

**ARLINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
School Board Meeting Minutes
February 2, 2023**

The Arlington School Board convened on Thursday, February 2, 2023 at 7:32 PM at 2110 Washington Blvd., Arlington, Virginia.¹

Present were:

Reid Goldstein, Chair
Cristina Diaz-Torres, Vice Chair
Mary Kadera, Member (absent)
David Priddy, Member
Bethany Zecher Sutton, Member
Claudia Mercado, Clerk
Carmen Mejia, Deputy Clerk

Also present were:

Dr. Francisco Durán, Superintendent
Catherine Ashby, Assistant Superintendent, School & Community Relations
Kimberly Graves, Chief of School Support
Stephen Linkous, Chief of Staff
Dr. Gerald Man, Chief Academic Officer
Dr. John Mayo, Chief Operating Officer
Dr. Jason Ottley, Chief Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Officer
Christine Smith, Division Legal Counsel

~~**A. CLOSED MEETING ON THE DETERMINATION OF A GRIEVANCE – 5:30 PM, ROOM 401 CANCELED ON 2/1**~~

B. REGULAR MEETING OPENING (7:32 PM):

1. Call to Order
2. Presentation of Colors: Arlington Career Center Space Force JROTC Cadets Corps
3. Recognitions: Student Performance “Lift Every Voice and Sing” and Black History Month

In celebration of Black History Month, the Board was delighted by a rendition of “Lift Every Voice and Sing” by the Jefferson Middle School Chorus under the direction of Mr. Christian Banach. Furthermore, Mr. Goldstein noted that Black History Month provided the opportunity to learn about, celebrate, and honor Black leaders from the past and present. Thus, Mr. Ty Byrd, Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, helped the Board recognize outstanding students and administrators and applauded their contributions to the schools and community.

C. CONSENT ITEMS (8:04 PM):

Ms. Zecher Sutton moved for the adoption of the consent agenda, seconded by Mr. Priddy. The motion was adopted in a vote of 4 – 0, with Ms. Diaz-Torres, Mr. Goldstein, Mr. Priddy, and Ms. Zecher Sutton voting affirmatively. Ms. Kadera was not present at the time of the vote. The following items or actions were approved as a part of consent:

¹ 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.

1. Minutes

[C-1-a Minutes for the January 19, 2023 School Board Meeting](#)

[C-1-b Minutes for the January 21, 2023 School Board and Superintendent Retreat](#)

[C-1-c Minutes for the January 25, 2023 Policy Subcommittee Meeting](#)

[C-1-d Minutes for the January 10, 2023 Closed Meeting and Work Session #2 with ACTL](#)

2. Personnel Actions

P/E-SCALE PERSONNEL

1 Appointment

T-SCALE PERSONNEL

8 Appointments

1 Change In Position/Salary

3 Resignations

2 Resignations With Prejudice

1 Retirement

A-SCALE PERSONNEL

2 Appointments

1 Change In Position/Salary

1 Resignation With Prejudice

SUPPORT SERVICES PERSONNEL

1 Appointment

2 Resignations

1 Termination

3. School Board Member Liaison Assignments to Schools and Advisory Groups for 2022-2023

4. Appointments to School Board Advisory Committees

D. ANNOUNCEMENTS (8:05 PM):

1. Board Announcements:

February 7 – Closed Meeting, 5:30 PM, Board Conference Room

February 7 – Work Session on Career and Technical Education, 6:30 PM, Board Room

February 8 – Policy Subcommittee Meeting, 8 AM, Board Conference Room

February 9 – Closed Meeting, 5:30 PM, Room 401

February 16 – Closed Meeting, 5:30 PM, Board Conference Room

February 16 – School Board Meeting, 7 PM, Board Room

Mr. Goldstein announced that the School Board was accepting nominations for the Honored Citizens Award through March 13 to recognize individuals who make an enormous difference in our school communities. He also shared about events at some of his liaison schools.

