



February 21, 2022

Dear Dr. Duran and Members of the School Board:

I am writing to follow-up on my comments during the February 17, 2022 School Board meeting on behalf of Arlington Parents for Education regarding the APS 2022-2023 budget. As noted, APS should use the upcoming budget cycle to reflect that student education is the number one priority for APS. The factors that will most impact the quality of student education that



budget by approximately \$6-9 million (accounting for salary and benefits). This incremental investment is necessary for APS to achieve its goal of attracting and retaining the best teachers in the area. For APS to invest \$21 million for additional teacher compensation (as planned in the existing proposal), while still remaining middle of the pack or in the bottom half of our local peers in teacher compensation, would be a significant missed opportunity.

Reduced Class Sizes. As set forth in our white paper on class sizes (available [here](#)), Arlington Parents for Education believes APS must focus on reducing its class sizes. APS' class sizes at the elementary level are the highest among the WABE benchmarked school districts. At the middle school level, the average clas



APS should also increase both the size and duration of its proposed summer school program. As we noted in our recent white paper, APS' peer districts responded to the pandemic by increasing the number of students in their summer school program, while APS shrunk the size of its program. Further, APS' summer school program is only 4 to 5 weeks long, and provides only half days of instruction, which is one to two weeks shorter than what is recommended by the US Department of Education, and falls short of the full day instruction that best practices recommend. We ask that APS revisit the design of its summer school program to address those shortcomings.

Where Will the Funding Come From? We recognize that this increased focus on our students' educational performance will require a shift in resources. But as the district with the highest cost per student within the Washington Area Boards of Education (WABE) benchmarks, we believe APS has the resources to fund those priorities. In particular, APS should shift its resources away from non-student facing administrative positions, use some of its close out reserve funds, devote some of the savings it will generate from lower enrollment, and partner with the Coe oAðn oa



savings estimate in the FY 2022 Budget resulting from an enrollment reduction of 525 students, we estimate that an enrollment reduction of approximately 1500 would translate into savings of approximately \$9 million.

Partnership with the County APS should also partner with the County on a two-to-three year recovery plan, which would provide for dedicated additional funding beyond the County's typical revenue sharing. Those amounts should be dedicated to student learning loss recovery efforts. The allocation of those resources should be the subject of stakeholder engagement, and