

Your School Board



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Residents who wish to meet with a Board member may do so on a walk-in basis during Open Office Hours on Monday from 5-7 p.m. on days when school is in session. School Board members can also meet by appointment with small groups of individuals to discuss issues or positions. If Monday is a holiday, Open Office Hours are held the following Tuesday from 8:30-11:30 a.m.

School Board Meetings:

Arlington School Board meeting dates, times, agendas and other information are available online at www.apsva.us/schoolboard.

Continuing Progress in the New Year

by Dr. Pat Murphy, Superintendent

Happy New Year! Although 2016 is just getting started, we are nearly halfway through another school year. We have so many academic successes to be proud of as we reflect on the past 12 months. On this page, you'll see our latest infographic highlighting much of our recent progress and academic success. In the past year, our Virginia Standards of Learning (SOL) test scores have reached an all-time high, and our graduation rates continue to rise, with more than 90 percent of students moving on to two- or four-year colleges. Almost three-fourths of our middle school students are completing Algebra I or Geometry by the end of middle school, which prepares them for higher level courses in high school, and 75 percent of our high school students are completing one or more college level courses like Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate and dual-enrollment classes. The *Washington Post Challenge Index* ranks APS high schools among the top 3 percent in the United States. Our students have achieved remarkable success and the high quality education they receive helps them achieve the goals they set for themselves.

As we usher in a New Year, it's not only a great time for reflection on our success but also an opportunity for new beginnings. We know this continued progress would not be possible without the tremendous investment and support we receive from the Arlington community.

A top priority of our School Board this

year is to support the needs of the whole child because we know from research that the social and emotional support students receive, both at school and through their relationships with positive and caring adults in the community, make a tremendous difference in their future success.

I want to personally invite you to take an opportunity to visit, volunteer, and engage with our students, teachers, and families. I hope you will consider the many ways you can get involved in the year ahead and share your talents and experiences to support our work in preparing our students for their future.

As a volunteer or partner, you can help student achievement and the social and emotional development of our students in school and in the community. There are many ways to become involved in positively influencing their lives – whether it's volunteering your time, donating in-kind resources, or committing your business or community organization to a long-term partnership with a school in your neighborhood. You can learn more about how to get engaged as a volunteer or partner by visiting www.apsva.us/partnerships.

