

ARLINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
School Board Meeting
January 22, 2009

Item C-1-c

The Arlington School Board convened on Thursday, January 22, 2009, at 7:36 p.m. at 1426 North Quincy Street, Arlington, Virginia.

Present were:

Ed Fendley, Chair
Sally M. Baird, Vice-Chair
Libby Garvey, Member
Abby Raphael, Member
Emma Violand-Sánchez, Member
Melanie Elliott, Clerk

Also present were:

Dr. Robert G. Smith, Superintendent
Mary Beth Chambers, Assistant Superintendent, Finance
Dr. Alvin Crawley, Assistant Superintendent, Student Services
Linda Erdos, Assistant Superintendent, School and Community Relations
Dr. Betty Hobbs, Assistant Superintendent, Personnel
Dr. Mark Johnston, Assistant Superintendent, Instruction
Walter McKenzie, Assistant Superintendent, Information Services
Clarence Stukes, Assistant Superintendent, Facilities and Operation

Members of the Virginia 821st AFJROTC Cadet Corps presented the colors.

National Board Certified Teachers Recognition

Dr. Smith recognized 28 teachers who achieved national board certification, presenting them with a commemorative APS star-shaped box, a National Board lapel pin provided by the Arlington Education Association, and a corsage provided by the County Council of PTAs (CCPTA). He thanked AEA representative Shelley Jennings and CCPTA president Cecelia Espenoza for their support.

A. ANNOUNCEMENTS: (8:00 p.m.)

Mr. Fendley made the following announcements:

Meetings:

- January 30, 2009, School Board Courageous Conversations, Syphax Building rm. 121, 8:00 a.m.

Other Events:

- January 26, 2009, Kindergarten Information Night, Kenmore Middle School, 7 p.m.

- January 27, 2009, Governor’s Academy Visit to Career Center, 8:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.
- January 27, 2009, PTA Reflections Award Ceremony, Williamsburg Middle School, 7 p.m. (snow date January 29, 2009)
- February 4, 2009, Montessori Information Night, Drew Model School, 7 p.m.
- February 3-5, 2009, NSBA Federal Relations Network Meeting, Washington, D.C.

B. CITIZEN COMMENT ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS: (8:02 p.m.)

The following speakers addressed the Board:

Jennifer Dunlap, President, Jefferson Middle School PTA: thanking the Board, Dr. Smith, and staff for the process followed to identify potential improvements to Jefferson, which allowed parent and community engagement; and encouraging the Board to fund the improvements recommended in the study.

Mr. Fendley commended Ms. Dunlap and the other members of the Jefferson community for their work on this issue. He noted that the Board will hear a detailed presentation of the improvement study in February.

C. CONSENT ITEMS: (8:06 p.m.)

Ms. Baird moved for adoption of consent items, seconded by Ms. Garvey. The motion was adopted in a vote of 5 – 0, with Ms. Baird, Mr. Fendley, Ms. Garvey, Ms. Raphael, and Dr. Violand-Sánchez voting affirmatively. The following items or actions were approved as a part of consent.

1. Minutes:
 - a. December 16, 2008, Legislative Breakfast
 - b. December 16, 2008, Work Session on Enrollment and Capacities
 - c. December 18, 2008, School Board Meeting
 - d. January 8, 2009, School Board Meeting

2. Personnel Actions:

T-Scale Personnel

- 5 appointments
- 1 change in position/salary
- 4 retirements

A-Scale Personnel

- 3 appointments
- 1 resignation

3. Scholarships:

Scholarships in the amount of \$17,096.07 were awarded.

D. MONITORING PRESENTATIONS: (8:07 p.m.)

1. Foreign Language in Elementary School (FLES) Implementation Status Report

Dr. Mark Johnston acknowledged the work of staff on the implementation of FLES, reviewed the development of the program and the implementation plan, and described the goals of the program.

Mary Ann Ullrich, Foreign Language Supervisor, reported on the staffing, program design, staff development, assessment and proficiency expectations for the FLES program. She noted that all of the FLES teachers are certified in both Spanish language and elementary education. She reviewed the program model and professional development provided to staff, and described proficiency expectations and goals for the program, noting that performance guidelines were developed based on guidelines created by the American Council on Teaching Foreign Language. Marleny Perdomo, Immersion Specialist, presented implementation findings, noting that staff has had good success in use of instructional time, curricular materials, and assessment practices. Challenges include providing appropriate differentiation for speakers at different levels. Ms. Perdomo reminded the Board that the program is inclusive, and stated that integration of core content into the FLES curriculum is an important goal. Language assessments and results were shared, and parent satisfaction surveys as well as ACI support shows that satisfaction with the program is high.

