

Dear Ms. Peterson,

Thank you for the opportunity to weigh in during the budget process. I appreciate the chance to provide input on the proposed changes to the state budget. I am pleased to see the state's commitment to fiscal responsibility and to ensuring that our resources are used effectively. I will continue to monitor the progress of the budget process and will be happy to provide further input as needed.

Consider adding Covid-19 emergency operations fees to pool usage to increase revenue to ensure the pools break even, or ask the County to allocate additional revenue to APS to close the gap.

Schools should not be subsidizing community swimming activities, nor should we be forced to prioritize pool staff over teaching staff this year.

- Furlough Extended Day employees until that program resumes.
Ideally, deploy as many other employees as possible to support additional bus and classroom needs unless funding for extended day

students use facilities at their base high schools if other physical facilities are needed.
(Josh Folb developing formal proposal)

- Reduce number of options programs at the elementary level to reduce curricular and transportation costs and focus on walkable neighborhood schools for younger students, (unless data show that choice programs create meaningful diversity in schools that are closing opportunity gaps and helping APS reach other specific equity goals, in which case the cost/benefit should be better understood and addressed in this context.)
 - Increase class sizes at all levels to bring us in line with other large districts in the area.
 - Reduce class choice at the high school level, and explore options to offer choice through expanding our partnerships with NOVA, Virtual Virginia, and other online offerings which would enable students to take classes offered elsewhere rather than staffing every option at every high school.
 - Look more closely at the Resource Teachers, and how they benefit all levels of learners (Gifted, English Learners, & Special Ed) in an effort to simplify and reduce staff.
- Identify other opportunities to reduce non-(core) teaching staff.
 - Eliminate repurposed fractional allocations at the school level.

Many principals take the fractional remainder of allocations dedicated to instructional departments and repurpose them. For example, they may be allocated 1.2 positions for Art and 3.5 positions for Math, and 1.3 positions for PE. But they only hire 1 art, 3 math and 1 PE. They then take the $0.2 + 0.5 + 0.3$ and hire another person to do something else, like a special project, rather than giving back those allocations.

If each building has just one of these heads, in aggregate, and there are roughly 40 buildings, and teachers cost roughly \$100K, then this is \$4M. There is a feeling in the system that there are many more than just one per building.
 - Reduce non-teaching T-scale staff at schools, even one position across 40 schools = ~\$4M.

- Seek funding for specific programs that are much loved but expensive and easy targets for reductions but may appeal to local funders (e.g., Outdoor Lab)
- Allow families to opt out of receiving iPads or laptops if they agree to provide their own
- Evaluate potential delay of other important, but large, investments.
 - Delay school moves and opening of the Reed school to delay all associated costs.
 - Ask for permission to slow down implementation of the DOJ settlement requirements.
 - Slow phasing in of the recommendations from the Special Education review and report.
Take this opportunity to learn from other districts, to ensure we are following best practice, from both an instructional and a cost/benefit point of view.
- Consider other more extreme temporary measures during the Covid-19 pandemic emergency, such as:
 - Suspending participation in athletics while the students are not attending school in person.
 - Reducing 403b match for APS staff for a defined period of time.

Thank you again for the opportunity to share our ideas at this early phase. We look forward to working with you throughout this challenging year.

Sincerely,

Melanie Bowen, Chair, Budget Advisory Council

Members of the Council: Chuck Rush (Vice Chair), Bob Ramsey (Chair Emeritus), Lisa Blackwell, Nellie Carr, Katherine Christiansen, Dedra Curteman, Julie Davis, Cristina Diaz-Torres, Juan Gordon Sr., Sean Miller, Valerie Smith, Erik Sullivan, Jennifer Wagener