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2. Superintendent's Announcements and Updates

With a heavy heart, Dr. Durán spoke about the student drug overdose and building lockdown at Wakefield High School. He thanked the first responders and staff who worked quickly to keep students safe. In response to local news and recent incidents, Dr. Durán acknowledged safety and security concerns and the need for education and urgent action related to substance abuse and gun violence. Speaking on the opioid epidemic affecting students and the threats to safety, the Superintendent shared information on the immediate plan put in place to relay information and resources to parents and students. Dr. Durán encouraged community members to report safety concerns to a principal or counselor or use the anonymous reporting form available on the APS website. In connection with the Every Student Counts priority, the Superintendent shared about the work taking place to prepare students for post-graduate success. Dr. Durán then acknowledged that in February APS recognized Black History Month and Career & Technical Education Month, as well as National School Counseling Week (Feb. 6-10), Crossing Guard Appreciation Day (Feb. 8), Virginia Kindness Week and School Board Clerk Appreciation Week (Feb. 13-17), and School Bus Driver Appreciation Day (Feb. 22). In addition, the Superintendent invited families to the Summer Activities Fair on February 16 for an opportunity to connect with local and regional summer program exhibitors and learn about opportunities for children of all ages. Lastly, Dr. Durán shared about the re-opening of the David M. Brown Planetarium and encouraged the community to visit the new Planetarium.

Similarly, addressing some recent tragic events, Mr. Goldstein acknowledged that the community was faced with many challenges. As a School Board, he shared his support for the Superintendent to implement concrete steps to assure the well-being of the school community and community at large. He also urged the Superintendent to pursue every avenue to address safety and security issues at the schools by providing proposals to the Board for funding consideration. In addition, Mr. Goldstein recognized that the County Board was ready to partner with APS on these issues. He concluded by noting that it would be through the collaborative actions of staff, parents, community, and students that APS could holistically address the needs of students, families, and staff. Also expressing their heavy hearts, the Board was adamant for the school system to take action to address opioid abuse to ensure the well-being of students and staff. Furthermore, the Board requested that an after-action plan be conducted with fidelity on the incident at Wakefield High School, making public any information that can be made available. Mr. Priddy spoke about the Narcan training clinic held on February 1 by the Department of Human Services and wanted to bring awareness about the importance of the training to respond to the opioid overdose crisis, imploring a focus on educating students on the grave consequences of drug use. Ms. Diaz-Torres inquired about the ready availability of Narcan at schools, and the cost to make it widely available, and as accessible as hand sanitizer. She also voiced the need for the School Board Policy Subcommittee to explore making it permissible for students to carry Narcan on their person. Ms. Diaz-Torres then encouraged APS to use the voice of students to change the narrative of drug use, which would help peers to listen to each other and save lives. Arguing that substance use is being noted at a younger age, Ms. Zecher Sutton encouraged education and a stronger focus on drug use prevention at the upper elementary and middle school levels. Ms. Zecher Sutton also highlighted the need to provide support and training for teachers in the area of substance abuse prevention as they are now faced with the need to engage in this issue. Lastly, Ms. Zecher Sutton was interested in learning more about the systems in place for substitute teachers to be familiar with safety and security protocols.

In response to Board inquiries, the Superintendent briefly elaborated on the work taking place to provide support to students. Furthermore, Ms. Graves and Dr. Mayo spoke about the intentional work taking place with community partners to address opioid abuse and the preventive actions to ensure families and students have access to information and resources. They also spoke about some of the work taking place with school administrators to provide professional development. Dr. Mayo provided a brief update on the enhancement of the lock-key system project.

E. PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA AND NON-AGENDA ITEMS (8:50 PM):

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Mr. Goldstein announced that the Board would re-instate using the call-in service for public comment.

The following speakers addressed the Board:

