

ARLINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
School Board Meeting
May 6, 2021

Item D-1-a

The Arlington School Board convened on Thursday, May 6, 2021 at 7:05 PM at 2110 Washington Blvd., Arlington, Virginia.¹

Present were:

Monique O’Grady, Chair
Barbara Kanninen, Vice Chair
Cristina Diaz-Torres, Member
Reid Goldstein, Member
David Priddy, Member
Melanie Elliott, Clerk

Also present were:

Dr. Francisco Durán, Superintendent
Raj Adusumilli, Assistant Superintendent, Information Services
Jeannette Allen, Interim Assistant Superintendent, Administrative Services
Catherine Ashby, Assistant Superintendent, School and Community Relations
Marcus Gregory, Assistant Superintendent, Facilities and Operations
Bridget Loft, Assistant Superintendent, Teaching and Learning
Leslie Peterson, Assistant Superintendent, Finance and Management
Dan Redding, Assistant Superintendent, Human Resources
Lisa Stengle, Executive Director, Planning and Evaluation
Arron Gregory, Chief Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Officer
Brian Stockton, Chief of Staff
Cathy Lin, Director, Facilities and Operations
Jeff Chambers, Director, Design and Construction
Lori Silver, Supervisor, Office of English/Language Arts

A. CALL TO ORDER

B. REGULAR MEETING OPENING:

1. Call to Order
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. **Citizen Comment on Agenda and Non-Agenda Items:**

The following speakers addressed the Board concerning systemic racism and encouraging efforts to combat racism in Arlington Public Schools. Some speakers referenced a racist incident at a recent sporting event at a school and expressed concerns about the response from those in authority:

Amanda Lukoff, parent

Whytni Kernodle, Black Parents of Arlington
Lydia Hatcher, parent

The following speakers addressed the Board, stating concerns about virtual learning and asking that students be brought back to school full time. Some speakers shared concerns about learning loss and challenges their children have faced:

Caroline Callen, student
Reade Bushe, parent
Bryan Walsh, parent
Emily Lozano, parent and child
Rafael Bacares, parent

The following speakers also addressed the Board, supporting the decision to continue providing families the option to continue with virtual learning, describing the challenges and reasons families have chosen to continue with virtual learning:

Emily Vincent, parent
Tannia Talento, Arlington Schools Hispanic Parent Association
Janeth Valenzuela, parent
Gabriela Uro, Arlington Schools Hispanic Parent Association

The following speakers also addressed the Board:

Deanna Caputo, parent: stating concerns about the process for contact tracing and quarantining of students in APS schools.

Michael Coughlin, staff: asking to keep funding for the English Learner Secondary Specialist in the proposed budget.

Katie Pegoraro, parent: speaking on equity and the differences between in person and virtual learning.

The following speakers also addressed the Board, asking for better compensation in the SY 2021 budget:

Brandon Durlinger, teacher
Josh Folb, Arlington Education Association
Ingrid Gant, Arlington Education Association President

4. Recognition

The Board recognized the 2021 Honored Citizens, Cloe Chin, Paula Cohen and Bethany Sutton for their dedication and commitment to supporting Arlington Public Schools, students and families.

5. Announcements

- *May 13, 2021 Virtual Closed Meeting, 5:15 PM*
- *May 13, 2021 Committee of the Whole Meeting, 6:30 PM*
- *May 17, 2021 Virtual School Board Policy Subcommittee Meeting, 2 PM*

5. Superintendent’s Announcements and Updates

Dr. Durán acknowledged several recognitions and events such as School Lunch Hero Day, Employee Appreciation Month, and Asian and Pacific American Heritage Month. He also announced that May is Mental Health Awareness month. In closing, he gave an update on the progress on the School Board Action Plan, including work being done on the Instructional Programs and Pathways Initiative.

