

Strategic Visioning Process  
Arlington Public Schools  
Launch Session – April 12, 2022

Breakout Room #	Names	<p style="text-align: center;">Hopes and Dreams</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>[With your group, make a bullet point list of your hopes and dreams for the future of the Arlington Public Schools. Avoid education “jargon” in your responses. Your ideas should be clear and accessible to the general public.]</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">What requests or hopes do you have for the facilitation and/or structure of this process?</p>
1	Michi Kurata, Cori, Maren White, Lisa Lambert	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Provide a curriculum that explicitly teaches about emotional intelligence and focus on the development of social emotional skills as a critical life skill</li> <li>- Ensure that students find a love of learning and value learning over just getting a good grade-- and that schools/teachers/parents also value legitimate learning over empty academic success</li> <li>- Instruction and curriculum at all schools will adapt to learning styles, skills, and abilities</li> <li>- An inclusive curriculum that explicitly teaches about diverse identities, starting at a young age</li> <li>- The district will provide enough resources to support student learning and professional development for teachers/staff</li> <li>- APS will meet the unique needs of each child</li> <li>- APS to be a place where everyone feels happy, included, “at home,” a sense of belonging and productivity.</li> <li>- Hire more staff of color, and make APS more accessible to families of color.</li> <li>- Support and acknowledge the mental health and growth of each student</li> <li>- Grading equity</li> <li>- Opportunities to collaborate with the neighborhood &amp; community through service, volunteerism, events</li> <li>- More cross curricular learning/connections through all disciplines</li> <li>- Less focus on testing, more focus on engaged learning, skill building, and self aware learners.</li> <li>- Trauma informed teaching practices from top to bottom (so important)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Pilot programs</li> <li>-Teachers teaching teachers/mentoring programs for new teachers</li> <li>-Student voice/choice</li> <li>-Consider marginalized voices first, then majority.</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Keep effective teachers here. More competitive pay for teachers compared to surrounding communities</li> <li>- More mental health providers in schools.</li> <li>- Proactive, proactive, proactive when possible</li> </ul>	
2	Kirsi, Claire, Sindhu, Rebecca	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social emotional skill development, imbuing a sense of curiosity and love of learning</li> <li>• Establishing real-world connections between values and societal impact (“what does kindness mean in the application to the real world?” social justice-minded, community-oriented)</li> <li>• Meet all students’ needs – identifying the assets of each student</li> <li>• Supporting teachers’ and staff’ needs comprehensively</li> <li>• Follow evidence-based practices to support learning, even if it diverges from mandatory rules or regulations (e.g. amount of physical activity provided to students throughout the day, developmentally-appropriate learning approaches)</li> <li>• Look at opportunities for flexibilities within structures and systems – not one model for all students (e.g. how can we re-purpose afterschool in a way that supports out-of-the-box learning options? What types of before-school options could support students, families, such as the early gym option?)</li> <li>• See every kid have a friend group (increased community)</li> <li>• Recruit and retain staff – address the pay disparities between Arlington and surrounding communities - A comprehensive district-wide strategy to recruit and retain diverse, effective staff and community participation in hiring for key leadership roles.</li> <li>• Shared responsibility for every child within a school building</li> <li>• Service-learning opportunities and projects, plus PD to support this kind of work (project-based learning at Gibbs and beyond)</li> <li>• Bring evidence-based literacy curriculum to elementary schools aligned with science of reading</li> <li>• Individualized learning plans</li> <li>• Competency-based learning and grading</li> <li>• There’s a disconnect between 504 and IEP learning plans – confusion and disconnect around responsibilities and leadership – need to clean this up</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Elevate voices that have historically not been listened to or marginalized</li> <li>• Data-driven decisionmaking</li> <li>• Think broader first, before narrowing down</li> <li>•</li> </ul>

