

ARLINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Closed Meeting and School Board Meeting Minutes
March 16, 2023

The Arlington School Board convened on Thursday, March 16, 2023 at 5:32 PM at 2110 Washington Blvd., Arlington, Virginia.¹

Present were:

Reid Goldstein, Chair
 Cristina Diaz-Torres, Vice Chair
 Mary Kadera, Member
 David Priddy, Member
 Bethany Zecher Sutton, Member

Also present were:

Dr. John Mayo, Chief Operating Officer (attended as the Superintendent's designee in his absence)
 Christine Smith, Division Legal Counsel
 Stephanie Maltz, Director of Labor Relations

A. CLOSED MEETING ON THE CONSULTATION WITH LEGAL COUNSEL ON MATTERS REGARDING LEGAL ADVICE RELATED TO COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

Mr. Goldstein called the meeting to order and *moved that the Board immediately convene in a closed meeting to consult with legal counsel on specific legal matters requiring legal advice on collective bargaining, as authorized by Virginia Code §2.2-3711(A)(8)*. The motion was seconded by Mr. Priddy, and it was adopted in a vote of 5 – 0, with Ms. Diaz-Torres, Mr. Goldstein, Ms. Kadera, Mr. Priddy, and Ms. Zecher Sutton voting affirmatively.

The closed meeting adjourned at 7:04 PM and the Board reconvened in an open meeting.

Mr. Goldstein 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; Ms. Kadera – Aye; Mr. Priddy – Aye and Ms. Zecher Sutton – Aye.

Also present were:

Dr. Francisco Durán, Superintendent (absent due to personal reasons)
 Catherine Ashby, Assistant Superintendent, School & Community Relations
 Dr. Tyrone Byrd, Interim Chief Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Officer
 Kimberley Graves, Chief of School Support
 Stephen Linkous, Chief of Staff
 Dr. Gerald Mann, Chief Academic Officer
 Dr. Jason Ottley, Chief Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Officer
 Claudia Mercado, Clerk
 Carmen Mejia, Deputy Clerk

B. REGULAR MEETING OPENING (7:04 PM):

1. Call to Order

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2. Presentation of Colors: Arlington Career Center Space Force JROTC Cadets Corps
3. Recognitions: March is Arts in the Schools Month and Dr. Jason Ottley, Chief Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Officer

While APS celebrates the importance of arts education all year, the Board highlighted how valuable access to arts education is for all students in recognition of March is Arts in the Schools Month. Dr. Pam Farrell, Supervisor of Arts Education, presented a video showcasing students' participation in dance, music, theatre, and the visual arts. The Board also recognized Dr. Ottley for his service to APS and his work to move forward the equity and inclusivity principles outlined in School Board policy and wished him well in his next career endeavors.

C. CONSENT ITEMS (7:29 PM):

Ms. Diaz-Torres moved for the 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, Ms. Kadera, Mr. Priddy, and Ms. Zecher Sutton voting affirmatively. The following items or actions were approved as a part of consent:

1. Minutes

[C-1-a Minutes for the February 28, 2023 Closed Meeting](#)

[C-1-b Minutes for the March 2, 2023 Closed Meeting and School Board Meeting](#)

[C-1-c Minutes for the March 8, 2023 Policy Subcommittee Meeting](#)

2. Personnel Actions

P/E-SCALE PERSONNEL

- 4 Appointments
- 4 Changes In Position/Salary
- 4 Resignations
- 1 Retirement
- 1 Termination

T-SCALE PERSONNEL

- 6 Appointments
- 1 Resignation
- 4 Resignations With Prejudice
- 5 Retirements

A-SCALE PERSONNEL

- 5 Appointments
- 3 Resignations

SUPPORT SERVICES PERSONNEL

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

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3. Amendments to School Board Policy J-5.3.30 Admissions
4. Opioid Settlement
5. Appointments to School Board Advisory Committees
6. Grievance #G-SY23-SS-IG-02

Mr. Goldstein announced that under consent, the School Board adopted amendments to School Board Policy J-5.3.30 Admissions to clarify requirements and practices. Consequently, the Superintendent approved the Policy Implementation Procedures (PIPs) related to this policy. He also announced that the Board approved the participation in the proposed settlements of opioid-related claims, which will result in payments of up to billions nationwide. Any funding received by Arlington County will be used for the abatement of the opioid epidemic, especially important given the effect the opioid crisis has had locally in Arlington. Mr. Goldstein then announced that the Board appointed Ms. Cynthia Schall as the Interim Principal at Arlington Community High School and Lara Macdonald as the Interim Assistant Principal at Arlington Community High School. Lastly, the Board recognized Dr. Barbara Thompson, Principal at the Arlington Community High School, on her retirement from APS after 38 years of service and thanked her for her commitment and dedication to public education and for progressively leading the Arlington Community High School, which provides students with an alternative path to graduation.

