



School Board's FY 2020 Budget Direction

Arlington Public Schools is an excellent school system and the School Board is committed to continuing to provide a high-quality education to our students. The School Board directs the Superintendent to prepare an FY 2020 budget that maintains our 27,500+ student school system and ensures long-term sustainability.

Arlington Public Schools faces cost pressures due to ongoing student enrollment growth, debt service, and staff compensation. The opening of five new schools/programs in Fall 2019 will increase baseline operating costs significantly. The School Board is strongly committed to our ongoing initiatives and investments to support the whole child and 21st Century learning. We request and are hopeful that, as budget deliberations begin, funding for APS's critical needs will be a top priority for the County.

The School Board is also focused on the need to ensure long-term efficiency and sustainability. The School Board therefore directs the Superintendent to:

- Present a budget that is consistent with APS's Mission, Vision, Core Values and Strategic Plan with a continued emphasis on the School Board's priority to support the whole child.
- Include a step increase for eligible employees, consistent with School Board policy and the Strategic Plan goal to have an engaged workforce. The budget should also include the final year of the phase-in plan to increase the salaries of positions identified in the compensation study as being under market.
- Include full funding to support the on-time opening of five new schools/programs in Fall 2019 and the on-going funding for those five schools.
- Include funding to support the growth of our 27,500+ student system.
- Align funding for new initiatives and expenses to the School Board's 2018-2024 Strategic Plan.
- If possible,
 - restore all class sizes that were maintained with one-time funds in FY 2019;
 - restore other items that were maintained with one-time funds in FY 2019; and
 - continue the implementation of critical whole-child initiatives begun in the FY 2017 and FY 2018 budgets.
- Present a needs-based budget with tiers for cuts to consider if funding is not met.

The Superintendent is further directed to:

- Review all budget categories to identify potential efficiencies and cost savings, including the savings from School Board decisions in the FY 2019 budget.
- Explore longer-term strategies for efficiencies, such as collaboration with the County on services and service fees.
- Present a transparent budget that provides details for significant changes in a major expenditure category (salaries, benefits, purchased services, etc.).
- Consider recommendations from the 2017-18 citizen advisory council reports, program evaluations, internal audits, and other relevant reports.
- Explore increases in revenue, including a review of all APS fees.
- Consider reserve funds for one-time costs in FY20 in accordance with School Board practice.
- Provide three-year forecasts of revenues and expenditures to gauge long-term financial sustainability.
- Ensure that APS complies with all federal, state and local laws.
- Include funding for budget studies that analyze and produce recommendations to create efficiencies and reduce per pupil costs.