3	Scott Lever, Parisa Parsa, Jessica Truslow, Katerina Cai	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School district that allows students to have the tools and confidence to be able to make choices to lead a fulfilled life after k-12 education in a rapidly changing world (e.g. Global world with changing geopolitical, environmental concerns can be overwhelming and hold a lot of uncertainty)</li> <li>• Students filled with a sense of themselves as agents of civic and community connection in the world - wherever they are - able to see and be seen fully and at home in their own skin</li> <li>• Sense of achievement tied to relational abilities as much as academic skills</li> <li>• Schools bring a focus on skills and capabilities necessary in future work - succeeding in the workplace of the future (agile methodologies, etc.) “21st Century Skills”</li> <li>• More diverse staff, faculty, administration</li> <li>• Better differentiation in heterogeneous classes in HS (addressing needs of full spectrum of students)</li> <li>• Stronger emphasis on reading &amp; writing in elementary &amp; mid school</li> <li>• Pay teachers better</li> <li>• Consistency across elementary schools - not teacher or school dependent, but commitment to same skills taught</li> <li>• across levels in town</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Help us get beyond the simple and easy things in an education environment, go beyond the obvious</li> <li>• Help us to address the outliers amongst the kids and not just cater the majority</li> <li>• Help us to learn how to prioritize and make tough decisions</li> <li>• Turn the 60 of us into advocates in the success of making APS great for the long term</li> <li>• Bring a perspective of what other school districts are doing so that we know APS continue to be competitive for scarce resources and parents’ choice</li> </ul>
4	Matt Coleman, Aqeel, Thor, Eva Kennedy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teachers and teaching good habits like discipline and commitment not just the curriculum.</li> <li>• Teaching the whole student; giving students every opportunity possible; making sure the whole student is able to navigate the world</li> </ul>	
5	Hannah M, Elisa M, Kate P, Dan A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Idea of otherness→ challenging that idea and the atmosphere of ‘otherness’ so that the community feels inclusive and welcoming for everyone</li> <li>- Empathy built in to our policies, practices, curriculum</li> <li>- Extending that to access for all people thinking about disability, trauma, any other factor</li> <li>- That we can be brave enough to make some bold changes → to make some radically different plans, facing down the ways that the system is inequitable, racist, exclusive, etc</li> <li>- Having action forms to actively dismantle the systems and factors that are in place</li> <li>- There are current difficult conversations about heterogeneous</li> </ul>	-hope there is a way to hear from all stakeholders as many families may not feel they are able to/want to give feedback or come to the table

		<p>classes; thinking of that, continuing with a plan to take bold steps and not just take baby steps to test the waters and stop based on resistance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The strategic plan should make it easier to make the right, brave decisions. It should help ground people and decisions in the core values to make it clear what should be done</li> </ul>	
6	Kathy Rogers, Filip, D. Hodges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adequate, flexible staffing to meet the needs of all students/educators</li> <li>• Prioritize funding to attract best and diverse teacher workforce</li> <li>• For school to be able to offer improved support/connection between staff and students (closer alignment between what is “available” and what students need)</li> <li>• Connections to students, conversations, interviews not just data, make sure to get the whole student voice and not just most successful part of it.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Help us to reach a consensus even if it is not unanimous</li> <li>• Help us to prioritize so we can make progress as quickly as possible</li> </ul>
7	Cesar Urrunaga, Julianna Keyes, Berengere Sauvagnat, Maddi Bransford	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kids should be able to get help when they need it. (It currently takes too long to be able to provide the right help to students that need it)</li> <li>• Arlington to base the decisions on what is equitable (e.g. homework, tracking, decisions backed by data) and not just popular.</li> <li>• Schools should be happy places, safe, joyous.</li> <li>• More recess, longer lunch- downtime.</li> <li>• School should be center of social work- lots of extra curriculums, late buses</li> <li>• Ways to meet diverse sensory, communication, executive functioning needs of all students</li> <li>• Dedicated time for science and social studies every day in elementary school</li> <li>• More opportunities for interdisciplinary instruction</li> <li>• Flexible options to learn what the kids want - tailored curriculum</li> <li>• Better understanding for parents and students of the consequences of the choices (not in a negative way, but perhaps more frequent guidance of the kids) and clear communication for the parents (in particular if they did not go through the american education system.</li> </ul>	
8	Kevin Toro	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creating a space where kids have room to explore, have</li> </ul>	