C. CONSENT AGENDA: (8:22 PM)

Dr. Kanninen moved to adopt the consent agenda, seconded by Ms. Diaz-Torres. The motion was adopted in a vote of 5 – 0. The voting record is as follows: Ms. Diaz-Torres – Aye; Mr. Goldstein – Aye; Dr. Kanninen – Aye; Ms. O’Grady – Aye; and Mr. Priddy – Aye. The following items or actions were approved as a part of consent:

1. Minutes: REMOVED FROM AGENDA

2. Personnel Actions:

P/E-SCALE PERSONNEL

- 1 Appointment
- 4 Reorganization and Reclassification Requests
- Classification Specification – Chief Operating Officer
- Classification Specification – Chief Academic Officer
- Classification Specification – Chief of School Support
- Classification Specification – Director of English Learner Services

T-SCALE PERSONNEL

- 2 Changes In Position/Salary
- 20 Resignations
- 9 Retirements

A-SCALE PERSONNEL

- 1 Appointment
- 3 Resignations
- 1 Retirement

SUPPORT SERVICES PERSONNEL

- 3 Appointments
- 2 Changes In Position/Salary
- 2 Resignations
- 1 Retirement

3. Professional Learning Brief

Ms. O’Grady confirmed that under consent, the Board accepted the Professional Learning Brief. She also announced that the Board appointed Verlese Gaither as Administrator of Alternative Programs in the Department of Teaching and Learning.

D. MONITORING ITEMS: (8:25 PM)

1. School Year 2020-2021 Update

Dr. Durán presented the update, reviewing health and operational metrics and information on vaccinations. He also provided information on safety measures and planning for returning students to school in the fall. Data on current enrollment by instructional model and data on the family selection process underway for the 2021-2022 school year were also presented. In closing, Dr. Durán provided brief updates on instruction in terms of SOL testing and on plans for summer school.

In response to Board questions, staff provided information about contact tracing, pop-up clinics and vaccinations for students and families, extended day options for summer school, and transportation plans for the fall. Also discussed were family selection process results and options to change models, future plans for distance learning opportunities, and COVID testing for students and families.

2. English/Language Arts (ELA) and Literacy Update: (8:59 PM)

Ms. Silver provided an overview of the ELA Office and shared highlights of their efforts, including training in the Historically Responsive Literacy Framework and strategically planning for SY 2021-22. She presented data from PALS, SOL assessments, Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS), and the Reading Inventory. Ms. Silver then shared plans for moving forward, including opportunities for professional development and collaboration with other instructional offices. Plans also include engaging in long-range strategic planning, strengthening Tier 1 instruction, advocating for literacy screeners and assessments, and examining ELA resources. In closing, Ms. Silver reviewed opportunities for improvement such as addressing the opportunity gap.

Dr. Durán appreciated the report and stressed the need to focus on strengthening literacy. Ms. Silver responded to questions on topics such as the responsive literacy framework, efforts to address learning loss due to the pandemic, plans for managing resources and new materials, and using the DIBELS data. Also discussed was the importance of using data to inform decisions, ensuring funding for literacy support, providing support and training to staff, and addressing older learners’ needs.

E. ACTION ITEMS: (9:49 PM)

1. FY 2022 Final Budget

Before presenting the proposed budget, Ms. Peterson shared an update on how staff and the Superintendent recommend looking at the impact of the pandemic on

enrollment. Responding to a Board request, Ms. Peterson presented projections adjustments from the APS enrollment consultant that reflect the enrollment drop that occurred during the pandemic. Dr. Durán then spoke to staff's belief that reducing staffing based on these revised projections would not be the best way forward. He also noted that if the Board does not accept his current recommendation, he asked that they use the data from the consultant.

Ms. Peterson then summarized the FY 2022 budget development and outlined changes that have been made, including updates from the Superintendent as well as additions and reductions requested by the Board. Staff then responded to questions about aspects of the proposed budget, including the impact of a reduction in copiers on instruction.

Mr. Goldstein made the following motion:

I move that the Arlington School Board adopt its Fiscal Year 2022 School Board Budget totaling \$698,834,346. The School Board's FY 2022 budget requires an ongoing County Transfer of \$527,096,321, a one-time County Transfer of \$2,817,940, a Beginning Balance or Carry Forward of \$3,500,000, and funding from Reserves of \$19,560,386, broken into the following:

