

ARLINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Closed Meeting and School Board Meeting Minutes
February 3, 2022

The Arlington School Board convened on Thursday, February 3, 2022 at 5:30 PM at 2110 Washington Blvd., Arlington, Virginia.¹

Present were:

Barbara Kanninen, Chair
Reid Goldstein, Vice Chair
Cristina Diaz-Torres, Member (arrived at 5:38 PM)
Mary Kadera, Member
David Priddy, Member

Also present were:

Dr. Francisco Durán, Superintendent

A. CALL TO ORDER AND CLOSED MEETING

Dr. Kanninen called the meeting to order and *moved that the Board immediately convene in a closed meeting to discuss the performance of a public school employee, as authorized by Virginia Code §2.2-3711(A)(1)*, seconded by Ms. Kadera. The motion was adopted in a vote 4 – 0, with Mr. Goldstein, Dr. Kanninen, Ms. Kadera, and Mr. Priddy voting affirmatively. Ms. Diaz-Torres was not present at the time of the vote.

Dr. Kanninen moved to certify that pursuant to §2.2-3712(D) of the Code of Virginia to the best knowledge of each School Board member, only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements by Virginia law were discussed in the closed meeting just held, and only such public business matters as were identified in the motion convening this closed meeting were heard, discussed, or considered. The motion was seconded by Mr. Priddy and 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. Kadera – Aye; and Mr. Priddy – Aye.

Dr. Kanninen called for brief a recess at 6:55 PM, and the Board reconvened in an open session at 7:02 PM.

Also present were:

Catherine Ashby, Assistant Superintendent, School and Community Relation
Kimberley Graves, Chief of School Support
Bridget Loft, Chief Academic Officer
Dr. John Mayo, Chief Operating Officer
Jason Ottley, Interim Chief Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Officer
Christine Smith, Legal Counsel
Brian Stockton, Chief of Staff
Claudia Mercado, Clerk
Carmen Mejia, Deputy Clerk

B. REGULAR MEETING OPENING

1. Call to Order
2. Presentation of Colors: Arlington Career Center AF JROTC Cadets Corps
3. Recognitions: National Board Certified Teachers

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Ms. Nancy Routson, Teacher Evaluation Specialist, joined the Board to congratulate 14 outstanding teachers who successfully earned their National Board Certification.

C. CONSENT ITEMS (7:12 PM):

Ms. Diaz-Torres moved for adoption of the consent agenda, seconded by Mr. Priddy. The motion was adopted in a vote of 5 – 0, with Ms. Diaz-Torres, Mr. Goldstein, Dr. Kanninen, Ms. Kadera, and Mr. Priddy voting affirmatively. The following items or actions were approved as a part of consent:

1. Minutes

- C-1-a Minutes for the October 19, 2021 Closed Meeting
- C-1-b Minutes for the October 19, 2021 Work Session on Homework and Communications of Student Progress
- C-1-c Minutes for the October 22, 2021 Special School Board Policy Subcommittee
- C-1-d Minutes for the October 27, 2021 School Board Policy Subcommittee
- C-1-e Minutes for the November 9, 2021 Closed Meeting
- C-1-f Minutes for the November 12 2021 School Board Policy Subcommittee
- C-1-g Minutes for the November 30, 2021 Closed Meeting

2. Personnel Actions

P/E-SCALE

- 2 Appointments
- 1 Change In Position/Salary
- 1 Reclassification Request
 - Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Specialist

T-SCALE PERSONNEL

- 7 Appointments
- 3 Changes In Position/Salary
- 1 Resignation
- 1 Resignation (With Prejudice)
- 1 Retirement
- 2 Terminations

A-SCALE PERSONNEL

- 8 Appointments
- 2 Resignations
- 2 Retirements

SUPPORT SERVICES PERSONNEL

- 1 Appointment
- 3 Changes In Position/Salary
- 2 Resignations
- 1 Resignation (With Prejudice)
- 3 Retirements

3. Addition to the 2022-23 High School Program of Studies - Music Appreciation: History of Music Genres and Cultural Identities

4. Appointment to the Advisory Council on School Facilities and Capital Programs (FAC)

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5. Appointment to the Arlington Special Education Advisory Committee (ASEAC)

Dr. Kanninen announced that under consent, the Board approved the addition of the course Music Appreciation: History of Music Genres and Cultural Identities to the 2022-2023 High School Program of Studies. The Board appointed Rebecca Hunter as vice chair to the Advisory Council on School Facilities and Capital Programs (FAC) and Claudia Cuellar to the Arlington Special Education Advisory Committee (ASEAC). In addition, Board appointed Ms. Jennifer Gildea as the Principal of Alice West Fleet Elementary School and Mr. Andrew Spencer as the Executive Director of Transportation & Fleet Management in the Department of Facilities and Operations.