	Julie Hansen Bekka Lane Paul Schlichtman	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>agency and autonomy in learning and it's fun</li> <li>Students learn community responsibility</li> <li>Every learner feels respected in every building in every room in every grade</li> <li>Support across community levels (students, educators, staff, and parents as part of whole)</li> <li>leave after graduate and be able to go where want to go</li> <li>joy is a high achievement</li> <li>building a sense of community and not cliques - building a future</li> <li>Powerful learners</li> <li>Idea that we are a community anything we do is also focused on the staff, faculty</li> <li>Less "giving tree" and more sustainable for the educators</li> <li>Who's caring for the caregivers</li> </ul>	
9	Alex Dorson, Alecia Serafini , Smita Thakur, Dia Black	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>make the APS amore accommodating space specifically for neurodivergent students</li> <li>Less focus on testing and more focus on creative curriculum that is flexible</li> <li>Make our kids empathetic and loving everyone all around</li> <li>Provide students with the foundation and tools to achieve their goals, gain a lifelong love of learning, meet the challenges of the future, contribute to their communities and be responsible citizens.</li> </ul>	
10	Danuta Forbes, Sissi Liu, Rob Spiegel, Larry Slotnick	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>District that attracts and retains a talented and diverse staff with District/HR policies that provide staff with high job satisfaction and engagement. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Allow teachers to express their desires for the direction of the school and district. Be transparent with the community about this.</li> <li>Have a well funded district that gives teachers and students what they need (e.g. course selection, different ways to support kids, etc.)</li> <li>Have equity between elementary schools; teachers</li> </ul> </li> <li>How to prepare our kids for the challenges of the future, having analytical thinking skills, sustainability issues, future of the planet</li> </ul>	
11	Margaret Credle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Safe environment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Being honest about the</li> </ul>

	Thomas, Liz Phipps-Soeiro, Gabby Ambrosino, and Andrea Nicolay	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brave environment</li> <li>• Ensuring every student has access to public library resources</li> <li>• equal/equitable access to learning</li> <li>• All students to be able to effectively access their education with the necessary supports</li> <li>• Undo the system</li> <li>• Community based education</li> <li>• Value the experience and knowledge</li> <li>• Re: Brown vs. Board of Ed- are e forcing assimilation of our BIPOC students into a dominant cultural narrative/value system- how are we honoring differing cultural values and norms</li> <li>• How do we elevate marginalized/oppressed voices- how do we LISTEN? Also truly giving PHYSICAL voices</li> <li>• Get students excited about using library resources</li> </ul>	<p>institution we're working in</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In order for the institution to continue it has to reproduce status quo</li> <li>• Be authentic in our discussions about where are we and where we need to go</li> <li>• Lose our egos about how our ideas are framed in the interest of making them inclusive and allowing them to evolve</li> <li>• Trust the process</li> </ul>
12	Emily Sullivan, Katie, Justin Panarese, Evgenia Diakonenko	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A district that support curious children who are willing to do extra, environment that stimulates learning</li> <li>• A district that has the resources (e.g., caseload size, evidence-based interventions) to help high-need students make progress</li> <li>• District that prioritizes curiosity, joy, cognitively demanding and relevant tasks/materials, equity and social justice</li> <li>• All students feel known and have adults and peers in the school building that they trust.</li> <li>• All students feel comfortable being themselves in the district.</li> <li>• Balance of/equitable services across the grade bands (ie: professional learning, social workers, coaching at all grade levels)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clear and transparent processes - goals, agendas, where is the work from one meeting going, how will it be incorporated and followed up on?</li> <li>• Clarity of representation - who is on this committee (staff/parents/diversity and range of perspectives)</li> <li>• Actionable benchmarking data that is presented in a way that is easy for all stakeholders to digest.</li> <li>• Making sure that the data we are using is valid in its measurement (i.e., is what we are measuring accurately representing what we are thinking it is?)</li> </ul>
13	Bella Harris, Thad Dingman, Inae Hwang	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strong foundation that is purposeful, that will be implemented</li> <li>• Stronger commitment to math and science from a younger</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Anti-oppressive process/allowing more space</li> </ul>