- 1. The School Operating Fund at a total of \$582,626,307, requiring an ongoing County transfer of \$455,090,420, a one-time County transfer of \$2,817,940, a beginning balance or carry forward of \$3,500,000, and funding from reserves of \$19,145,912.*
- 2. The Community Activities Fund at a total of \$20,481,578, requiring a County transfer of \$6,031,919.*
- 3. The Debt Service Fund at a total of \$58,367,805, requiring a County transfer of \$57,953,331 and funding from reserves of \$414,474.*
- 4. The Food and Nutrition Services Fund at a total of \$10,212,942, requiring a County transfer of \$0.*
- 5. The Capital Projects Fund at a total of \$5,688,901, requiring a County transfer of \$5,688,901.*
- 6. The Children's Services Act Fund at a total of \$4,375,000, requiring a County transfer of \$2,331,750.*
- 7. The Grants and Restricted Programs Fund at a total of \$17,081,813, requiring a County transfer of \$0.*

I further move that the Arlington School Board authorize the advance placement of purchase orders for kitchen expansion project, concrete replacement project, installation of playgrounds, indoor air quality project, installation of new synthetic fields, HVAC replacement/ rebuilds, gym floor refinishing, safety project, software

licenses, and replacement of IT devices and device cases that are funded in the adopted FY 2022 budget. These orders will be placed only after the Finance Office verifies that the funds have been designated in the School Board's adopted FY 2022 budget. These items should be neither received nor invoiced until on, or after, July 1, 2021.

The motion was seconded by Dr. Kanninen.

Dr. Kanninen moved to amend the main motion by implementing the revised enrollment projections provided by staff that reduces enrollment by 525 students resulting in a savings of \$3,447,739 and 36.90 FTEs. I further move that \$500,000 of this savings be added to the staffing contingency, thereby decreasing the amount from reserves by \$2,947,739. The motion to amend was seconded by Ms. Diaz-Torres.

Dr. Kanninen explained that her proposed amendment related to the new information on projections. She stated her concern that if enrollment is significantly lower than projections, funds allocated in the current budget for compensation would not be available for other needs. Mr. Goldstein was concerned that the projections may be significantly higher than actual enrollment, and this proposal will result in hiring teachers who may not be needed. While recognizing the uncertainty in the projections, Ms. Diaz-Torres and Mr. Priddy believed the staff proposal is a reasonable compromise, and Ms. O'Grady recognized the importance of supporting current staff.

Ms. O'Grady called for a vote and the motion to amend passed by a vote of 4 - 1, with Ms. Diaz-Torres, Mr. Priddy, Dr. Kanninen, and Ms. O'Grady in favor, and Mr. Goldstein opposed.

Ms. Diaz-Torres moved to amend the main motion by adding \$4,953,748 to implement Compensation Option 4 instead of Compensation Option 1 and funding it by increasing the amount used from reserves by \$4,953,748, seconded by Dr. Kanninen.

Ms. Diaz-Torres explained the importance of rewarding staff, especially those at the top of the pay scale, and especially in light of the difficulties staff have faced during the pandemic. Board members recognized the challenges going forward to address compensation, but felt it was important to support staff now with this additional compensation.

Ms. O'Grady called for a vote and the motion to amend passed by a vote of 5 - 0, with Ms. Diaz-Torres, Mr. Goldstein, Dr. Kanninen, Ms. O'Grady and Mr. Priddy in favor.

Dr. Kanninen moved to restore \$85,000 for copiers which will be funded by using \$85,000 from reserves, seconded by Mr. Priddy.

Mr. Goldstein stated that he believed this was not a necessary adjustment. Mr. Priddy, Ms. Diaz-Torres, and Ms. O’Grady felt this was a good investment.

Ms. O’Grady called for a vote and the motion to amend passed by a vote of 4 - 1, with Ms. Diaz-Torres, Mr. Priddy, Dr. Kanninen, and Ms. O’Grady in favor, and Mr. Goldstein opposed.

Ms. O’Grady moved to amend the main motion by adding \$8,538 to implement a \$10 per visual arts student planning factor at the middle school and funding it by increasing the amount from reserves by \$8,538. The motion was seconded by Mr. Goldstein.

Ms. O’Grady explained that this was a recommendation of the Arts Education Committee and would ensure that there is parity across the middle schools. Mr. Goldstein agreed with this recommendation and suggested looking to make a similar adjustment at the high school level in the near future.

Ms. O’Grady called for a vote and the motion to amend passed by a vote of 5 - 0, with Ms. Diaz-Torres, Mr. Goldstein, Dr. Kanninen, Ms. O’Grady and Mr. Priddy in favor.

