

**ARLINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
School Board Meeting Minutes  
May 11, 2023**

The Arlington School Board convened on Thursday, May 11, 2023 at 5:30 PM at 2110 Washington Blvd., Arlington, Virginia.<sup>1</sup>

**Present were:**

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

**Also present were:**

Dr. Francisco Durán, Superintendent  
Dr. John Mayo, Chief Operating Officer  
Michael Hodge, Assistant Superintendent, Human Resources

**A. CLOSED MEETING ON PERSONNEL ACTIONS**

Mr. Goldstein called the meeting to order and *moved that the Board immediately convene in a closed meeting to consider as many as 8 appointments, 7 changes in position/salary, 21 resignations, 2 resignations with prejudice, 1 termination, and 8 retirements, as authorized by Virginia Code 2.2-3711(A)(1)*. 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 6:25 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.

Mr. Goldstein called for a recess at 6:25 PM and the Board reconvened at 7:01 PM.

**Also present were:**

Catherine Ashby, Assistant Superintendent of School and 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  
Christine Smith, Division Legal Counsel  
Claudia Mercado, Clerk  
Carmen Mejia, Deputy Clerk

---

<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.

**B. REGULAR MEETING OPENING (7:01 PM):**

1. Call to Order
2. Presentation of Colors: Arlington Career Center Space Force JROTC Cadets Corps
3. Recognitions: None

Mr. Goldstein began the meeting by acknowledging that during the month of May, Arlington Public Schools (APS) recognizes and celebrates different groups of individuals who make the diverse community special and contribute to the APS mission of being an inclusive community that empowers all students to foster their dreams, explore their possibilities, and create their futures. On behalf of the School Board, Mr. Goldstein wished educators a Happy Teacher Appreciation Week and appreciated their tireless yet passionate work to connect with students and families. Noting that being a teacher is one of the most powerful and impactful professions, Mr. Goldstein praised educators on their work to shape generations, influence minds, and improve the world. He concluded by adding that the contributions of teachers are undoubtedly the most significant asset in APS.

**C. CONSENT ITEMS (7:05 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 April 18, 2023 Closed Meeting and Budget Work Session# 5](#)

[C-1-b Minutes for the April 25, 2023 Closed Meeting and Public Hearing on the School Board Proposed FY 2024 Budget](#)

[C-1-c Minutes for the April 27, 2023 School Board Meeting](#)

[C-1-d Minutes for the April 11, 2023 Committee of the Whole Meeting](#)

2. Personnel Actions

**P/E-SCALE PERSONNEL**

- 1 Appointment
- 1 Change In Position/Salary
- 1 Resignation
- 2 Retirements

**T-SCALE PERSONNEL**

- 2 Appointments
- 5 Changes In Position/Salary
- 17 Resignations
- 4 Retirements

**A-SCALE PERSONNEL**

- 1 Appointment

---

<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 Resignations
- 1 Resignation With Prejudice
- 1 Termination

**SUPPORT SERVICES PERSONNEL**

- 4 Appointments
  - 1 Change In Position/Salary
  - 1 Resignation
  - 1 Resignation With Prejudice
  - 3 Retirements
3. Arlington Education Association (AEA) as the Exclusive Representative for Licensed Staff and Support Staff
  4. Appointments to School Board Advisory Committees

Under consent, Mr. Goldstein announced that in accordance with the APS resolution authorizing collective bargaining, the School Board certified the Arlington Education Association (AEA) as the Exclusive Representative for the licensed personnel bargaining unit and the support personnel bargaining unit. Mr. Goldstein announced that the Arlington Education Association (AEA) submitted its request seeking certification to represent licensed personnel and support personnel on March 14, 2023. APS sent notification about the election and the opportunity to intervene on March 28, 2023. No other labor organization or Employee Association requested to intervene. The online secret ballot election for licensed and support personnel was held from April 24 to April 27, 2023. AEA was selected by a majority of the licensed employees that voted by secret ballot. AEA was also selected by a majority of the support employees that voted by secret ballot. In addition, Mr. Goldstein announced that the Board appointed Angie Close as the Director of Secondary Special Education. Moreover, effective July 1, Mr. Goldstein announced the following appointments:

