

ARLINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Joint School Board/County Board Work Session
January 24, 2017

Item C-1-d

The Arlington School Board convened on Tuesday, January 24, 2017 at 5:04 PM at 2100 Clarendon Blvd., Arlington, VA.

Present were:

School Board

Nancy Van Doren, Chair
Barbara Kanninen, Vice Chair
Reid Goldstein, Member
James Lander, Member
Tannia Talento, Member
Dr. Patrick K. Murphy, Superintendent
Melanie Elliott, Clerk

County Board

Jay Fisette, Chairman
Katie Cristol, Vice Chair
Christian Dorsey, Member
Libby Garvey, Member
John Vihstadt, Member
Mark Schwartz, County Manager
Hope Halleck, Clerk

Also present were:

Raj Adusumilli, Assistant Superintendent, Information Services
John Chadwick, Assistant Superintendent, Facilities and Operations
Cintia Johnson, Assistant Superintendent, Administrative Services
Leslie Peterson, Assistant Superintendent, Finance and Management
Dr. Kristi Murphy, Interim Assistant Superintendent, Human Resources
Tara Natrass, Assistant Superintendent, Instruction
Lisa Stengle, Director, Planning and Evaluation
Lionel White, Director, Facilities Planning
Zach Larnard, Planner
Elizabeth Hardy, Urban Planner, County

1. Opening Remarks

Mr. Fisette called the meeting to order and briefly reviewed the agenda, noting that this continues the jointly supported Facilities Study process. Ms. Van Doren welcomed attendees and appreciated the collaboration between the two Boards.

2. Review of Community Facilities Study Phase II Consultant Study Regarding Forecast and Projection Process – Elizabeth Hardy, Urban Planner, County

After highlighting the purpose and charge of the Community Facilities Study (CFS), Ms. Elizabeth Hardy presented a review of the consultant Phase I study of the forecast and projection processes used by the County and by Arlington Public Schools. The study confirmed the validity of the projections methods being used, confirming the need for two different methodologies and projections, and also recommended improvements for data sharing, collaboration, trend monitoring and methodology.

In Phase II, the consultants looked at CFS recommendations to develop more detailed student generation factors (SGFs) and to determine if the County population forecast can be augmented to project births and population by age group. Ms. Hardy explained how SGFs are defined and applied to housing types to estimate future students and to monitor trends. She reviewed key findings of the analysis, sharing data on the housing supply and students generated by housing type. After confirming that 75% of the student increase between 2010 and 2015 came from existing housing, Ms. Hardy shared the overall breakdown of SGFs, affirming that most students come from single family homes.

Ms. Hardy then reviewed research on whether the population forecast can be augmented to project births and population by age group. Key findings included that, by 2030, Arlington will have reached the peak in births and those under age 15; using a component model to project births will enhance long-term projections; and several data points can be monitored to add a qualitative element to forecasts and projections. Ms. Hardy described the component model, which incorporates natural increase and net migration in measuring population change. She shared data on projected population by age groups and on projected births using the component model, and described how projected births are used to inform APS enrollment projections. In closing she reviewed suggested data points to monitor which will add a qualitative element to data generated. The consultants also recommend implementing a data sharing agreement between Arlington County and APS.

3. Questions and Discussion

Staff responded to questions, confirming that “new housing” refers to both building on empty lots and new structures that replace existing homes. The group discussed how population migration data is used and how many school aged children residing in the county attend APS. Staff confirmed this is currently calculated using census data, and in 2010 was found to be 90%. Dr. Murphy agreed to provide data on home schooled students, and the group discussed the APS residency verification process, as well as how school boundaries are influenced by projections. Dr. Murphy shared that the birth to kindergarten ratio in 2011 was 70%, up from 55% in previous years. He also confirmed that while incoming classes are not continuing the recent pattern of growth, outgoing classes are significant smaller, so enrollment will continue to increase for several years. Ms. Hardy provided information on the County population estimates and agreed to work with the Schools to share data that will inform projections for both entities.

Other topics discussed were the impact of the local economy on enrollment, and if the number of households with school-aged children has changed over time. Staff are working to see if this can be determined and how it relates to the growing enrollment. Ms. Van Doren cautioned that there are many unknowns that affect enrollment, so it is important to understand projections can change. Board members were curious about research that tracks changes in housing choices as population groups mature. Ms. Hardy confirmed staff continually tracks data and uses it to adjust the models used for projections regularly. Staff agreed to see if data is available on housing generation factors in other cities to compare to Arlington, and Board members commented on recent trends, such as housing with fewer bedrooms. The group considered whether housing stock can be analyzed by other factors, such as committed affordables versus market rate, to see if these influence the SGF.

Looking forward, Dr. Murphy shared the APS 3-5 Year Plan that outlines initiatives to respond to growing enrollment. He confirmed the plan will be reviewed and adjusted as projections change. Mr. Dorsey recognized the importance of investments that meet the needs of the community, with facilities and plans that are flexible and adaptable. Ms. Cristol described factors the County Board considers when looking at new development, and the group agreed to work together to ensure that APS is informed of development plans so projections can be adjusted. The Boards recognized that some development in the County is by right, so the County Board has no control over the projects; however, County staff does track these projects to inform projections. Additional areas for further exploration include tracking single family housing turnover, mixed income projects and how development affects neighborhoods. The group briefly discussed state generated population projections, and there was some concern about accuracy of those projections that may negatively impact the County.

In closing, the Boards recognized that there is some concern in the community about too much development. Mr. Schwartz reassured the Boards that both the County and APS are doing a good job tracking growth, and are working together to improve processes and results. Mr. Fisette echoed the importance of collaboration and sharing information and to the continued response to recommendations of the CFS. Ms. Van Doren looked forward to continued collaboration, and reiterated that the numbers being generated are accurate and projections are strong. She looked forward to the work of the Joint Facilities Advisory Commission to help both APS and the County continue to address the needs of the growing population and school enrollment. Mr. Fisette and Ms. Van Doren then thanked all participants and attendees.

The meeting adjourned 8:02 PM.

ATTEST:

Melanie Elliott, Clerk
Arlington School Board

Nancy Van Doren, Chair
Arlington School Board