Ms. O’Grady then called for a vote on the main motion as amended. *Mr. Goldstein moved to adopt the School Board’s FY 2022 budget as amended in the amount of \$700,933,893.*

Board members acknowledged the hard work of the staff, the Board, and the community in finalizing the budget, and appreciated the focus on education and equity, professional learning, and strengthening APS. Ms. O’Grady also appreciated and acknowledged the County’s support on the budget.

Ms. O’Grady called for a vote and the motion was adopted in a vote of 5 – 0. The voting record is as follows: Ms. Diaz-Torres – Aye; Mr. Goldstein – Aye; Dr. Kanninen – Aye; Ms. O’Grady – Aye; and Mr. Priddy – Aye.

F. INFORMATION ITEMS: (10:55 PM)

1. Superintendent’s Proposed FY 2022-2024 Capital Improvement Plan

Thanking staff for their work on this proposed Capital Improvement Plan (CIP), Dr. Durán confirmed that this plan was limited to three years, due to the uncertain financial situation.

Ms. Peterson spoke to the economic situation and the approach taken by APS and the County in preparing for this CIP and plans moving forward. She then explained how the adopted School Board CIP Direction was incorporated into the Superintendent’s Proposed CIP. She confirmed the CIP focuses on secondary seats and facility improvements, including Career Center improvements, upgrades to

kitchens, security vestibules, HVAC in schools, parking and a turf at The Heights, and replacement fields at some school sites. She also confirmed the CIP includes funding for major infrastructure projects. She then presented the chart that outlines the timeline and funding for the CIP projects.

Mr. Chambers reviewed the projects in the CIP. He shared new plans for the Career Center sites, which would convert the current Career Center building to an elementary school, add a new building for the Career Center, and use the current Montessori school site for field space. He also described the kitchen renovations, the air quality/HVAC upgrades in the proposed CIP, the plans for the parking and field at The Heights Building, and the proposed field upgrades. Mr. Chambers then provided clarifying information to respond to Board questions. To close the presentation, Ms. Stengle reviewed projections that informed development of the proposed CIP and spoke to how instruction plans and options informed the proposal. She then briefly reviewed the CIP timeline.

Recognizing that there will be an in-depth work session in the near future, the Board members agreed to hold any additional questions until that time.

2. Revisions to School Board Policies I-1.35 Resources, I-7.2.5.31 Support, Resources and Extended Time; and I-9.1 Selection of Textbooks and Other Instructional Materials (11:44 PM)

Ms. Loft presented proposed changes to the three policies. These revisions update the policy language and add references to associated APS policies, and also add clarifying information to the policies. Ms. Loft also noted that the associated policy implementation procedures will be updated as well.

Ms. Diaz-Torres thanked staff for incorporating clarifying language in Policy I-9.1. She noted that Policy I-1.35 was redundant with the Goals policy and asked staff to follow up with the best way to address this by retiring this policy.

3. Virginia School Boards Association Legislative Positions (11:50 PM)

Dr. Kanninen presented a proposed position that APS plans to submit for inclusion in the VSBA annual legislative document. This position would be to ensure statewide standards, rules and enforcement mechanisms to prevent bullying discrimination, racism and all forms of violence during interscholastic activities.

Board members and the Superintendent spoke to the importance of this proposed legislative position in ensuring the safety of students and communities throughout Virginia. Dr. Kanninen confirmed that the Board can pursue this legislation in a number of ways.

G. NEW BUSINESS: PERSONNEL ACTION

Mr. Priddy moved that the Board waive policy G-2.4 Employment and approve the resignation of one Support staff member without the designation of ‘with prejudice.’ The motion was seconded by Ms. Diaz-Torres.

Mr. Goldstein spoke to the importance of abiding by policy, and also noted that the affected employee was aware of the impact of the decision to resign with prejudice but chose to do so. He stated his belief that the Board should not take this action.

Ms. O’Grady called for a vote and the motion was adopted in a vote of 4 - 1. The voting record is as follows: Ms. Diaz-Torres – Aye; Dr. Kanninen – Aye; Ms. O’Grady – Aye; and Mr. Priddy – Aye; and Mr. Goldstein – Nay.

H. ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 12:02 AM.

ATTEST:

Melanie Elliott, Clerk
Arlington School Board

Monique O’Grady, Chair
Arlington School Board