Carmen De La Cruz Scales, Principal, Carlin Springs Elementary School  
 Carolyn Jackson, Principal, Gunston Middle School  
 Helena Payne Chauvenet, Principal, Hoffman-Boston Elementary School  
 Peter Balas, Principal, Wakefield High School  
 Dr. Betty Sanders, Assistant Principal, Washington-Liberty High School

**D. ANNOUNCEMENTS (7:43 PM):**

1. Board Announcements:

May 18 – Closed Meeting, 5:30 PM, Board Conference Room  
 May 18 – Work Session on the Library Services Program Evaluation, 6:30 PM, Board Room  
 May 23 – Celebration of Excellence, 5:30 PM, Washington-Liberty High School  
 May 24 – Policy Subcommittee Meeting, 8 AM, Board Conference Room  
 May 25 – Closed Meeting, 5:30 PM, Board Conference Room  
 May 25 – School Board Meeting, 7 PM, Board Room

Ms. Kadera and Mr. Goldstein shared announcements about upcoming events at their liaison schools. They also took the opportunity to wish staff a Happy Mother's Day. Ms. Kadera congratulated the Yorktown High School Music Department on earning the Virginia Music Association Blue Ribbon Award for the second year in a row.

2. Superintendent's Announcements and Updates

---

<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.

The Every Student Counts school year initiative spotlight was the Title I Summer Mailbox Books program where students sign up to receive free books during the summer. Dr. Durán shared about Teacher Appreciation Week at APS and thanked the community for the many ways they helped share their gratitude to teachers. Excited that graduation and prom season was upon APS, Dr. Durán announced that graduations were going to be held from June 9-16 and promotions were going to be held on June 14. Graduation ceremonies would be livestreamed on the APS website. In addition, he encouraged students to use sound judgement during the celebratory season and encouraged conversations on how to keep students safe. Dr. Durán then shared that APS was developing a new School Board Policy for the school year calendar to set a process and criteria to develop the school year calendar each year starting with the 2024-25 school year. The goal of the new policy would be to bring more consistency to the calendar process and better align the calendars of the school divisions in Northern Virginia. He encouraged the community to review the draft policy and provide feedback by visiting the School Board Policies for Review in the Engage webpage until May 19. The draft policy would be presented to the School Board for approval later in the year. The Superintendent then announced that the Virginia Standards of Learning (SOL) testing would be administered to students in grades 3-12 during the testing window of May 15 and June 9. He spoke about teachers and students diligently preparing for the tests, which help measure the extent to which students have learned the content and skills reflected in state standards. Furthermore, the Superintendent encourages families to register for Extended Day services for the 2023-24 School Year and provided the deadlines for registration. Dr. Durán was proud to announce that for the seventh consecutive year, APS was recognized as the 2023 Best Communities for Music Education by the National Association of Music Merchants (NAMM) for its outstanding support of music education and enriching the lives of children and advancing student achievement. Lastly, the Superintendent invited the community to the 2023 Celebration of Excellence on May 23 at Washington-Liberty High School to honor the 2023 Principal of the Year, Assistant Principal of the Year, Teacher of the Year, and the 39-school based teacher honorees, Leader of the Year, and Support Employee of the Year.

Ms. Zecher Sutton clarified that the SOL test results would be sent to parents in August and Dr. Durán shared that the Board would receive an update on the results in August. Mr. Priddy encouraged the community to share their feedback on the new school year calendar School Board Policy.

**E. PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA AND NON-AGENDA ITEMS (8:02 PM):**

The following speakers addressed the Board:

<b>Name:</b>	<b>School or Affiliation:</b>	<b>Topic:</b>
Kirstin Pickle	Advisory Council on Teaching & Learning, Student Services Advisory Committee	Requesting an increase in Social Emotional Learning (SEL) resources and staffing
Joshua Folb		Suggesting that the Board request the County Board for additional funding for compensation
Deborah Waldron	APS Teacher	Requesting class size reductions
June Prakash	President, Arlington Education Association	Requesting better compensation for educators and equitable Human Resources practices
Ivis Castillo	School Bus Driver	Sharing concerns about physicals at Transportation Services

<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.

