

Instructional Programs and Pathways (IPP)

Community Questionnaire – February 2021

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Throughout the 2020-21 school year, the Department of Teaching and Learning is leading a visioning process for the PreK to Adult Instructional Programs and Pathways (IPP). As part of this process, staff have engaged and solicited feedback from the community in several ways. One way was through administration of a community questionnaire that was open from February 16 - 28, 2021. The questionnaire was available in the five main languages of APS and was disseminated through multiple channels including School Talk, Engage Ambassador update, Community Engagement opportunities, updates, Friday5, PTA's, APS Advisory Committees, and Virtual Community Meetings. All communications linked to the IPP webpage at Engage with APS.

There were 490 respondents to the questionnaire. The responses provide some helpful feedback, yet needs to be interpreted with caution since it is not representative of the APS community. The majority, 85%, were Parents/Guardians of APS students; and the remaining 15% were either parents of a child not yet enrolled in APS, APS Staff members, APS students and/or Arlington residents without children enrolled in APS. Respondents spanned across thirty-nine school communities though participation rates varied: Arlington Traditional, Montessori Public School of Arlington, and Gunston accounted for 44% of all respondents. 21 schools had 10 or more respondents and the remaining 18 schools had nine or fewer respondents. Schools with the highest levels of participation included Arlington Traditional, Montessori Public School of Arlington, Gunston, Thomas Jefferson Middle School, Wakefield, Alice West Fleet, McKinley, Washington-Liberty, Yorktown, Arlington Career Center, H-B Woodlawn, Swanson, Claremont and Key, respectively.

The questionnaire provided community members an opportunity to indicate their level of support or non-support on the following four ideas:

- 1) Realign, co-locate or combine some APS programs
- 2) Create a Grade K-8 school by realigning programs when it is feasible to fund through the CIP
- 3) Create a virtual learning program for secondary students (Grade 6-12)
- 4) Make programs within neighborhood secondary schools available as countywide options for students when operationally feasible (building capacity, transportation, etc.).

One of the driving forces in the decision to obtain feedback on general principles/ideas versus the specific suggestions was to obtain community feedback that had broader applicability that would help inform not only the suggestions in this visioning process but future visioning processes.

For each of the questions, participants had the following response options: I strongly support, I support, I support some but not all, I do not support, I don't know, or I have no opinion. Participants also had an opportunity to share any questions or comments in a comment box for each of the topics and overall.

The following analysis is available in the attached report:

- Respondents
 - Tables 1-3 show the distribution of responses by school, affiliation with APS, and by school level.
- Overall Feedback
 - Table 4 – Support or non-support for each proposal.
 - Tables 5-8 – Analysis of short responses for each proposal.

- Results by School Type
 - Tables 9-13 – Parents/Guardians
 - Tables 14-18 – APS Staff
- Additional Comments
 - Table 19

Below is a summary of the attached report.

1) Realign, co-locate or combine some APS programs

- Overall: 43% of respondents supported or strongly supported, 25% supported some, but not all; 13% did not support; 11% had no opinion and 8% said they didn't know.
- Parents and Staff responded similarly across school levels (Elementary, Middle, High) with a few exceptions amongst staff.
 - Elementary Neighborhood School Staff – similar levels of support as above, 0% did not support, 20% had no opinion
 - Elementary Option School Staff –62%, strongly support or support, 0% did not support
 - Middle School Staff – 57% strongly support or support, 29% didn't know
 - High School Staff –56%, strongly support or support
- Some of the most frequent questions and comments in the open-ended responses included:
 - Request for more information/details regarding the APS programs being considered
 - Support for continuing the Arlington Traditional model
 - Maintaining current classes and programs at the Career Center
 - Focus on neighborhood schools
 - Support for balanced decisions to serve all APS schools.

2) Create a Grade K-8 school by realigning programs when it is feasible to fund through the CIP

- Overall: 42% of participants supported or strongly supported, 11% supported some, but not all; 25% did not support; 14% had no opinion and 8% said they didn't know.
- Parents and Staff responded similarly across school levels (Elementary, Middle, High) with a few exceptions amongst staff.
 - Elementary Neighborhood School Staff- similar levels of support as above but only 7% did not support, 26% had no opinion, 19% didn't know
 - Elementary Option School staff- 69%, strongly supported or supported, 8% did not support, 23% did not know
 - Middle School Staff- similar levels of support and non-support as above but 29% said they didn't know
- Some of the most frequent questions and comments in the open-ended responses included:
 - Support for the Montessori program
 - Request for more information/details regarding the APS programs being considered
 - Concerns that students in a K-8 program are too different developmentally
 - Focus on school capacity/overcrowding
 - Expand the traditional model
 - Support for a K-8 Immersion program.

- 3) Create a virtual learning program for secondary students (Grade 6-12).
- Overall: 42% of participants supported or strongly supported, 15% supported some, but not all; 33% did not support; 7% had no opinion and 4% said they didn't know.
 - Parents and Staff responded similarly across school levels (Elementary, Middle, High). Staff responses across levels did show higher levels of support with just under 2/3 of staff strongly supporting or supporting this idea and lower levels of non-support.
 - Some of the most frequent questions and comments in the open-ended responses included:
 - Using an existing program (e.g. Virtual Virginia) for students that want a virtual program
 - Support for a virtual program
 - Do not support a virtual program
 - Concerns about student social-emotional well-being
 - Virtual program is not a solution for capacity issues
 - More information/details about a virtual program needed
- 4) Make programs within neighborhood secondary schools available as countywide options for students when operationally feasible (building capacity, transportation, etc.).
- Overall: 73% of participants supported or strongly supported, 11% supported some, but not all; 11% did not support; 7% had no opinion and 3% said they didn't know.
 - Parents and Staff responded similarly across school levels (Elementary, Middle, High) with a few exceptions amongst staff.
 - Elementary Neighborhood School Staff- similar levels of support and non-support as above but 26% had no opinion
 - Elementary Option School Staff- 93% strongly support or support
 - Middle School staff – 85% strongly support or support
 - Some of the most frequent questions and comments in the open-ended responses included:
 - Support for this suggestion
 - Request for more information/details regarding suggestion
 - Concerns about equal access and diversity of option programs
 - Do not support suggestion
 - Support suggestions to increase diversity in option programs
 - Concerns about cost of busing

5) Additional Comments and Questions (Final Question)

Below is a summary of the most frequent comments and questions (shared by 5 or more respondents)

- Support for and expansion of Arlington Traditional School
- Feedback on survey process and format
- More information/details about the IPP needed
- Focus on capacity, overcrowding, and infrastructure
- Support for neighborhood schools
- Concerns about the Key move to ATS
- Does not support an APS virtual program
- Support for and expansion of Montessori program
- Support virtual school option
- Co-locate Montessori program
- Focus on inequities between North Arlington and South Arlington
- Boundaries and program locations should focus on increasing diversity
- Concerns with quality of virtual instruction
- Expand immersion program
- Support for or expansion of choice programs – general
- Support for Arlington Tech