

**ARLINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
Closed Meeting and School Board Meeting Minutes  
March 24, 2022

The Arlington School Board convened on Thursday, March 24, 2022 at 5:30 PM at 2110 Washington Blvd., Arlington, Virginia.<sup>1</sup>

**Present were:**

Barbara Kanninen, Chair  
Reid Goldstein, Vice Chair  
Cristina Diaz-Torres, Member  
Mary Kadera, Member  
David Priddy, Member

**Also present were:**

Dr. Francisco Durán, Superintendent  
Christine Smith, Division Counsel  
Renee Harber, Assistant Superintendent, Facilities and Operations  
Jeff Chambers, Director of Design and Construction  
Benjamin Burgin, Assistant Director of Design and Construction  
David Webb, Director/ Procurement Agent  
David Mancini, Troutman Pepper LLC  
Robert Richardson, Law Office of Robert K. Richardson

**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 for consultation with legal counsel and a briefing by staff pertaining to litigation as authorized by Virginia Code §2.2-3711(A)(7); and for consultation with legal counsel regarding specific legal matters requiring the provision of legal advice by such counsel as authorized by Virginia Code §2.2-3711(A)(8).*, seconded by Mr. Priddy. The motion was adopted in a vote of 5 – 0, with Ms. Diaz-Torres, Mr. Goldstein, Ms. Kadera, Dr. Kanninen, and Mr. Priddy voting affirmatively.

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 Ms. Kadera and was adopted in a vote of 5 – 0. The voting record is as follows: Ms. Diaz-Torres – Aye; Mr. Goldstein – Aye; Ms. Kadera – Aye; Dr. Kanninen – Aye; and Mr. Priddy – Aye.

Dr. Kanninen called for a brief recess at 6:35 PM, and the Board reconvened in an open session at 7:01 PM.

**Also present were:**

Catherine Ashby, Assistant Superintendent, School and Community Relation  
Kimberley Graves, Chief of School Support  
Bridget Loft, Chief Academic Officer  
Christine Smith, Legal Counsel  
Brian Stockton, Chief of Staff  
Claudia Mercado, Clerk  
Carmen Mejia, Deputy Clerk

**B. REGULAR MEETING OPENING – 7:01 PM**

1. Call to Order

<sup>1</sup>The recording of School Board meetings is posted on the APS Web site following the meetings. Regular meetings are also broadcasted on Comcast Cable Channel 70 and Verizon FIOS Channel 41.

2. Presentation of Colors: Arlington Career Center AF JROTC Cadets Corps
3. Recognitions:

Dr. Pam Farrell, Supervisor of Arts Education, presented the Wakefield High School Chamber Orchestra which performed in honor of March is Arts in the School Month. Ms. Loft recognized Dr. Shunda Johnson, a long-time employee of APS, as the Virginia Council for Exceptional Children Special Education Teacher of the Year. Ms. Loft commended her as an outstanding member of the profession who works on positive outcomes for students and provides the highest standards of instructional education.

**C. CONSENT ITEMS (7:20 PM):**

Ms. Diaz-Torres *moved for adoption of the consent agenda*, seconded by Ms. Kadera. 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 December 16, 2021 Closed Meeting and School Board Meeting
- C-1-b Minutes for the January 4, 2022 Closed Meeting
- C-1-c Minutes for the January 6, 2022 Virtual Policy Subcommittee Meeting
- C-1-d Minutes for the January 6, 2022 School Board Meeting
- C-1-e Minutes for the January 12, 2022 Virtual Policy Subcommittee Meeting
- C-1-f Minutes for the January 13, 2022 Closed Meeting

2. Personnel Actions

P/E-SCALE

- 1 Appointment
- 2 Changes In Position/Salary
- 1 Resignation
- 2 Classification Specification Requests
  - Director of Policy & Legislative Affairs
  - Director of Labor Relations