Jamie Borg, Principal at Glebe, described her experiences with implementing FLES, sharing some of their challenges as they adapted their schedule to allow inclusion of the program. Positive impacts include better and more efficient use of planning and classroom time. Ms. Borg also described efforts to build support in the community and the staff, and collaboration efforts with the central office. Challenges included recruiting staff with appropriate foreign language training, hiring additional specialists, and finding classroom space for the program.

Ms. Perdomo described additional efforts underway such as alignment of the language courses as the program advances and articulation with higher grades. She also briefly reviewed the next steps, which include adjusting student assessments, refining the curriculum with emphasis on integration of content, collaboration with other programs such as Gifted and ESOL/HILT, middle school considerations, and expansion of the program to all elementary schools.

Dr. Violand-Sánchez appreciated the work that has been done, and asked if the principals meet to discuss implementation; Ms. Borg stated that she has met with many principals to share her experience, and noted that the principals at FLES schools are planning to hold regular monthly meetings. Dr. Violand-Sánchez encouraged continued efforts to integrate core content into the FLES program.

Ms. Baird expressed her concern that expansion of FLES may be threatened by budgetary constraints. She asked about more training to teachers for heritage

speakers; Dr. Johnston commented that staff has been working to address these concerns. He also noted that the assessments have been very helpful in guiding ongoing staff training. In terms of collaboration between FLES schools, Ms. Baird asked about communications from the central office as well as between the schools. Dr. Johnston stated that adjustments need to be made during the implementation stage, and central office staff continues to work with the schools to help with this transition. Ms. Baird asked about the impact of the loss of early release Wednesdays on planning time for pre-kindergarten teachers. Ms. Borg commented that 5-year-old students in the Glebe Montessori program have the option to participate in FLES but none have chosen to. She also stated that her Montessori teacher has been given the choice to include FLES, but is content with his current schedule. Dr. Johnston reminded the Board that the planning factor for FLES does not include pre-K, and explained the reasons behind this decision. He also responded that concerns are being addressed to make sure planning time in FLES schools is commensurate with other schools. Finally, Ms. Baird asked how students new to FLES are integrated. Ms. Perdomo described efforts to assist teachers to help them differentiate for the new students.

Ms. Raphael congratulated staff on their work, noting the Board's commitment to expanding FLES to all elementary schools; she also acknowledged the challenge faced with the budget. In terms of middle school discussions, Ms. Raphael asked about inclusion of Spanish in the 6th grade schedule. Dr. Johnston noted that all middle school electives are being reviewed, and Spanish will be considered in that process. Ms. Raphael noted the low participation in the current Spanish for 6th graders program and wondered if it is because it is held after school. Dr. Johnston stated that staff is trying to determine what is hindering the program. Ms. Raphael encouraged efforts to let families of 5th graders know that the program is available in 6th grade. In terms of the budget, Dr. Johnston noted that even with a possible delay of implementation in the coming year, the full implementation by 2013-14 may be met, as five FLES programs were initiated last year.

Ms. Garvey asked whether there is a uniform process for principals to establish the schedules for their schools, or if there is flexibility. Dr. Johnston responded that there is variation, but schedules are fairly consistent overall, and he described the collaborative efforts of all schools to establish their program.

Mr. Fendley stated his strong support for FLES and stressed that this is a good match for the Arlington community. He appreciated efforts to integrate content, and noted that learning a language other than English enhances the learning experience overall. He stated his view that foreign language is a core subject, and also his belief that failure to expand the program would be the same as cutting the program. In terms of the rollout schedule, he noted that last year the program was introduced at three schools and two schools revised their schedules to expand the program, rather than the program being added at five schools. He stated his intention to pursue funding for implementation of FLES in the coming year's budget, and noted his belief that there are funds proposed for expanding other

programs that might be redirected to this effort. Mr. Fendley thanked the staff for the progress that has been made with FLES.

2. Report on Status of Wakefield High School Schematic Design (9:04 p.m.)

Mr. William O'Connor, Director of Design and Construction, reviewed the progress that has been made on the Wakefield Schematic design, noting that there has been input from the BPLC, PFRC, county and school staff. He then introduced Paul Lund of Bowie-Gridley, who presented the current schematic design. The conceptual design was adopted by the Board in October 2008, and Mr. Lund described the process followed to develop the schematic design. Some concerns that have been addressed include parking and transportation issues, open space for students to gather, and street frontage for the building. He ended his presentation by describing the next steps in the process.

