.

Tracey Kretzer: In the “developmental delay” category, what is the new age?

Julie Crawford: Two through six.

Question: Is there a brochure or a website?

Julie Crawford: You can go to the APS website, then to Office of Special Education. There are lots of links there, including Child Find and the Parent Resource Center.

Mark Johnston: I will bring up the website for you.

Julie Crawford: Every school has a Special Education Coordinator to assist parents; let me know if the information you need is not on the website.

Tecla Murphy: How much of the population is under each category?

Julie Crawford: IEPs are protected by the 504 Rehab Act. Some students have 504s but not IEPs. These numbers are just 504s. My telephone number is 703-228-6040 if you need further information.

Mark Johnston: Thank you, Julie. Now Julie is off to College Night. I'd like to present Faith Tabatabai, ESOL/HILT Supervisor, to talk about the next slide on LEP students.

Faith Tabatabai: Our students represent different levels of English proficiency. This slide shows 3,743 K-12 students who receive direct services. This represents 19 percent of the student population. As of October, we had 1,170 students in exited years 1 and 2; 864 students in exited years 3 and 4; 588 pre-k students, and 191 eligible but not receiving services. This results when parents have opted their children out of the program, as they have the right to do. There is also a small number of dually-identified students.

Question: What does "exit" mean?

Faith Tabatabai: It means that students have been exited from receiving direct services. They are at an advanced level of English proficiency. They may receive indirect services from us, like monitoring their progress and their SOL scores, or they may receive small group instruction.

Our Annual Survey of Limited English Proficient Students will come out in December or January. It breaks down all the data—numbers of students at each school, their levels, their languages, home countries, etc. This Survey will be posted on the website.

Mark Johnston: On October 28, the ESOL/HILT Office will present to the School Board a report on levels of service, performance measures, content, proficiency, and areas of improvement.

Faith Tabatabai: Also, we have about 100 more students this year than last.

Mark Johnston: Thank you, Faith. Now I see that Leslie Peterson, APS Budget Director, is here. Leslie will give us some information on the budget process.

Leslie Peterson: Thank you. This is a big crowd. I'm more used to working with the Budget Advisory Committee, where the membership is about 17 and there are usually 13 or so attending.

We start building the budget in the summer, when the School Board gives direction to the Superintendent. This year the School Board's Standards and Guiding Principles are the same as last year, but this year the Board also gave Budget Priorities—the direction for FY 2012. All of this information is on the APS website: [www.apsva.us/budget](http://www.apsva.us/budget).

We have just begun the budget development process—the budget materials from departments and schools are due to us in November. The Board and Superintendent will meet in December. The County gives us its final figure the second or third week in January.

Revenue Sources: Of the total APS budget of \$442 million, 82 percent comes from the County (real estate taxes, fees); local funds (tuition, school fees) total 3 percent; federal funds equal 38 percent—higher presently due to stimulus funds which will be ending; state funding of 11 percent; and a carry forward amount. Based on the local composite index—that is, the capacity of a locality to pay—Arlington is one of the richest. Arlington receives 20 cents per dollar of the state’s calculated share. As an example of the state’s Standards of Quality, one standard is a kindergarten class of 30 students and no assistant.

Jerry Hensley: Is this the amount above and beyond?

Leslie Peterson: That’s a tricky calculation.

Hans Bauman: There are musings about the federal amount being smallish in relation to our budget and that federal funds come with headaches and restrictions. Have we talked about whether we need these funds with the strings attached?

Mark Johnston: We tested this a few years ago, for example, when the federal government insisted on administering reading tests in English to Limited English Proficient students who were new. Arlington and a few other localities took a firm stand against this. The federal contribution to the whole state was in jeopardy. Arlington could have refused the funds, but Richmond said no, since it would have jeopardized all of Virginia’s federal funds.

Hans Bauman: Can’t we opt out?

Mark Johnston: We can’t because it puts all of Virginia’s funds in jeopardy.

Question: What is the source of state funds? Income taxes? The lottery?

Answer: Liquor stores (laughter).

Leslie Peterson: The lottery is a portion of it, along with state income taxes and other fees and revenue. \$360 million in our Operating fund consists of debt service and the cafeteria fund.

Over 80 percent of funding goes to schools and instructional support, management support, costs to benefit schools, including instruction-based personnel in central office going to schools.

Question: What goes into schools?

Leslie Peterson: Everything that is in the schools—teachers, principals—everything housed in the schools.

Janice Bitetti: Does the amount in schools include salaries?