T-SCALE PERSONNEL

- 2 Appointments
- 1 Change In Position/Salary
- 6 Resignations
- 1 Retirement

A-SCALE PERSONNEL

- 4 Appointments
- 2 Resignations
- 1 Termination

SUPPORT SERVICES PERSONNEL

- 5 Appointments
- 2 Changes In Position/Salary
- 1 Resignation
- 2 Retirements

3. Revisions to School Board Policies B-3.7.30 Legal Representation

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4. Revisions to School Board Policy I-1.32 Standards and Requirements, I-6 Curriculum, I-7.2.1 Special Education
5. Revisions to School Board Policy J-6.8.1 Student Safety – Bullying/Harassment Prevention

**D. ANNOUNCEMENTS (7:21 PM):**

1. Board Announcements:

March 31, 2022 – Closed Meeting, 5:30 PM, School Board Conference Room

March 31, 2022 – Public Hearing on the Superintendent’s Proposed FY 2023 Budget, 7 PM, Board Room

April 5, 2022 – Budget Work Session #5, 6:30 PM, Board Room

April 6, 2022 – Virtual Policy Subcommittee Meeting, 8:30 AM

Dr. Kanninen announced that the Board was accepting nominations for the Honored Citizens Award and encouraged the community to nominate outstanding volunteers who have devoted over five years of commitment to APS and exemplify the core values.

As the liaison to Wakefield High School, Ms. Kadera applauded the Wakefield Orchestra performance. She announced that March 21<sup>st</sup> was World Down Syndrome Day and that the Harris Teeter on Glebe Road would display student art from Glebe Elementary School in the construction fence. Mr. Goldstein shared about the unveiling of the Mary Lockwood Commemorative Plaque in honor of the Women’s Suffrage Movement at Arlington Traditional Elementary School and about upcoming activities at his liaison schools.

2. Superintendent’s Announcements and Updates

Dr. Durán encouraged the community to participate in providing input on several surveys. He spoke the about the School Bell Times Study Survey that APS was conducting as part of the APS School Bell Times Study to gather input on possible scenarios for reducing the variations in school start and end times. The input received would inform final recommendations to the School Board to be presented on April 28 and slated for a vote on May 12. Bell changes would take effect in the 2022-23 school year. He then talked about the 2022 Your Voice Matters Survey that covered topics such as school climate, student well-being and employee and family engagement. He also announced the Social Emotional Learning (SEL) Screener Survey for Students in Grades 3-12 Survey to help APS identify, report, and address all students’ social-emotional and academic needs. Dr. Durán announced that the new APS Student Progress Dashboard would launch on March 25. The new online dashboard will show student progress in English Language Arts and Mathematics, beginning with the 2019-20 school year. He shared brief information on literacy and math and how the data gathered from the assessments would identify students who need interventions. Lastly, he shared about the Women’s Suffrage Marker event at Arlington Traditional Elementary School and congratulated the National Scholastic Art Awards 2022 medalists.

Mr. Priddy suggested increasing communications about the Your Voice Matters Survey to increase participation. The Board appreciated the launch of the Academic Dashboard to provide comprehensive academic information and transparency to the community. Ms. Diaz-Torres noted that the dashboard was part of long-time work from staff to share information. Ms. Kadera inquired about school staff engagement of the Bell Study Survey.

**E. PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA AND NON-AGENDA ITEMS (7:57 PM):**

The following speakers addressed the Board:

Adora Williams, member, Advisory Committee on Student Services, opposing reduction of psychologists

Symone Walker, member, Arlington NAACP Education Committee, requesting additional literacy interventions at the secondary level

Sherrice Kerns, Arlington NAACP Education Committee, encouraging improved bullying and harassment reporting procedures at APS

