

ARLINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
School Board Budget Work Session #3

Item C-1-b

The Arlington School Board convened on Tuesday, March 19, 2019 at 7:05 PM at 2110 Washington Blvd., Arlington, Virginia.

Present were:

Reid Goldstein, Chair
Tannia Talento, Vice Chair
Barbara Kanninen, Member
Monique O’Grady, Member
Nancy Van Doren, Member
Melanie Elliott, Clerk

Also present were:

Dr. Patrick K. Murphy, Superintendent
Raj Adusumilli, Assistant Superintendent, Information Services
Leslie Peterson, Assistant Superintendent, Finance and Management
Erin Wales-Smith, Interim Assistant Superintendent, Human Resources
Lisa Stengle, Executive Director, Planning and Evaluation
Regina Van Horne, Assistant Director, Evaluation
Brianna Cobbins, Director of Employee Relations
Corey Dotson, Talent Acquisition Coordinator
Michael Frickel, Talent Acquisition Coordinator

Mr. Goldstein called the meeting to order and attendees were introduced. He reviewed the agenda, the budget question/response process, and the County Board budget calendar.

Department Budget Reviews

Planning & Evaluation (P&E)

Ms. Stengle presented a department and staff overview, describing services provided and areas of focus for P&E. After reviewing the department’s projects and initiatives, she confirmed they also provide support to other departments and to County initiatives. Ms. Van Horne described the work of the Evaluation Office, including evaluations, surveys, research and process improvements. Ms. Stengle then provided an overview of the Engage web page managed by P&E, and summarized collaboration with the County. Next, Ms. Stengle and Ms. Van Horne presented an overview of the current budget and highlighted new funding in the proposed budget. Ms. Stengle then summarized proposed budget reductions, including decreased funding for evaluation costs, eliminating the Hanover research subscription, and reducing consultant fees.

Responding to questions, staff confirmed that program evaluations underway, including for Special Education and ESOL/HILT, will be completed even with reduced funding, and explained how future evaluations will be managed. Staff also described the impact that proposed reductions

will have on program evaluations and other P&E functions. Staff also clarified how consultants are used for evaluations, and the Board encouraged working in-house when possible.

Human Resources

Ms. Wales-Smith presented an overview of services provided, staffing, and initiatives and performance indicators for Human Services. She also reviewed the department budget, summarized proposed new funding which includes \$50,000 for software to manage employee contracts. She then reviewed the proposed reductions included in Tiers 2 and 3.

Staff responded to questions, describing the impact of the proposed reductions and how the new funding will be used. The group discussed the effect of proposed reductions on implementation of the Strategic Plan in terms of performance indicators for an engaged workforce. Long-term and ongoing evaluation of Human Resources services was also discussed. Staff provided clarifying information about proposed reductions related to technology, front desk staffing, and other HR functions. The group also briefly discussed professional training available to administrators.

Compensation

Ms. Peterson presented a brief overview of compensation in APS, including historical information and the currently proposed compensation. She shared a 5-year comparison of compensation in Arlington and 5 other local jurisdictions. She also provided a comparison of salary scales and earnings over years at the Bachelor, Master and Doctorate levels, noting how Arlington ranks compared to the other local jurisdictions.

The group discussed how to assess whether the pay scale could be restructured to better address student instructional needs. In response to a request, staff agreed to provide similar compensation information on the District of Columbia staff pay scales.

Ms. Peterson then reviewed the Washington Area Boards of Education (WABE) compensation data which showed how Arlington compares to the other jurisdictions. She also described how benefit costs are calculated for vacancies or reductions in force. She then shared data on the T-scale lane and step distribution for APS staff.

Several options for compensation increases were then presented. The first option was for a Step increase for a total of \$10.7 million. Ms. Peterson noted that 24% of staff would not receive an increase with this option. The second option was a Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) of 1% with a cost of \$13.5 million, and provides an increase to all employees, including hourly employees. The third option, proposed by the Arlington Education Association, was to provide a COLA based on the Social Security adjustment, or a market rate adjustment based on pay scale, in addition to a STEP increase. Ms. Peterson then described market rate adjustments APS has implemented over the past few years and explained the parameters to take advantage of additional state funding that has become available.

The next option shared was a Step and a COLA only for the employees at the top of scale or on longevity, for a total of \$5.2 million. Ms. Peterson noted this option results in uneven increases within the longevity steps. She also provided background information about previous COLAs

given to top of scale employees, and how that resulted in a structural imbalance. Four additional options were shared that provided Steps or COLAs for select scales or longevity steps, as well as an option to provide only a one-time bonus. A final hypothetical option that would provide all scales with some form of compensation increase and would address some of the imbalance the scales was presented. In closing, Ms. Peterson reviewed how this option would affect how APS compensation compares to the other local jurisdictions.

In closing, Dr. Murphy confirmed that these options were presented for Board consideration, and he stated his interest in providing some compensation for all staff. He also stated his support for providing compensation that keeps APS competitive, and commented on the importance of investing in staff. Board members thanked staff for the comprehensive information provided.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 9:50 PM.

ATTEST:

Melanie Elliott, Clerk
Arlington School Board

Reid Goldstein, Chair
Arlington School Board