John Foote		Expressing concerns about sexual harassment and sexual assault
Danielle Jones	Vice President, Arlington Education Association	Sharing concerns about class sizes, substitute shortage, and compensation

**F. MONITORING ITEMS (8:20 PM)**

1. Student Advisory Board (SAB) Annual Report

Oliver Andress, Chair, and Eli Gaull, Vice Chair, presented about the 2022-23 SAB meetings and highlighted the important topics discussed. The topics covered included sexual harassment, mental health, equity and diversity, and budget and transportation. They also spoke about the SAB goal to improve recruitment efforts next school year to continue to give students an active voice about topics that matter to them.

As the liaison to the SAB, Ms. Kadera thanked Mr. Andress and Mr. Gaull on their leadership in the SAB and, along with Mr. Goldstein, encouraged more active feedback on current Board topics. The Board appreciated the efficient and informative annual update. Excited and acknowledging the importance of the SAB engagement, Mr. Gaull, the Board and Mr. Linkous encouraged students to join the SAB to have a voice on important and relevant topics at APS.

**G. ACTION ITEMS (8:38 PM):**

1. Adoption of the Final FY 2024 Budget

Dr. Durán thanked everyone for the positive feedback during the budget development process. He thanked staff who worked under the leadership of Ms. Leslie Peterson, Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Management Services, in the annual process of building the budget. Dr. Durán was also appreciative of the School Board for providing specific and direct priorities and direction. He looked forward to the continued collaboration to help direct his work and focus on providing students with resources. Ms. Leslie Peterson presented the School Board’s Proposed FY 2024 Budget including a summary of updated expenditures.

Mr. Goldstein highlighted after some deliberation, the Board felt that the three proposed positions of Student Success Specialists would be best employed at the middle school level, thus creating the positions of Deans of Students for Middle Schools. He believed that discussion about additional Deans of Students would continue in the next year’s budget.

*Mr. Goldstein moved that the Arlington School Board adopt its Fiscal Year 2024 School Board Budget totaling \$804,392,800. The School Board’s FY 2024 budget requires an on-going County Transfer of \$594,385,235, a one-time County Transfer of \$13,841,500, a Beginning Balance or Carry Forward of \$3,500,000, and funding from Reserves of \$41,701,121, broken into the following:*

1. *The School Operating Fund at a total of \$675,199,146, requiring an ongoing County transfer of \$515,841,836, a one-time County transfer of \$13,841,500, a beginning balance or carry forward of \$3,500,000, and funding from reserves of \$38,100,791.*
2. *The Community Activities Fund at a total of \$20,221,158, requiring a County transfer of \$8,173,593.*
3. *The Debt Service Fund at a total of \$64,881,485, requiring a County transfer of \$62,369,155 and funding from reserves of \$2,512,330.*
4. *The Food and Nutrition Services Fund at a total of \$13,815,415, requiring a County transfer of \$0.*

---

<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.

5. *The Capital Projects Fund at a total of \$6,576,901, requiring a County transfer of \$5,488,901 and funding from reserves of \$1,088,000.*
6. *The Children's Services Act Fund at a total of \$4,975,000, requiring a County transfer of \$2,511,750.*
7. *The Grants and Restricted Programs Fund at a total of \$18,723,695, requiring a County transfer of \$0.*

*Mr. Goldstein further moved that the Arlington School Board authorize the advance placement of purchase orders for productivity software, minor construction projects, floorcovering, playground equipment, replacement of existing fire alarm panel, printing services, trade books, security equipment and hardware, PA system components, life safety equipment and components, and personalized learning technology that are funded in the adopted FY 2024 budget. These orders will be placed only after the Finance Office verifies that the funds have been designated in the School Board's adopted FY 2024 budget. These items should be neither received nor invoiced until on, or after, July 1, 2023.*

The motion was seconded by Ms. Diaz-Torres.