D. ANNOUNCEMENTS (7:16 PM):

1. Board Announcements:

February 5, 2022 – School Board and Superintendent Retreat, 9:30 AM, Arlington Outdoor Lab

February 9, 2022 – Virtual Policy Subcommittee Meeting, 8:30 AM

February 10, 2022 – Closed Meeting, 5:30 PM, School Board Conference Room

February 10, 2022 – Work Session on the Annual Update, 6:30 PM, Board Room

Mr. Goldstein shared about events that took place at some of his liaison schools, Arlington Traditional, Arlington Science Focus and Barcroft Elementary Schools and the Arlington Career Center.

2. Superintendent's Announcements and Updates

Dr. Durán announced that in February APS recognized Black History Month, School Board Appreciation Month, and Career & Technical Education (CTE) Month. APS also recognized National School Counseling Week and Cross Guard Appreciation Week. He presented information on the Virginia Department of Health (VDH) COVID-19 Test-to-Stay Program (TTS) launched on February 14 to allow students identified as close contacts to remain in school instead of quarantining at home. Dr. Durán congratulated the APS School Food Service employees and managers on being presented the COVID Heroes Award by the Arlington County Board for their dedication to providing healthy meals during the pandemic. He also shared that the Complete Vaccine Committee, where Board Chair Dr. Kanninen served as a liaison, was also recognized. Dr. Durán announced that APS was partnering with other school districts to host the virtual INSTRUCTION2INDUSTRY Career Expo to connect high school students with more than 100 local industry professionals from in demand career fields across Northern Virginia. Moreover, he announced that the application period for the Pre-K and elementary option school programs for the 2022-2023 school year was between February 1 and April 15, 2022. As a bright spot, the Superintendent congratulated the Washington-Liberty High School TechRise Challenge Winners, one of 57 teams nationwide to win NASA's inaugural TechRise Challenge. To conclude, he extended his deep appreciation to principals, non-instructional and Central Office staff who stepped in to teach classes and helped to ensure schools remained open during staffing shortages due to COVID-19. In an effort to address the divisive and polarizing political climate, Dr. Durán reminded the community that our teachers are among the best in the state and do an excellent job teaching the state-approved curriculum. He expressed his unabated support to teachers and staff. Dr. Durán joined partners in education across the Commonwealth to call for leaders and policy makers to continue to foster collaboration—not division—between families and schools, so that Arlington and other Virginia public schools continue to be among the best in the country.

Dr. Kanninen thanked Dr. Durán for addressing important topics and the Board joined him in supporting APS educators and students. Ms. Diaz-Torres appreciated learning about so many wonderful things happening at the schools and Ms. Kadera highly praised the National Board Certified Teachers for undergoing an extremely rigorous process and the impact the certification makes on student academic achievement.

E. PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA AND NON-AGENDA ITEMS (7:42 PM):

The following speakers shared concerns related to Transportation Services:

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Christina Childress, Transportation Services
 Kevin Carey, representative, Arlington Education Association
 Castillo Ivis, bus driver
 Crystal Harris, bus driver
 Russel Hunter, bus driver
 Charles Smith

The following speakers addressed the Board:

Marian Klymkowsky, recommending additional instructional technology coordinators and match coach allocations
 Jed Bobier, opposing the Virtual Learning Program pause
 Naisha Chinnery, parent, inquiring about faithful honesty bonds for the Superintendent and elected officials and providing notice of lawsuit related to the universal mask mandate
 Joshua Folb, opposing the Virtual Learning Program pause
 Brandon Clark, teacher, Gunston Middle School, requesting effective communication regarding COVID-19 guidance
 Reade Bush, Arlington Parents for Education, requesting literacy data and addressing learning loss
 Julie Abizaid, parent, opposing the universal mask mandate
 Christine Brittle, parent, supporting better protocols to close schools on inclement weather days
 Alison Babb, Arlington Parents for Education, addressing learning loss
 Blair Tak, parent, opposing the universal mask mandate
 Anjy Cramer, supporting teacher compensation