Leslie Peterson: About 85-86 percent is salaries and benefits.

Hans Bauman: What about the other 15 percent?

Leslie Peterson: Textbooks, maps, globes...

Question: Why not break it out?

Leslie Peterson: This is everything. We could have a chart; there is one in the adopted budget. The 2011 adopted budget shows salaries, staff development, etc.

Kathryn Scruggs: If this was \$442 million, the percentage would be lower by how much?

Leslie Peterson: Probably about 65 percent—that's a rough calculation. We have so much in other funds to benefit schools; the debt service is used to pay back building funds.

There will be community forums on the budget again this year—four forums. The dates and times are:

- Wed, Oct. 20, 7:30 p.m. at Wakefield High School Cafeteria
- Wed, Oct. 27, 9:30 a.m. at the Education Center Board Room
- Sat, Oct. 30, 9 a.m. at Jefferson Middle School Cafeteria
- Wed., Nov. 3, 7:30 p.m. at Glebe Elementary School Cafeteria

We will also be doing a budget survey on our website; it will open on November 5 and close on November 24.

Michael Novak: Is this redundant?

Leslie Peterson: Yes.

Mark Johnston: Some of the same questions you'll be working on tonight will be exactly the same questions discussed at the forums.

Rebecca Hunter: For the survey—will it come through SchoolTalk?

Leslie Peterson: Yes.

Tina Masciangioli: Will the survey be set up the same way as last year? Will it be monitored and be more scientific?

Leslie Peterson: We have made some changes to give us better analysis and we are also changing the questions. We are looking at setting up a unique user so a person can fill out the survey only once.

Natalie Goldring: To answer questions last year, we were asked to keep, drop, rank in order—are these questions being rewritten?

Leslie Peterson: There are different questions; we are still working on them.

Debbie Spiliotopoulos: In the Facilities portion of the budget, what is the proportion of capital and scheduled work/maintenance?

Leslie Peterson: It includes day-to-day maintenance.

Debbie Spiliotopoulos: What about a basic death of HVAC?

Leslie Peterson: In our Capital Projects Fund, there is \$4.6 million for maintenance and renovation. This is outlined in the budget. Our Capital Improvement Plan is developed every two years. This has been used primarily for rebuilding Yorktown and Wakefield and also funds HVAC and roofing.

Debbie Spiliotopoulos: \$4.6 million out of the general fund—and the CIP from bonds?

Leslie Peterson: Exactly.

The School Board and County Board will meet on October 20 at 7:00 p.m. in the County Board Room to discuss the budget, collaboration, enrollment, etc. It will be an informative meeting; you are welcome to attend. This will be the start of the budget dialogue.

Natalie Goldring: Is there any updated information on the gap?

Leslie Peterson: Last year at this time, the combined County/Schools gap was projected to be \$80-\$100 million. The schools represented \$45-\$47 million of that. This year, the projected gap is \$25-\$30 million, with APS representing \$13-\$14 million. These numbers are always changing as we refine our information. We are in much better shape this year—the County was projecting 0 percent revenue growth but is now projecting 1 percent. It is not as large a change as last year—it is very conservative.

Mark Johnston: Thank you, Leslie.

We will now get back to our slides giving demographic data on our students and on APS in general.

Title I is one of the largest programs in APS – IDEA is larger. This slide shows how funds are distributed. Title I schools are those schools whose population is at least 35 percent students on free/reduced lunch. At this time there are ten such schools.

There are two types of support: schoolwide, where all students receive services. These schools are Abingdon, Drew, Henry, and Key. Then there are targeted schools, where the only students receiving services are those on free/reduced lunch. These schools are Barcroft, Barrett, Campbell, Carlin Springs, Hoffman-Boston, and Randolph. Title I also provides salaries and benefits for other school-based staff at those ten schools.

With respect to ITCs (Instructional Technology Coordinators), we're over the state's Standards of Quality.

Hans Bauman: What is the Standard of Quality for Gifted?

Mark Johnston: There may not be a standard. They could use a model instead. It could be that services would be provided by other than a Resource Teacher.

This next slide shows important links to data on Free/Reduced Lunch, Civil Rights Statistics, and Enrollment Data.

As you hear about recommendations during this year, think about the competing dollars going to more students, boundaries, and enrollment.

The per pupil expenditure declined last year; the cost per student is lower. It is now at the same level as in FY 2007. This comes from last year's economic difficulties.

Janice Bitetti: The new students—what categories are they in?