D. ANNOUNCEMENTS (7:35 PM):

1. Board Announcements:

March 21 – Closed Meeting, 5:30 PM, Board Conference Room
 March 21 – Budget Work Session #4, 6:30 PM, Board Room
 March 22 – Policy Subcommittee Meeting, 8 AM, Board Conference Room
 March 23 – Closed Meeting, 5:30 PM, Board Conference Room
 March 23 – Public Hearing on the Superintendent’s Proposed FY 2024 Budget, 7 PM, Board Room
 March 30 – School Board Meeting, 7 PM, Board Room

Mr. Goldstein announced that due to an unfortunate family emergency, Dr. Durán would not be present at the Board meeting and Dr. Mayo would sit in as his designee.

In addition to sharing some upcoming events at her liaison schools, Ms. Kadera was pleased to share that Oakridge Elementary School staff formed its first affinity group called People of the African Diaspora. She was proud to announce that the Jefferson Middle School Orchestra received superlative scores in the 28 categories they were judged on at district middle school assessment. She was also proud to announce that the Yorktown High School robotics team received a “top rookie award” on their first competition. Furthermore, Ms. Zecher Sutton shared about her visit to Tuckahoe Elementary School and their Neurodiversity Celebration Week organized to bringing awareness of neurodiversity acceptance, equality and inclusion in schools and workplaces. At Tuckahoe Elementary School, neurodiverse students have the opportunity to share their differences and celebrate those differences with one another. Lastly Mr. Goldstein shared that the United States Senate Youth Program announced that APS student Ms. Laura Mohammed would join Senator Mark Warner and Senator Tim Kaine in representing Virginia during the 61st Annual US Senate Youth Program, an extremely competitive and merit-based program that provides high school students with an intensive week-long study of the federal government. A young lady with commendable accomplishments in school and the community, Ms. Mohammed was selected among top student leaders across the nation to be part of the 104-student delegation and would

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receive a scholarship for undergraduate study. Mr. Goldstein also shared about recent events at his liaison schools.

2. Superintendent’s Announcements and Updates

In recognition of March is Arts in the Schools Month, Dr. Mayo presented a video to spotlight music education at APS and its benefits to the social emotional well-being of students. Dr. Mayo spoke about the annually revised Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between APS and the Arlington County Police Department (ACPD) which defines how schools and law enforcement collaborate on emergency response and threat assessment, educational programming for students and staff, and supporting school-based activities and events. In response to recent safety and security concerns and inquiries about returning School Resource Officers (SROs) to schools, Dr. Mayo explained that in order to consider returning SROs to schools a community engagement process would need to be conducted to ensure there is a community consensus to return SROs to schools. However, at the moment, APS was not considering returning SROs to schools and the school system was focused on providing the adequate funding for safety and security, highlighting that the safety and security at the schools is a top priority. Dr. Mayo directed the community to visit the school safety section of the APS website to learn more about the School Support Coordinators (SSCs) and the safety and security measures in place. Next, Dr. Mayo provided information on the Social Emotional Learning (SEL) Screener Survey for Students in Grades 3-12 to be administered from April 24 to April 28. The purpose of the SEL Screener Survey is to help APS identify, report, and address all students’ social-emotional and academic needs. Dr. Mayo then encouraged the community to join the upcoming conversation meetings with division leaders on the Equity Profile Dashboard, aimed at understanding APS data regarding student opportunity, access, and achievement. Furthermore, Dr. Mayo announced information on the Summer School Program and shared the calendar of meetings related to the Fiscal Year 2024 Budget. In addition, Dr. Mayo was proud to announce that the fourth-grade art class at Nottingham Elementary School participated in creating art to inspire people to become Cherry Blossom Protectors. During the Cherry Blossom Festival, visitors will receive a Cherry Blossom Protector button featuring one of three designs created by the fourth graders. Lastly, Dr. Mayo congratulated Luise Schmitt Eisenlohr, a student at Arlington Science Focus School, on winning first place in the National Braille Readers are Leaders Challenge, grades K-1, for reading the most words in the least amount of time and winning first place for Apprentice Level (first and second grade) in the statewide Virginia Braille Challenge.

As a reminder, Ms. Diaz-Torres noted that the SEL Survey results would be shared with the families. Ms. Graves confirmed that the results would be available through Parent Vue and encouraged parents to reach out to the schools if they had any questions about the information received. Mr. Priddy was interested to learn about information on discipline data and Dr. Ottley invited the community to attend the Equity Profile Dashboard community conversations to learn about how the data will be analyzed and about the interventions for discipline. To conclude, Ms. Kadera highlighted the correlation between trauma and the arts in the schools and expressed her appreciation to teachers who support arts education.

E. PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA AND NON-AGENDA ITEMS (8:04 PM):

The following speakers addressed the Board:

Name:	School or Affiliation:	Topic:
Garrett Sylwester	Student, Gunston Middle School	Expressing disapproval of group punishment at Gunston Middle School
Maxwell Merck	Student, Gunston Middle School	Requesting emergency bathroom kits to address safety and security

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Tammie Dzubak	Parent and teacher at Fairfax Public School Teacher	Expressing disapproval of group punishment at Gunston Middle School and requesting a review of threat assessment response
Kathleen Clark	Past president of the Special Education Parent-Teacher Association (SEPTA)	Requesting better response to bullying at schools

F. MONITORING ITEMS (8:17 PM):

1. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Update

To begin, Dr. Byrd shared the purpose of the DEI Office and its alignment with the Strategic Plan performance objectives and strategies. He presented about the Implicit Bias Training, which will be mandatory for all staff by the end of the 2023-24 school year, and the multi-phase approach timeline. Dr. Byrd also spoke about the Equity Influencers and DEI Coordinators and their work to support the purpose of the DEI Office. In addition, he presented budgetary requests for additional resources. Ms. Cristin Caparotta, DEI Specialist, presented about the Equity Profile Dashboard, recommendations for professional development and spoke about current partnerships that support the work of DEI. Mr. John-Derik Hutchinson, DEI Specialist, presented information on the Culturally Responsive Teaching and Equitable Practices, standard six of the VDOE, designed specifically for the needs of each school, and shared some bright spots to highlight the wonderful work of the DEI staff.

Ms. Kadera began the discussion by clarifying that standard six is a performance objective mandated by the Code of Virginia teacher, and suggested clarification on implicit bias and its relationship to bullying. Dr. Byrd provided general information about the cross-departmental work to address bullying and helping to create an inclusive school environment. Understanding the importance of the implicit bias training and recognizing employee burnout, Ms. Kadera requested a thoughtful alignment of professional development by central office. Mr. Priddy requested a summary of the total number of employees requested for funding. To better understand Implicit Bias Training, Ms. Zecher Sutton asked Dr. Byrd to provide more detail on the multi-phase timeline to measure a change in culture. Moving forward and to be practical, she suggested creating concrete examples of implicit bias for staff and community. Moreover, Ms. Diaz-Torres noted her concern about the lack of discipline data and applauded the work to launch the Equity Profile Dashboard to consistently review the data to better support students. Furthermore, Dr. Byrd provided information on the predictive analytics software to forecast a student’s academic path and identify interventions.

G. ACTION ITEMS (9:14 PM):

1. Montessori Public School of Arlington Playground Relocation Construction Contract Award

Mr. Priddy moved that the School Board take the following action:

- *Approve a contract and subsequent purchase order for Game Time Division of PlayCore Wisconsin, Inc. in the amount of \$716,239.40, seconded by Ms. Diaz-Torres.*

Mr. Goldstein called for a vote and the motion was adopted in a vote of 5 – 0. The voting record is as follows: Mr. Goldstein – Aye; Ms. Diaz-Torres – Aye; Ms. Kadera – Aye; Mr. Priddy – Aye; Ms. Zecher Sutton – Aye.

H. INFORMATION ITEMS (9:16 PM):

1. Special Education Annual Plan

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Required by law, Dr. Kelly Krug, Director, Elementary Special Education, presented the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) Special Education Annual Plan that provides a detailed description of how federal entitlement funds are spent to support the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) 611 and 619. Ms. Heather Rothenbuescher, Director, Secondary Special Education, shared a summary of the proposed budget and a timeline of the application deadline.

The Board briefly discussed the Special Education Annual Plan funding.

2. Revisions to School Board Policies I-11.5.2.30 High School Credit at the Middle School, J-5.3.1 Homeless Education Services, M-3 Financial Management-Financing Construction and Site Acquisition, and M-11 Student ID Badges

Mr. Steven Marku, Director of Policy and Legislative Affairs, presented proposed revisions to policies to add applicable statutes and regulations to the reference section, update language to better mirror the language in the McKinney-Vento Act that presides homeless situations, the renumbering of M-3 Financial Management-Financing Construction and Site Acquisition, and clarify practices related to the Student Identification Cards.

I. NEW BUSINESS: NONE

J. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 9:39 PM.

ATTEST:

Claudia Mercado, Clerk
Arlington School Board

Reid Goldstein, Chair
Arlington School Board

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