The Board thanked the Superintendent, Ms. Peterson, the Budget Advisory Committee (BAC), and staff for their careful and thoughtful work on the budget. They appreciated the input of staff and community members which provided helpful context on the interests and concerns of the community. The Board also thanked the County Board's partnership and their support of public education. As it is customary and in a collegial note, Board members thanked the Chair, Mr. Goldstein, for his leadership during the budget process and keeping the Board focused on the bottom line, which was to present a sustainable budget. In the spirit of continuous improvement and an eye on ensuring a sustainable budget in the years ahead, Ms. Kadera highlighted a few areas of importance to her. Ms. Kadera suggested strengthening mechanisms to determine the return on investment and clearly articulate outcomes, timeframes, and measurements. She then suggested contemplating the practice of Academic Return on Investment (A-ROI) utilized by the Government Finance Officers Association and the Association of School Business Officials to prioritize programs and investments which will help to understand investments performance and mitigate the pressures of the budget in the years ahead. She urged the Board and leadership to consider A-ROI and explicitly provide detail in this matter in the next budget process. Lastly, Ms. Kadera suggested better direction on the use of reserves calling for more specificity on the sustainable use of reserves by the Board when it deliberates on its budget direction. Moreover, Ms. Zecher Sutton was confident that the budget prioritized supports for mental health, safety, social-emotional development, and well-being. She hoped to continue having thoughtful and productive conversations about ways to deliver excellence, as a school system and employer. Mr. Priddy then expressed his support for the budget that built upon the Board's priorities for the school year, prioritizing student academic progress, well-being, competitive employee compensation and operational efficiencies. Furthermore, Ms. Diaz-Torres was happy that the budget addressed some of the immediate needs of the school system and was specifically proud of the important addition of parental leave as a benefit to employees. Despite the uncertainty of the economic outlook, it was clear to Ms. Diaz-Torres that the priority of the school system was to continue to support the well-being of students and staff, even as this priority got harder to address. Ms. Diaz-Torres admitted that mental health was at her forefront and was grateful that the APS community has made intentional efforts to ensure the school system provides as many resources as possible. She also commented on the need to continue to address the systemic achievement and opportunity gaps, and the compensation for employees given the rising cost of living expenses. Subsequently, Ms. Diaz-Torres reiterated a point she shared at a budget work session, which was that education is dramatically underfunded. Explaining that although the County Board has stepped up to the plate by providing major funding to APS, public schools only receive 13% of state funding, not adequately funding the Standards of Quality (SOQ), and 2% of federal funding; Ms. Diaz-Torres was exasperated in saying that the funding to support the needs of students was not enough. She called for advocacy to request additional funding. Ms. Diaz-Torres encouraged the community to email congress members to ask for the full funding of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), and the Perkins Grant. She also urged emails and engagement with local delegates to fully fund the SOQs, eliminate the support cap, and

---

<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.

allocate supports for students with the greatest needs, according to the actual needs of the district and not based on formulas that do not match the needs of Arlington. In addition, she encouraged conversations with County Board members and candidates to maintain their commitment to education. For public education to continue to meet the needs of the students, Ms. Diaz-Torres suggested the careful recognition of the budgetary needs and greater collaboration amongst all stakeholders to help set the course for the school system and support the Strategic Plan. Lastly, Mr. Goldstein encouraged the community to advocate for budget needs as the process for the next budget begins right after the Board voted on the FY 2024 budget, and noted that the feedback will help shape the future budget. He also highlighted that the Board approached the budget deliberations with a sober intensity, recognizing the complex challenge of spending public funds efficiently on high quality education. Similar to other Board members, Mr. Goldstein was proud to approve a budget that prioritized investments in student success and well-being, school safety, and compensation. To conclude, Mr. Goldstein thanked his Board colleagues for their collaboration and creativity in the budget process and deliberations.

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 (9:11 PM):**

##### **1. The Heights Building Phase 2 Construction Contract Award**

Mr. Jeffrey Chambers, Director of Design and Construction, presented a summary of the Heights Building Phase 2 Construction Contract Award for the improvements to building access, accessible parking, bicycle infrastructure, and athletic facilities required in the Memorandum of Agreement with the County. He recommended that the Board consider the approval of a new project budget of \$18,930,000 and detailed the use of the funds.

The Board discussed the cost of the project, noting the increase in cost was due to scalation, and the timeline of construction.

#### **I. NEW BUSINESS: NONE**

#### **J. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:27 PM.

#### **ATTEST:**

---

Claudia Mercado, Clerk  
Arlington School Board

---

Reid Goldstein, Chair  
Arlington School Board

<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.