Name:	School or Affiliation:	Topic:
Josh Folb		Expressing frustration over mandates for teachers and encouraging better compensation.
Belinda Folb		Requesting decreasing class sizes.
Paul Weiss	HB Woodlawn Secondary Program	Requesting decreasing class sizes and addressing planning factors.
Danielle Anctil		Requesting decreasing class sizes.
Danielle Jones	Teacher	Encouraging mental health support for Wakefield High School staff and increasing compensation for teachers.
Maren Pearson	Parent, Escuela Key	Expressing concerns about incident at Escuela Key
Erin Freas-Smith	Parent, Escuela Key	Encouraging additional resources to address learning loss
Patricia Schnell	Parent, Escuela Key	Expressing concerns about the incident at Escuela Key and asking for the reinstatement of Señora Perdomo
Megan Krug	Parent Teacher Association (PTA), Escuela Key	Expressing concerns about the incident at Escuela Key and asking for the reinstatement of Señora Perdomo
Sara Bryant	Parent Teacher Association (PTA), Escuela Key	Expressing concerns about the incident at Escuela Key and asking for more resources to effectively address conflicts
Anthony Carrk	Parent, Escuela Key	Expressing concerns about the incident at Escuela Key and addressing threat assessment and safety policies at the school
Julie Hannink	Arlington Parents for Education	Urging a plan to focus on safety, student achievement, and auditor reporting
Claire Noakes	Executive Board, County Council of Parent Teacher Association (CCPTA)	Requesting more transparency related to the response to recent incidents

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June Prakash	President, Arlington Education Association	Sharing concerns related to school safety and engagement with employees
Mary Anderlonis	Parent, Hoffman-Boston Elementary School	Concerns about student-to-teacher ratio and resources for Title I school
Judith Davis	Parent, Wakefield	Asking to address the opioid use at Wakefield High School
Paula Cordero	Parent, Escuela Key	Expressing concerns about the incident at Escuela Key and asking for the reinstatement of Señora Perdomo

F. MONITORING ITEMS (9:33 PM):

1. Strategic Plan Status Update

Mr. Jonathan Turrisi, Special Projects Advisor, summarized the 2022 updates to the Strategic Plan. He also presented an update on the progress of the Strategic Plan goals and objectives, as well as information on the implementation of initiatives. In addition, Mr. Turrisi spoke about some of the next steps in the process to develop the 2024-2030 Strategic Plan.

Ms. Zecher Sutton wanted to flag that the Your Voice Matters survey was threaded in different areas and suggested increasing the frequency of the survey or finding other benchmarks to guide the work. She also expressed her interest in learning more about the 24/7 on-demand virtual tutoring service with Dr. Durán noting that an update would be provided during the Budget Work Sessions. Ms. Zecher Sutton also pondered if APS had the capacity in place and appropriate metrics to implement the strategies and assess the effectiveness of initiatives and activities. Recognizing Ms. Zecher Sutton's train of thought, Ms. Diaz-Torres appreciated that the current Strategic Plan was more methodical in measuring outcomes than previous Strategic Plans. She also noted that the next steps to develop the 2024-2030 Strategic Plan create a great opportunity to assess the goals, objectives, and strategies and whether they remain a priority. Mr. Goldstein was interested in seeing more quantitative data on the progress of the performance objectives and an analysis of objectives not met or flatlining. Dr. Durán explained that each objective would be carefully reviewed and evaluated to adjust the strategies and assess the course of action. For example, regarding disproportionality, Dr. Durán explained some of the immediate steps taking place to address ongoing discipline concerns and provide the necessary support for students. He also explained the different mediums for the Board to receive information on the progress of the Strategic Plan.

G. ACTION ITEMS: NONE

H. INFORMATION ITEMS (10:23 PM):

1. Revisions to School Board Policies G-1.4 Acceptable Use of Social Media, K-14.1.10.30 Cooperation with Juvenile Court, and K-14.1.10.31 School and Police Relations

Steven Marku, Director of Policy and Legislative Affairs, presented the revisions to School Board Policies G-1.4 Acceptable Use of Social Media, K-14.1.10.30 Cooperation with Juvenile Court, and K-14.1.10.31 School and Police Relations which included updates to comply with Virginia law, revision of language to clarify meaning and current practice and adding references to the appropriate Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs). Mr. Marku also provided a summary of the public comment feedback received on the proposed revisions.

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Ms. Diaz-Torres clarified that the public was welcome to send comments on the APS and ACPD MOU to school.board@apsva.us. Mr. Marku clarified that the revisions to Policy K-14.1.10.31 removed outdated procedures that are currently part of the MOU.

I. NEW BUSINESS: NONE

J. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 10:38 PM.

ATTEST:

Claudia Mercado, Clerk
Arlington School Board

Reid Goldstein, Chair
Arlington School Board

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