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Cecilia Kline, parent, requesting better guidance for accommodations for high-risk students  
 Sabrina Saunders, student, Kenmore Middle School, concerns about cyber bullying  
 Elizabeth Pilot, student, Kenmore Middle School, concerns about mask use bullying  
 Brandon Clark, teacher, Gunston Middle School, appreciating the diversity at Gunston Middle School  
 Kathleen Clark, sharing bullying incident at her son's school  
 Joshua Folb, addressing concerns about the Virtual Learning Program, School Bell Times Study Survey, and secondary teacher planning time  
 Meg Gruber, former president, Virginia Education Association, sharing concerns about teacher planning time  
 Jed Bobier, member, Arlington Education Association, requesting a pause of the School Bell Times Study

#### **F. MONITORING ITEMS (8:22 PM):**

##### 1. Security Update

Mr. Zachary Pope, Director, Safety, Security, Risk and Emergency Management, explained that the Department of Safety, Security, Risk and Emergency Management provides a comprehensive protection, prevention, preparedness, response, and recovery services across the school division in collaboration with Arlington County and regional and federal agencies. He presented the key School Board Policies that govern the department, its alignment with the Strategic Plan Performance Objective 16 and compliance in the Emergency Management Accreditation Program (EMAP) and the American National Standards Institute (ANSI). He explained the myriad of areas that APS must follow regulations related to Occupational Safety and Health (OSHA), County Ordinance, and Code of Virginia. He highlighted the APS COVID-19 response and opportunities to improve safety, security, risk, and emergency management as a school division.

The Board briefly discussed the emergency management responses for incidents at such as those at Wakefield High School and ways to enhance training, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) reimbursement timeline and addressing other areas of concern. The Board appreciated the tremendous work related to COVID-19 pandemic.

##### 2. Special Education Update

Ms. Heather Rothenbuescher, Director of Secondary Special Education, presented the mission and vision statement of the Office of Special Education. Ms. Rothenbuescher and Ms. Kelly Krug, Director of Elementary Special Education, shared a detailed summary of the Special Education 5-Year Action Plan developed to strategically address the long-term quality of programs and services for students with disabilities and students requiring interventions. In addition, Ms. Krug presented the priorities to continue to build consistency across all APS schools to service students with disabilities which included new staffing allocations recommendations in the FY 2023 budget and collaboration with the math office.

The Board discussed the phased implementation plan for revised planning factors and the positive takeaways of the inclusive model for professional learning. Ms. Kadera shared her kudos on the different community engagement strategies.

#### **G. ACTION ITEMS: NONE**

#### **H. INFORMATION ITEMS (9:29 PM):**

##### 1. Special Education Annual Plan

Ms. Krug presented an overview of the Annual Application Arlington Special Education that is required by the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) and provided a detailed description of how federal entitlement funds are

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spent as part of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Part B Sections 611 and 619. Ms. Rothenbuescher presented the FY 23 Proposed Budget for mandated services.

2. FY 2021 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) Entrances Renovation Project Update: Gunston Middle School Entrance Renovation Construction Contract Award

Mr. Jeffrey Chambers, Director Design and Construction, proposed that the contract be awarded to the lowest responsive and qualified bidder, The Matthews Group, Inc. in the amount of \$1,612,114 million, for the entrance renovation at Gunston Middle School. The project would relocate the primary school entrance and main office closer to S. Lang St, adjacent to the community theater. He presented a status update on the FY 2021 CIP Entrances Renovation Projects and the factors that caused an increase in projects cost.

The Board discussed the contractor being proposed, cost adjustments, and the impact of the proposed entrance renovation on the school community.

**I. NEW BUSINESS (9:51 PM):**

*Dr. Kanninen moved to authorize staff to take all actions necessary as recommended and discussed in closed session, 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; Ms. Kadera – Aye; Dr. Kanninen – Aye; and Mr. Priddy – Aye*

**J. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:52 PM.

**ATTEST:**

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Claudia Mercado, Clerk  
Arlington School Board

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Barbara Kanninen, Chair  
Arlington School Board

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