

# ARLINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

## FY 2013 Budget Standards and Guiding Principles

The Arlington Public Schools FY 2013 Budget will respond to strategic plan goals and ensure that a) fiscal, human, and physical resources are used effectively, efficiently, and responsibly; b) APS acts in an environmentally-responsible manner; and c) APS complies with all federal and state laws. Funds proposed for expenditure in the Superintendent's Proposed Budget will focus on meeting the following six standards below, using the principles listed as factors in determining the funding levels to support programs and activities. The development of the budget will:

- Base short- and long-term decisions on updated three-year forecasts of revenues and expenditures;
- Undertake a systematic review of ongoing and proposed expenditures;
- Identify efficiencies and streamline operations; and
- Consider recommendations from 2010-2011 citizen advisory council reports.

This document was compiled in partnership with the APS School Board, Superintendent, and Senior Leadership.

**Standard #1: Achievement Gap, Cultural Competence, and Rising Achievement for All**  
(Strategic Plan Goal #1: Ensure That Every Student is Challenged and Engaged, and Strategic Plan Goal #2: Eliminate Achievement Gaps)

As a first priority, the budget will support activities that focus on high levels of achievement by all students and that eliminate as predictors of achievement such variables as race, dominant language, disability, and income. The budget will reflect system-wide goals that encourage and support high-quality instruction and classroom interaction; provide equitable access to opportunity; and involve parents in the education of their children.

### Guiding Principles

- All APS students shall experience success.*
- APS focuses instruction by identifying and monitoring student progress.*
- Teachers are empowered and supported to enhance student learning.*
- Staff members have high expectations and take responsibility for student achievement.*
- Staff is culturally competent.*
- All parents are viewed as partners in the education of their children.*
- Student learning is aligned with curriculum, instruction, and assessment.*

**Standard #2: Effective Communications** (Strategic Plan Goal #5 – Meet the Needs of the Whole Child)

The budget will support a systematic two-way communication process both inside and outside the school system; stimulate a greater understanding of the role, accomplishments, and needs of the Arlington Public Schools; and encourage a dialogue to help APS identify and respond to the needs of the communities it serves.

*Guiding Principles*

- A. *Decision-making is enhanced by dialogue with the entire community.*
- B. *An informed and engaged community supports APS and actively supports APS students.*
- C. *Effective communication increases parental involvement and improves student achievement.*
- D. *Efforts focus on communities that are currently underrepresented in APS dialogues.*

**Standard #3: High Quality and Diverse Staff** (Strategic Plan Goal #3: Recruit, Retain and Develop High Quality Staff)

The budget will support initiatives that enhance and provide a high-quality work force, including attracting a diverse applicant pool that reflects our student body. It will ensure that APS has a competitive advantage through the Teacher Excellence Initiative, professional development for all staff members, and other staff support programs.

*Guiding Principles*

- A. *All students are taught by teachers certified in the field they are assigned to teach.*
- B. *Teachers and staff demographics reflect the diversity of the overall student population.*
- C. *Professional development opportunities are provided to all instructional and support staff members.*
- D. *APS provides a competitive advantage to attract and retain a high-quality staff.*
- E. *All APS staff members are evaluated to ensure effectiveness and accountability to school division philosophy and goals.*

**Standard #4: Learning and Working Environments** (Strategic Plan Goal #4: Provide Optimal Learning Environments)

The budget will provide high-quality, safe, efficient, and environmentally-friendly facilities for the current and projected enrollment and work force.

*Guiding Principles*

- A. *APS maximizes the efficient use of all facilities and operations/services.*
- B. *Learning and work are enhanced through well-maintained, safe, and full-functional facilities.*
- C. *APS facilities promote an appreciation for and attention to the environment.*
- D. *APS facilities are designed and built to standards that provide equitable opportunities for students and staff members.*

**Standard #5: Responsive Education and Healthy Learning Environment** (Strategic Plan Goal #5 – Meet the Needs of the Whole Child)

The budget will provide school experiences that respond to each student's talents, interests, and challenges. Activities include those that afford individualized educational experiences and increase student developmental assets\* while ensuring safe and supportive learning experiences.

*Guiding Principles*

- A. *Instruction is differentiated to maximize student learning.*
- B. *Students are prepared to work in a global society.*
- C. *Access to student achievement data assists student monitoring and drives instructional decision-making.*
- D. *Students are supported in making informed decisions about their short- and long-term plans.*
- E. *Students develop the skills and relationships necessary to lead healthy and productive lives.*
- F. *Students learn Twenty-first Century Skills, such as collaboration, problem-solving, and working in a virtual environment.*

**Standard #6: Technical Infrastructure and Information Systems** (Strategic Plan Goal #4 – Provide Optimal Learning Environments)

The budget will create and maintain the physical and digital infrastructure required to sustain the efficient operation of the school system. It will provide systems and services, including network systems, hardware, and software, that promote academic achievement, efficient administrative structures, and maximize school resources.

*Guiding Principles*

- A. *Productivity and learning are enhanced through the use of Twenty-first Century Tools.*
- B. *Enterprise systems promote effective and efficient use of resources across the division.*
- C. *Data are accurate, reliable, and secure.*
- D. *Information systems are scalable, replicable, and redundant.*

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\* The Developmental Assets are 40 common-sense, positive experiences and qualities that help influence choices young people make and help them become caring, responsible adults. Grounded in extensive research in youth development, resiliency, and prevention, the Developmental Assets represent the relationships, opportunities, and personal qualities that young people need to avoid risks and to thrive.