Mark Johnston: The proportion of LEP students is about the same. We are starting to see a trend—a decrease in diversity. There seems to be less diversity at elementary—we can look at home values and ask who can afford the homes.

Yvonne McIntire: Regarding the Civil Rights statistics—how do the new categories change?

Mark Johnston: Yvonne is talking about the change in how Civil Rights data is self-reported. I get involved in how we count re: accountability. I don't have an answer to your question. I haven't seen an analysis nor have we received guidance from the State. For proportion of enrollment, we are using last year's categories. We are awaiting guidance from the state.

Middle School and High School Information Nights are coming up.

The 4-6 Year Academic Plan is where students in Grade 6 develop a plan for their coursework through high school. This plan is monitored and adjustments are made as needed.

When we talk about the Career Center, sometimes it's too late for students to enroll if they have not planned this out. For example, Veterinary Science—it's challenging for a



student all of a sudden decide to do it their senior year because it's a double period block.

Some things that are changing include:

American Productivity and Quality Center (APCQ) – process management framework to realize efficiencies and cost savings, redirect savings. For example, I'm part of a team working on Data Management. We are now looking at data needs and processes for meeting those needs.

Jerry Hensley: Is PPMS modeled at the State Department?

Mark Johnston: It's probably related. Our approach is called Define / Measure / Analyze / Improve / Control (DMAIC). Dr. Kevin Clark is the Co-Chair of the Strategic Plan Task Group for 2011-2017. This Strategic Plan will be adopted by the Board next summer and will guide our work for the next six years. There are opportunities for you to participate if you are interested.

Kevin Clark: There is a press release asking for volunteers; the deadline is October 22. I encourage you to stay tuned in and to participate. There are community forums coming up. [Mark Johnston shared the dates.]

Rebecca Hunter: Does ACI touch on capacity, planning and use of space? How does it integrate?

Mark Johnston: Fortunately for me, not much (laughter). To give you an example, the conversions of computer labs to free up classroom space has been painful. There are also issues around early childhood and pre-kindergarten programs (taking space in community neighborhood schools).

Hans Bauman: There is a Facilities Advisory Board that deals with capacity and other issues. It's useful to see the perspective from many sides.

Kathryn Scruggs: I'm still studying the organizational chart of the Department of Instruction. Some things have changed; could you clarify? What is Director, Early Childhood & Elementary Education?

Mark Johnston: Our budget last year was very difficult. We reorganized and had an opportunity to address some areas of concern. For instance, the Early Childhood Office has to coordinate services across 22 elementary schools. Although we have the same challenges, we decreased a Supervisor position and created this new position at no cost to the system. We reduced clerical positions and supply accounts and realized a \$300,000 to \$400,000 savings. We're trying to be more coordinated.

Question: What is the difference between "Curriculum" and "Program"?

Mark Johnston: “Curriculum” means content—like math, science, etc. “Program” examples would be the ESOL/HILT service model, Title I, Office of Minority Achievement, and Gifted Services.

Martha Hermann: On the organizational chart, who are the Assistant Superintendents?

Mark Johnston: The Assistant Superintendent for Administrative Services is Meg Tuccillo. Meg provides administrative support to schools; she will be coming to the Board soon. The Assistant Superintendent for Facilities and Operations is Clarence Stukes. The Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Management Services is Mary Beth Chambers. The Assistant Superintendent for Information Services is new to APS—his name is Dr. Salah Khelifaoui. The Assistant Superintendent for Instruction is me. Dr. Betty Hobbs is Assistant Superintendent for Personnel Services. Linda Erdos is Assistant Superintendent for School and Community Relations. Dr. Alvin Crawley is Assistant Superintendent for Student Services.

Over the course of this year, you’ll be hearing from 14 different committees—some with recommendations and some without. You will be asked to consider the worth of the recommendations, and some will be in conflict.

Example: The Arts Advisory Committee wants to emphasize choral music, but the enrollment is not increasing. Also, increasing enrollment in choral music could result in decreased enrollment in other arts courses, CTE courses, or world languages courses.

Next year’s 9<sup>th</sup> graders must have a credit in Personal Finance Literacy to graduate.

You are arbiters of all.

I met with Department of Instruction staff today. Our AP Biology textbook offers free online access which is ending. The cost to continue it will be a few thousand new dollars; now we must find a way to cut a few thousand dollars,

When we look at those 1,000 new students, we are looking at new teachers, transportation, etc. We may have to look at offsets.