Board members thanked staff and the architects for their work on this process and shared community support they have heard for the schematic design.

Ms. Raphael asked about efforts to maintain the courtyard included in the original design. Mr. Lund stated that two courtyard areas have been added, one in the center of the building adjacent to the auditorium, and a second near the cafeteria. The new design will have a strong presence at the corner, Ms. Raphael noted, addressing community concerns. She asked if the changes to the design will have any impact on the proposed budget. The architects expect the new design will work with the currently projected budget, and Mr. O'Connor noted that a cost estimate will be included when the final schematic design is presented.

Ms. Baird asked for a review of the project schedule; Mr. O'Connor noted that it has proceeded a little slower than anticipated because of the additional time needed to allow feedback from community groups; staff hopes to bring the schematic design with cost estimate to the Board in late May. He also noted that staff will continue to work with all of the county groups, and once the Board approves the schematic design, will move forward with the process quickly.

Mr. Fendley appreciated the compact, efficient design of the building as illustrated, and noted his interest in plans for energy management and LEED certification. He commented on the community's commitment to minimizing the environmental impact of buildings and shared his hope that this school moves those efforts forward. He asked if there are any zero carbon emitting schools in the country. Mr. Lund was not aware of any, but agreed to find out; he also commented that they have started to work on incorporating sustainability. Mr. Fendley encouraged considering the use of alternative sources such as geothermal, wind, or solar energy. The other area of interest to Mr. Fendley is ensuring that the building promotes preferred transportation modes: buses and transit service, walkers, and bikes. He wondered if the parking at the front of the building is necessary. He also asked for confirmation that the porousness of the site has been considered, to allow people to move smoothly. Mr. Lund stated that

the architects did consider and included this aspect in the plan, noting that the proximity to Barcroft Park encourages flow.

Building capacity was also discussed briefly; Mr. Fendley noted that enrollment is projected to rise and asked if thought has been given to housing more than 1600 students in the new building. Mr. Stukes noted that while current projections for Wakefield shows it reaching capacity in 2016, staff is considering using a 6/7 model to calculate capacity, which would change that projection. Mr. Fendley encouraged staff to look at all possibilities now. Ms. Raphael commented that capacity projections countywide need to be considered as well.

E. ACTION ITEM: (9:35 p.m.)

1. Yorktown Construction Contract

Mr. Stukes thanked all who worked on this project, and in particular recognized Yorktown staff, students, citizen groups, county groups, and central office staff. Mr. O'Connor then updated the Board on the project and reviewed the bid process, noting that the bids came in under anticipated cost. He stated that while all of the bids were extremely aggressive, Hess Construction was the low bidder, and he reviewed the specific costs as well as other data related to the project and contract estimates. Based on all of this information, the following is the revised recommended breakdown of costs:

General Construction	\$64,706,000
Design	6,445,489
Project Management	5,139,000
General Requirements	1,661,000
Equipment	240,000
<u>Contingency (8% of GC)</u>	<u>5,176,480</u>
Total Project Cost	\$83,367,969

The following speakers addressed the Board:

John Vihstadt, past president, Yorktown PTA, and co-liaison for the Yorktown rebuilding project: expressing support for moving the project forward, and asking that some of the anticipated savings be used to increase capacity to address expected enrollment growth.

David Haring, Yorktown Civic Association: expressing concern that the building design does not allow future expansion, and encouraging the Board to plan for the anticipated increase in enrollment; also asking for parking and safety improvements during the construction process; and encouraging abundant communication with the community as project moves forward.

Mr. Fendley thanked the speakers for their comments.

Ms. Raphael moved that the Board award the General Construction contract for Yorktown High School to Hess Construction in the amount of \$64,706,000 and further that the Board adopt a revised Project Budget of \$83,367,969, seconded by Ms. Baird.

Ms. Garvey noted the concerns expressed as to the capacity of the building and asked if staff believes the facility as planned will house the anticipated increased enrollment. Mr. Stukes commented that the revised capacity model being considered and the size of the planned common spaces in the school should accommodate the enrollment; in terms of overall capacity throughout the county, staff will continue to look at this issue and work with the Board on solutions. Ms. Garvey asked how many students may be housed at the Career Center in the future, and if it will impact capacity figures. Dr. Smith commented that the plans for the Career Center could include increasing its enrollment up to 250 students. He also noted that it is important to remember that the Board guideline for high schools is 1600 students and the building designs have been based on that number; and capacity projections support the need to review attendance boundaries, class schedule models, or revising the space guideline. Ms. Garvey agreed that the Board will need to look at numbers down the line, and stated her support for the plan and contract for Yorktown.