Finally, student safety continues to be a top priority for us. We depend on

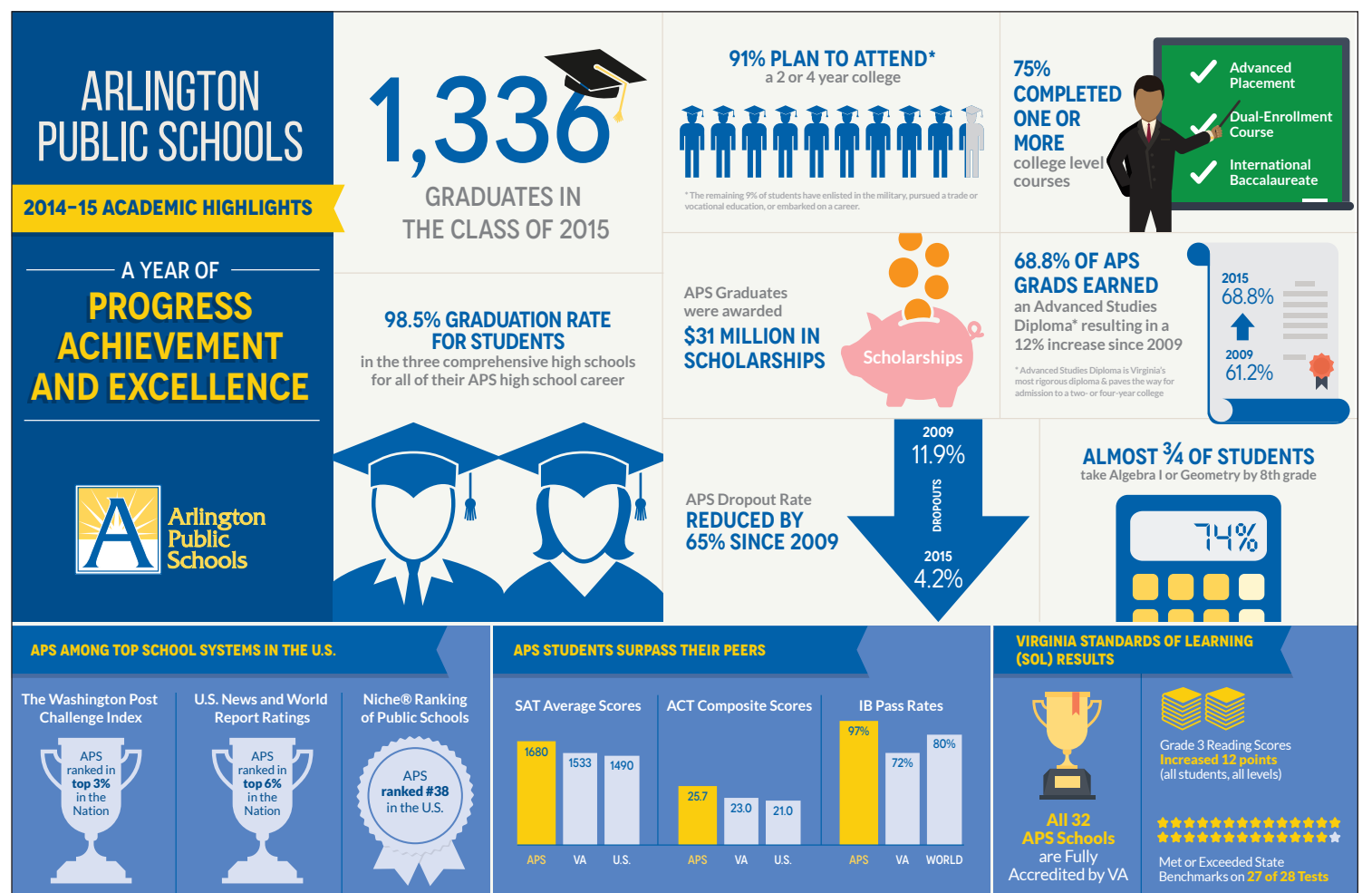


the community to help us ensure that students are safe as they travel to and from school. Families, neighbors and community members can support that effort by looking out for students as they board school buses, stopping their vehicles when stop-arms are extended, and watching for student pedestrians and bicyclists as they travel in early morning and late evening hours. We also know that winter weather presents unique challenges with transportation for all of us, so we encourage you to take extra precautions to look out for students traveling to and from school when winter weather conditions make travel difficult.

Our community places a high value on public education and providing Arlington's children with exceptional educational opportunities. On behalf of the School Board, teachers, staff, families and students, I want to thank you for your continued support.

Volunteer to Support APS

Interested in **volunteering** or **partnering** with a school? Currently, more than 500 businesses and community organizations provide over 600 partnership relationships with the schools and programs in APS. To learn more, visit www.apsva.us/volunteers or contact Dawn Smith at 703-228-2581.



NewsBRIEF

Student Video Contest Winners

Students from the Arlington Career Center won the Virginia School Boards Association's (VSBA) fourth annual student video contest, which challenged high school students across Virginia to create a 30-second video around the theme of "Student Achievement: What Does It Look Like?" This is the third year in a row that the Career Center has come in first. To watch the video, visit <https://vimeo.com/141050551>.

Williamsburg Creates Campaign Around Student with Tourette

Trevor Harris is a normal seventh grader. He loves baseball and the Washington Nationals and has an impressive collection of Rubik's Cubes. He also wants you to know that he is a really nice guy. But the Williamsburg Middle School student has Tourette Syndrome, and often feels singled out and picked on by other students.

Tourette syndrome (TS) is a neurological disorder characterized by repetitive, involuntary movements and vocalizations called "tics." Early symptoms of TS typically appear between the ages of 3 and 9. It is estimated that 200,000 Americans have the most severe form of TS, and as many as one in 100 exhibit milder and less complex symptoms such as chronic motor or vocal tics.

As part of Bullying Prevention Month, the Williamsburg counseling staff produced a PSA called "Accept Tourette," and also developed a school-wide activity based upon the video, stressing empathy and tolerance. "Trevor was new to APS last year," said seventh grade counselor Elise Kenney. "We wanted to support Trevor's transition to Williamsburg."

The idea for the PSA and campaign was Harris's. "He is an amazing self-advocate and believes that students and staff simply need to see and hear from him to understand Tourette, and, therefore, him. I collaborated with journalism teacher Jeff Schonfeld and we first showed the video last year," said Kenney.

For more on this project, visit www.apsva.us/tourette.



Proposed Arlington Tech to Provide Career-Focused Learning

Pending budget approval, Arlington Tech is a new, dynamic program that will be launched at the Career Center next year. The program is centered on project-based learning, and students will apply interdisciplinary academic knowledge to skills developed through Career and Technical Education (CTE) classes.