F. MONITORING ITEMS (8:24):

1. Educational Technology Update

Ms. Loft presented highlights of the 2020 Monitoring Report on technology learning opportunities and spoke about the shift of educational technology due to the pandemic. She spoke about internet connectivity, enhancing teachers' use of digital tools, and using technology to support the Profile of the Virginia Graduate. Ms. Loft provided an overview of Lexia Core5 and DreamBox and explained the data on technology use to support learning programs. Ms. Amy Jackson, Supervisor of the Office of Educational Technology and Programs, presented about digital learning integration and professional learning opportunities to develop a robust digital pedagogy. She also spoke about the importance of Instructional Technology Coordinators and their role to effectively support curriculum and technology integration. Furthermore, Ms. Jackson presented the budget needs to implement the work of the Office of Educational Technology.

The Board discussed personal device use, the need for additional technicians, purposeful cross-departmental professional development, and creating a systematic approach to the use of technology. Ms. Kadera suggested developing a dashboard to share data on the student's academic progress.

G. ACTION ITEMS: NONE

H. INFORMATION ITEMS (9:14 PM):

1. Strategic Plan Update & Revisions to School Board Policy A-6.30 Development and Assessment of Strategic Plan

The Superintendent began the presentation by explaining the importance of transparency related to data to show student progress. He explained that the Strategic Plan serves as the roadmap to success for APS, thus, it must explicitly address metrics and guide the critical work of staff.

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Mr. Stockton thanked the cabinet members on their work to fine tune the Strategic Plan. He echoed Dr. Durán's comments that the Strategic Plan is a roadmap to direct the school division, adding that it also keeps the school system accountable to stakeholders and it serves as a tool to accomplish systematic student outcomes. He noted that as a living document, the Strategic Plan must be continuously updated. Mr. Matt Smith, Policy Revision Team Lead, presented an overview of the APS 2018-24 Strategic Plan and provided highlights on the tuning process of the Strategic Plan aimed to focus on performance objectives and strategies. He spoke on the systematic reporting process to the School Board, trends that impact the Strategic Plan, and considerations for the future. He then explained the proposed revisions to the Strategic Plan Policy to align with the 'Comprehensive Plan' scope.

The Board discussed embedding equity, maintaining the policy in the forefront of APS work, and aligning the budget process with the Strategic Plan. They also discussed community engagement. Mr. Goldstein applauded the work achieved to revive the current Strategic Plan.

2. Revisions to School Board Policies- B-3.6.30 School Board Advisory Committees, B-3.6.34 School Health Advisory Board and B-3.6.35 Student Advisory Board

Mr. Smith explained the revisions to the policies that govern advisory committees and proposed Policy Implementation Procedures (PIPs) to better define key functions of the advisory committees. The revised policy and new PIP would go into effect July 1, 2022.

Ms. Diaz-Torres highlighted the importance of the new revisions to standardize the management of committees.

3. Revisions to School Board Policy I-7.2.9.31 Advanced Classes

Ms. Loft presented the updates to School Board Policy I-7.2.9.31 which included updated language that eliminated barriers to accessing advanced classes, guiding course selection, and the override of prerequisites of an advanced course.

The Board discussed the prerequisites to enroll in advanced courses, successfully preparing students, and professional development to rectify the disproportionality of minority students in advanced classes. They also conversed about parent involvement and creating a partnership between staff and families to guide students on the course selection process. Dr. Kanninen suggested articulating budget constraints so that it is clearly understood that course selection is guided by funding available.

4. Changes to the Virtual Learning Program

Ms. Graves presented an overview of the program which was implemented to support pandemic relief and provide an option to students who were not able to return to in-person instruction. She spoke about the different supports available for families transitioning back to their home schools. She concluded by sharing the Superintendent's recommendation to pause the Virtual Learning Program for the 2022-23 school year.

Ms. Kadera, School Board liaison to the Virtual Learning Program, supported the need for a long-term plan, inquired about the rationale to pause the program, and recognized the impact of pausing the program on families. The Board discussed the logistical reasons to pause the program and alignment of the virtual program to the PreK-12 Instructional Program Pathways (IPP) framework and budget. They also discussed the process for students with medical conditions to access virtual instruction.

I. NEW BUSINESS:

J. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 11:06 PM.

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ATTEST:

Claudia Mercado, Clerk
Arlington School Board

Barbara Kanninen, Chair
Arlington School Board

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