ARLINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Work Session on Human Resources Audit Report – Update on Implementation Meeting Minutes
September 30, 2025

The recordings of School Board meetings are posted on the APS Website following the meetings.

The Arlington School Board convened on Tuesday, September 30, 2025, at 10:46 a.m. at 2110 Washington Blvd., Arlington, Virginia.

Present were:
Bethany Zecher Sutton, Chair
Miranda Turner, Vice Chair
Mary Kadera, Member
Kathleen Clark, Member
Zuraya Tapia-Hadley, Member
Carmen Mejia, Deputy Clerk of the School Board

Also present were:
Dr. Durán, Superintendent
Catherine Ashby, Assistant Superintendent, School & Community Relations
Dr. Julie Crawford, Chief of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion, and Student Support
Kimberley Graves, Chief of School Support
Dr. Gerald Mann Jr., Chief Academic Officer
Christine Smith, Legal Counsel
Brian Stockton, Chief of Staff
Andy Hawkins, Business Officer
Corey Dotson, Assistant Superintendent, Human Resources
Ricardo Sorto, Special Projects Coordinator
Adora Aldana, Director, Talent Acquisition and Management
Shannan Ellis, Director, Talent Acquisition and Management
Kahina Saunders, Director, Employee Relations
Tammie Sommons, Classification and Position Management Coordinator
Carrie Holmes, Benefits Supervisor

Presentation

Dr. Durán explained that the purpose of the work session was to review the progress and improvements made by the Human Resources (HR) Department following the recent audit. He emphasized the importance of having high-quality staff across all departments to best serve students and noted that strengthening HR systems is critical to supporting employees so they can be successful in their roles. He shared that the audit provided an opportunity to identify strengths, areas for growth, and actionable improvements, and that the work session was intended to transparently share the audit findings, actions taken, and outcomes to date.

Mr. Stockton thanked the Audit Committee and stated that commissioning the audit was a necessary and valuable step in identifying opportunities for improvement. He expressed hope that staff are already experiencing positive changes and emphasized that improvement is measured not only by actions taken but also by how staff experience HR services.

Mr. Dotson reviewed the organizational structure, audit updates, and described the roles of HR leadership and staff supporting employees. He summarized the major audit findings and addressed staffing availability during winter break. Moreover, Mr. Dotson shared updates on the restructuring of Talent Acquisition and Management and the Benefits Teams, including cross-training and skill development initiatives. Mr. Sorto provided an update on actions taken to improve Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) and outlined next steps, including a comprehensive review of Policies and Procedures and Implementation Plans (PIPs). He also discussed efforts to enhance customer service, improve

utilization of the Onflo system, and refine the HR Service Support Center. Ms. Holmes and Ms. Ellis discussed succession planning and business continuity efforts, while Ms. Sommons reviewed actions related to regulatory compliance, including standardized workflows for classification and position management. Ms. Saunders highlighted regulatory compliance training and plans to develop an internal audit system to ensure alignment with federal, state, and local regulations and collective bargaining agreements, as well as efforts to improve transparency and service delivery. Ms. Aldana concluded with an update on the implementation and goals of the new STARS+ program. Each department head outlined ongoing actions and upcoming priorities focused on improving customer service and strengthening HR support across Arlington Public Schools.

School Board Discussion

The School Board discussed the progress and actions taken by the Human Resources Department following the audit report, commending Ms. Kadera, Dr. Durán, Mr. Dotson, and the broader HR team for their leadership, collaboration, and responsiveness to feedback. Members expressed strong satisfaction with the steps already implemented and noted that the work demonstrates meaningful progress toward addressing the audit's recommendations. The Board discussed recruitment challenges, recognizing both internal and external factors, and emphasized the need to optimize recruiting strategies, including incentives for hard-to-fill positions. Members referenced STARS+ trend data on vacancies and expressed appreciation for the transparency and data-informed approach. Discussion also focused on succession planning and business continuity, including compliance risks and the importance of strong customer service supported by clear standard operating procedures. Board members praised the quality and volume of staff input shared during the session, expressing gratitude to employees who contributed their perspectives. Additional discussion highlighted improvements in customer service operations, including increased call and text volume, follow-up on missed calls, communication clarity, and expectations for closing service tickets within defined timelines. The Board encouraged continued updates throughout the year and noted that a monitoring report was expected in May, reinforcing their confidence in the direction and ongoing work of the HR department.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 12:16 PM.

ATTEST:

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Carmen Mejia, Deputy Clerk
Arlington School Board

Bethany Zecher Sutton, Chair
Arlington School Board