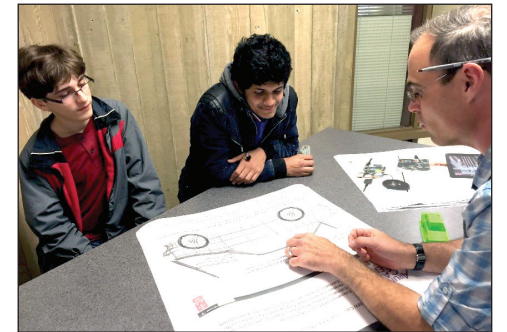
The professional learning environment at Arlington Tech will provide students with real-world connections including:

- Work-Based Internships and Apprenticeships
- An all-day, full-time high school program
- Opportunities for industry certifications
- Hands-on learning in high demand STEM-related careers
- Earning college credits through dual enrollment courses

Students will put theory into action as they apply core academic knowledge and CTE skills to collaboratively solve real-world problems on local and global levels. Students can explore and become certified in a variety of CTE programs, which will allow entry into a range of professional careers upon exiting high school.

Sustainable Technology, TV and Video Production, Fabrication Lab access, Automotive Collision Repair and thematic projects around the school focus on the 21st Century workplace. Innovative design with technology and collaboration are the hallmarks of this program.

Arlington Tech will also allow students to get a jump start on college by earning college credits through dual enrolled academic and STEM-related courses in



Engineering and IT/Digital Media.

If funded in next year's budget, Arlington Tech will accept 40 students during the 2016-17 school year. For more information on the application process and enrollment criteria, visit www.apsva.us/careercenter.

Preparing for 30,000 Students by 2021

In the most recent enrollment projections, APS is expected to exceed 30,000 students by the fall of 2021. The School Board recently made several decisions to address this rapid growth.

Wilson Concept Design

The new building at the Wilson site will include space for the H-B Woodlawn, Stratford, ESOL/HILT and Asperger's programs. The programs will share a cafeteria, clinic, gymnasium, library and auditorium. Staff presented architect's renderings of a terraced building design with courtyards and outdoor recreational spaces.

Stratford Concept Design

The Board adopted the concept design for the renovation and addition at the Stratford building, which is scheduled to open as a neighborhood middle school in 2019.

The middle school is being planned to accommodate 1,000 students, provide 144 parking spaces, and include traffic and safety improvements. The design will leave the historic building intact and maintain the historic south facade. In addition, up to \$250,000 additional funding will be made available to provide commemorative artwork/interpretation and signage regarding the historic significance of the Stratford Building, to be developed in collaboration with senior community leaders.

Stratford Historic Designation

On December 8, the School Board voted unanimously to direct the Superintendent to collaborate with the County Manager to develop designation language and design guidelines for pursuit of local historic

MORE Seats for Students

district designation of the Stratford Building. The Stratford building was the location of the former Stratford Junior High School, the first public school in Virginia to be racially integrated, in 1959. The School Board requested that the design guidelines and process balance the importance of honoring the events of 1959 with the School Board's current obligation to expand building capacity.

Recommended Site for New Neighborhood Elementary School in South Arlington

Thomas Jefferson was approved by the School Board as the site for a new 725-seat neighborhood elementary school in South Arlington. In addition, pending County Board approval of the Jefferson site, the School Board directed that individual meetings be held with Henry Elementary School, the Montessori Program at Drew, and Drew Model School by March 2016 to discuss possible next steps. A recommendation will be brought to the School Board by March 17 regarding the move of Henry to the new site at Jefferson, the relocation of the Montessori Program at Drew to the old Henry Elementary School building, and the transition of Drew to a stand-alone school.

Mark Your Calendars

JANUARY

JAN 17 **47th Annual Tribute to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.**
5-6:30 p.m., Wakefield High School

JAN 18 **Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Day**
No School for Students

JAN 19 **Kindergarten Information Night**
7 p.m., Washington-Lee High School
(Snow Date: Feb 8)

JAN 22 **Last Day to Apply to Secondary Schools and H-B Woodlawn**

FEBRUARY

FEB 1 **Timeframe to Apply to Countywide Elementary Schools Through April 15**

FEB 12 **Summer Activities Fair**
6-9 p.m., Jefferson Community Center
(Snow Date: Feb 19)

FEB 15 **Presidents Day**
No School for Students

FEB 25 **Superintendent Presents FY 2017 Proposed Budget**

To view the complete calendar, visit: www.apsva.us/calendar

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