

End of Year Report 2020-21

Budget Advisory Council
June 24, 2021

The Budget Advisory Council

- The BAC is comprised of 15 Arlingtonians from across the County, 1 student representative, and 1 liaison from the AEA.
- Our APS partner is Leslie Peterson, Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Management Services.
- Our School Board partner is Monique O'Grady.
- Collectively, we have 19 children attending APS schools, across Elementary, Middle, and High School, around the County, including the TJHSST pathway. We also have 3 children who are not yet in school, and 7, including grandchildren, who are successful graduates of APS. We also have committee members without children and whose children have previously attended APS but now attend another school.
- We bring a diverse set of experiences, perspectives, and priorities to our discussions and our recommendations.
- We have all contributed to the input and recommendations we shared in our report.

Main Activities of the BAC for 2020-2021

- Provided input on **APS policies** up for review and revision with significant financial implications (CIP policies F-1, F-7, and related PIPs)
- Offered feedback on the School Board's **FY22 Budget Direction** to the Superintendent
- Gathered and submitted ideas to the Board and Assistant Superintendent Peterson for closing the **FY21 and FY22 budget gaps** (along with other Board and Superintendent advisory committees)
- Prepared a report on the **Superintendent's Proposed FY22 Budget** for board review and consideration
- Prepared a **Year-End Report** for the Board

Recommendations Reinforced from 2020-2021

1. We recommend that APS shift to **longer term planning**, and tackle the structural issues required to close future budget deficits (with immediate focus on transportation, planning factors, administrative costs, IPP process)
2. We recommend **more measured use of reserves**
3. We recommend that APS leadership create a **longer term plan for compensation** and **review current staff role and responsibilities** before (judiciously) adding additional staff
4. We recommend Board have **frank discussions with the County** about the revenue sharing model so that we know the extent of the changes needed to close growing budget gaps
5. We recommend **longer term use of virtual schooling and classes** (for older students who opt for this path) to benefit students and ease budgets

Recommendations Reinforced from Past BAC Reports

1. We recommend **more transparency** in the budget process, for the community and the Board
2. We encourage the Superintendent and the Board **build community partnerships** aligned with APS priorities, especially closing the budget gap (e.g., Amazon, other local business to fund STEM, academic competitions, sports, field trips, and other activities under threat of being cut or eliminated)
3. We ask the Board to think about its **goals for the BAC**, and then to work with the committee to better achieve those objectives

Input for FY23 Budget Guidance

1. We recommend that we return to asking for **balanced budgets**
2. We recommend that the Board ask the Superintendent to **shift from one-year to multi-year planning** in the FY23 budget, and begin to identify areas for longer term savings
3. We recommend **more transparency in the months leading up to the budget** so that the community can digest and debate any larger issues which may be on the table in the budget process (e.g., changes to transportation, school choice)
4. We welcome Mr. Goldstein's proposal to create a **differentiated funding formula** based on school demographics, but also recognize that it needs to be done within existing budget, or with funds pre-negotiated from the County
5. We urge APS to focus on delivering **tighter enrollment forecasts**, given the downstream impact of overspending

Thank you
APS School Board, Administration,
Teachers, and Staff