

**ARLINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
Work Session on the Compensation Study Meeting Minutes  
December 9, 2021

The Arlington School Board convened on Thursday, December 9, 2021, at 6:36 PM at 2110 Washington Blvd., Arlington, Virginia.<sup>1</sup>

**Present were:**

Barbara Kanninen, Chair  
Reid Goldstein, Vice Chair  
Cristina Diaz-Torres, Member  
Monique O'Grady, Member  
David Priddy, Member  
Claudia Mercado, Clerk  
Carmen Mejia, Deputy Clerk

**Also present were:**

Dr. Francisco Durán, Superintendent  
Dr. John Mayo, Chief Operation Officer  
Leslie Peterson, Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Management Services  
Dr. Dashan Turner, Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources  
Heather Kazemi, Vice President and Consultant of Segal

Introduction

Dr. Durán thanked Dr. Mayo and Ms. Kazemi for their work to bring forward a comprehensive compensation study. He explained that employee compensation was a priority that would be part of his proposed FY 2023 Budget. He committed to making APS market competitive and properly compensate long-time employees.

Background

Ms. Kazemi presented the findings of the pay scale redesign. She explained the challenges APS faced due to its compensation that included increased turnover, lag of salary scales in the market, and employee concerns related to compensation. She presented results of the employee survey conducted in October 2021 to understand the employees' views of working at APS. Furthermore, Ms. Kazemi presented the three goals for compensation at APS, which were market competitiveness, consistent, predictable pay growth, and being financially sustainable.

Proposed Pay Scale Design

Ms. Kazemi presented the proposed pay scale redesign to better align APS's pay scales with the market and provide consistent predictable pay growth. She provided details on the recommendations for Teacher, Administrator, and Professional Pay Scales (T, P, E) and Support Staff Pay Scales (A to X) that also included the approach to restore step advancements not granted in 2011, 2013, 2015, and 2020. Ms. Kazemi provided detailed information on the proposed teacher scale compensation to create a competitive starting rate, graduated step progression, and no hold steps. In addition, she explained the proposed changes to school administrators and support staff salaries and pay scales. To conclude Ms. Kazemi explained that the estimated cost to implement the proposed redesign for all pay scales was \$33.7 million. She also noted that the recommendations were intended to provide the APS School Board with information regarding potential ways to address employee compensation concerns and staffing challenges. The proposed changes, however, depend on financial ability and budget priorities.

Questions and Discussion

The School Board discussed the differences in the proposed step changes, the impact of education level and experience on compensation, and how seniority affects pay. They conversed about creating a sustainable pay plan and the

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<sup>1</sup>The recording of School Board meetings is posted on the APS Web site following the meetings.

implementation of COLA (Cost of Living Adjustment). Ms. Kazemi, Dr. Durán, Dr. Mayo, and Ms. Peterson engaged in a lengthy discussion with the Board clarifying the information presented. They also observed that the pay plan would need to be reviewed yearly to ensure APS remains market competitive.

In conclusion, Dr. Durán shared that compensation was a top priority for APS and he was going to make sure employees receive appropriate living wages. The Board echoed their support for the proposal and looked forward to engaging in future conversations to deliver a consistent pay plan and implement solid strategies related to compensation.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:08 PM

#### **ATTEST:**

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Carmen Mejia, Deputy Clerk  
Arlington School Board

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Barbara Kanninen, Chair  
Arlington School Board

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