Dr. Violand-Sánchez asked how many students could be accommodated with a 6/7 model; Mr. Stukes stated that based on the current core classrooms, Yorktown could hold 1800 to 1850 students. Ms. Baird noted that the Facilities Council feels strongly that there is a need to look at middle and high school projections and capacity. Also commenting on capacity, Ms. Raphael noted that the Board has started a process to look at elementary capacity, and she encouraged starting a process to look at middle and high school capacities in the near future as well.

Ms. Raphael asked for an explanation of the increased building permit fees included in the contract documents; Mr. O'Connor explained that this is the result of a policy change at the County. Noting changes to the security system, Ms. Raphael inquired whether teachers will be able to lock their doors from interior; Mr. O'Connor stated they would. Ms. Raphael thanked all involved for their hard work and acknowledged the savings this contract represents, and she encouraged moving forward as quickly as possible with bond sales.

Mr. Fendley echoed the sentiments expressing appreciation for the work that has been done. Noting high student retention rates, he asked how many kindergarten-through third-graders are currently enrolled in elementary schools that feed to Yorktown; Mr. Stukes agreed to provide that information to the Board. In terms of sidewalks and traffic safety improvements, Mr. Fendley remembered earlier discussion of these concerns, and asked what progress has been made. Mr. O'Connor agreed to review the plans to see if there are opportunities to improve pedestrian circulation and safety. Mr. Fendley appreciated this effort, and also encouraged staff to consider the TDM program to help manage traffic issues that may be caused by the construction project.

The motion was adopted in a vote of 5 – 0, with Ms. Baird, Mr. Fendley, Ms. Garvey, Ms. Raphael, and Dr. Violand-Sánchez voting affirmatively.

F. INFORMATION ITEMS: (10:12 p.m.)

1. ACI Advisory Committee Status Reports

a. Arts Education

Cynthia Johnson-George presented the status report on the work of the Arts Education subcommittee, reviewing on the membership of the group. The focus for their research and recommendations for next year include maintenance and repair of performance spaces, teacher training, scheduling, the total impact of FLES on arts offerings, elementary instrumental music staffing, and promoting a mentoring program between high school and younger students.

Board members thanked Ms. Johnson-George for the report.

b. English Language Arts

Mr. Ross Tyler presented the status report on the English Language Arts subcommittee. The group has started learning about support for those schools that have not met AYP in reading, and using the model of response to intervention (RTI) to address these needs. Another topic of interest they will continue to investigate is after school programs that combine different types of tutoring with sports or other activities. Finally, the committee is considering expanding last year's recommendation on integration of the English curriculum with other curricular areas.

Dr. Violand-Sánchez asked for more information on response to intervention; Dr. Johnston agreed to provide that information to the Board as a followup.

Mr. Fendley asked about the committee's work on linking tutoring with sports activities; Mr. Tyler noted the committee is just beginning to collect information on this and will share what they learn with the Board.

2. ACI Status Report (10:25 p.m.)

Dr. Johnston, noting that more detailed information is included in the report, highlighted progress made on some of the 2007-2008 recommendations for English, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Special Education and Student Services.

Dr. Violand-Sánchez expressed interest in professional development on support for students who are not meeting graduation requirements. Dr. Johnston noted that, although not stated, this professional development is inherent in several of the initiatives. Dr. Crawley responded that the Student Services office plans to conduct more professional development on this issue for staff, and will also be

doing more outreach to parents on graduation requirements so they have the information they need to help their students succeed.

Ms. Baird asked about the plans for improvements to the planetarium. Dr. Johnston stated that review of the infrastructure is underway, and staff is working with faculty of GMU on the curriculum to see that it is appropriate, accurate, and current. Dr. Smith reminded Board of funding plans for improvement of the building and Ms. Erdos noted that issues with the economy have impacted fundraising efforts in the community, noting that the schools may need to decide to move forward without outside funding.

G. NEW BUSINESS:

H. ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting adjourned at 10:37 p.m.

ATTEST:

Melanie Elliott, Clerk
Arlington School Board

Ed Fendley, Chair
Arlington School Board