Debbie Spiliotopoulos: Where is the flexibility in the school?

Mark Johnston: Within meeting the state ranges identified in the Standards of Quality.

Debbie Spiliotopoulos: The school could select something other than a textbook,

Mark Johnston: Another example is sinks in the Biology labs; if we think about removing them, we have to think about the future—inequity, consequences. There are lots of aspects.

Now we’re going to ask you to divide into groups to address our Breakout Questions.

When the groups reconvened and reported out, Dr. Johnston entered their responses on the SmartBoard. They are included below (pages 12-15).

The meeting was adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

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**Next Meeting: November 10, 2010**

**Education Center Annex / Large Conference Room**

**1439 N. Quincy Street**

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## APPENDIX – BREAKOUT QUESTIONS

1. Which of the topics in APS 101 is most important to you, and why?

Social skills, life skills, and communication. That's what employers say they want. It also helps families stay together and raise great future APS kids.

College vs. job-ready. College may be too expensive or unnecessary. Kids are on such a track they don't realize what they want or need to do.

Increase in school population and its impact upon teacher:student ratio.

Budget

Gifted

Organization Chart

Disability

LEP

Title I Services

APCQ Process

Get kids "job ready" – life/social skills; writing/communication skills; fundamentals vs. technology. Beyond college prep.

Students need more time/attention to understand available choices and themselves (interests/strengths) – more counseling (for parents, too)

Achievement gap closure

Budget – sets the context for all other decisions

Consistency of instruction and policy implementation across the County.

Impact of capacity and enrollment

Space, student-to-teacher ratio

Gifted Services – differentiated instruction

Large increase in enrollment

## Gifted Services differentiation

### 2. What areas/topics do you want to know more about?

Allow local universities to more easily conduct research in APS in exchange for professional development.

Amount of money raised by PTA groups across the County—are there inequities? How can these inequities be addressed?

Why are 18% of students identified as Gifted? This seems high.

Research on effects of class size on student achievement—not sure that it actually affects achievement.

How are achievement gaps being addressed? What are our gaps?

How does APS plan to raise the floor without collapsing the ceiling?

### Sustainability

What do studies show are the major determinants of student success?

How does APS individualize instruction?

Local school control vs. County requirements

Oversight of schools to ensure standards are met

More program content

How should this relate to committee reports?

Standards of Quality – Arlington’s Standards of Quality vs, State’s

### Writing Program

Exemplary programs – how are they created and sustained? They give schools an identity.

Class size – balancing access to classroom teachers and resource teachers

Testing – how it helps in decision making

Reporting on all testing to the same level as SOLs

Exemplary programs at each school and how to sustain them

Class size

3. What are your top 4 or 5 priorities for the FY 2012 budget?

Expansion of in-demand programs (Immersion, Pre-K)

Early Childhood

Keeping Gifted Services Programs and Services

Teacher support/development/pay

Local school control – promoting excellent ideas/diverse ideas at the individual school level

I'd like to know more about how the recommendations for cuts last year were or were not implemented. How can last year's suggestions and subsequent cuts help us with the next round of cut recommendations?

Resource allocation

Technology support

Writing Program

Access to TJ

Increase graduation rate (reduce dropouts)

Continue to fund areas that differentiate schools

Preserve class size

Tying academic results to school resources (math, reading resource teachers)

4. Where should APS focus its resources in FY 2012?

Keeping our higher level of staffing vs. Virginia's Standards of Quality

Early Childhood and elementary where you learn to read = read to learn thereafter

5. Do you have any cost-neutral ideas for changes in APS Programs for FY 2012?

Expand pre-school (tuition-earning) programs to capture more of the full-fee paying families who are so interested in the Pre-K Montessori program.

Professional development – we put out a lot but could make money on it. Hire big-name speakers/programs. Host here and charge for participation. We'd have more talented teachers to boot. Examples: Responsive Classroom I/II, Conscious Discipline I/II, Kagan Cooperative Learning, Brain Gym

Improve communication

APS provide professional certification classes as a money-making operation

Increase ability grouping in all programs

Opt out for 6<sup>th</sup> grade reading

Empowering schools to make their own decision underlies into Exemplary Programs (?????????)

Empowering schools to make local decisions

6. If necessary, where would you make reductions for FY 2012?

How much money could be saved by trimming benefits (such as free Adult Ed classes for employees, reduced fees for using County rec facilities) from staff members?

What about freezing salary increases?

Reduce or restructure FLES

Increase class size

None! Raise taxes

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