		<p>age</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Anti-oppressive curricula and mission strongly supported by all in the district</li> <li>• Success experienced across all student groups</li> <li>• Creation of cooperative and supportive teams for students and educators- making certain that all members are valued members of the team</li> <li>• Do away with the word rigor in education as it is often used to exclude groups</li> <li>• See engagement be a core characteristic of all student learning experiences</li> <li>• Seeing Social Justice and Social Action be at the core of the student experience</li> <li>• Curiosity and creativity should be a cornerstone of our student development and something we care deeply about at all ages</li> <li>• Student mental health and connection/relationships to educators to be valued</li> <li>• Literacy (not just reading but also math and science etc.) is equity</li> </ul>	<p>at the “table” for voices not traditionally there.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Different school experiences/voices</li> <li>• Supportive team experience for all of us as we move through this process</li> </ul>
14	Sarah Endo, Julie Dunn, Roderick MacNeal, Junlei Li	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Every child be met “where they are”, and met with the education to achieve their potential, and every child feel safe and supported;</li> <li>• Every child can name at least one (hopefully more than one) adult in the school who knows them, and they can rely on; and every child finds at least one learning opportunity (class, club) that’s the reason they look forward to school;</li> <li>• Every child finds something they are passionate about and have a deeper learning experience - we provide equal access to all students for what they need.</li> <li>• All students know that their dreams are valid and that people believe in their dreams - teachers believe in them - and with hard work and focus and support, they can achieve those dreams. (Sometimes students don’t know that they are seen as - “Yes, I believe you can do that!”) Some students are better advocating for themselves than others. (e.g., Mentoring programs at school where students are paired with someone who can affirm that.)</li> <li>• No student/family have to advocate for themselves <i>alone</i>.</li> <li>• Families know that they have a real partnership with the school/staff to meet the needs of their children. Families know</li> </ul>	

		<p>that they are welcome to have conversations with teachers/administrators about the school.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students feel they are respected; family feel that they are respected, and teacher/staff feel that they are respected.</li> <li>• Blur the line of division between School and Community, in our spaces, activities, and think of School as a Community Resource. Where families can have low-stakes interactions with school.</li> </ul>	
15	Sarah Barton, Shaun Berry, Alison Elmer, Rashmi Pimprikar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clear and consistent communication while engaging diverse voices (Faculty, Families and Students)</li> <li>• Every child has a space to creatively contribute and have their contributions valued</li> <li>• Students as creators vs end users. Providing our students an open ended culture of curiosity, inquiry and problem solving.</li> <li>• Removing barriers and providing access. Inclusion and inclusivity, what does it look like? That it is OUR job together. We rise and fall together!</li> <li>• Growth Vs Achievement with benchmarks in mind</li> <li>• Meet students where they are and create spaces where they feel they belong</li> <li>• Students as creators vs end users. Providing our students an open ended culture of curiosity, inquiry and problem solving.</li> <li>• Inclusion and inclusivity, what does it look like? That it is OUR job together. We rise and fall together!</li> <li>• Staff members and all members of community feel like they are valued, supported and can work towards their strengths</li> <li>• How do we articulate that the curriculum is meeting everyone's needs?</li> <li>• How to engage families purposefully? What should meaningful, highly engaged family partnerships look like? Who is the end user of public education?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clear Agenda and actionable next steps</li> <li>• A balance between achievable outcomes in reasonable timeframe</li> <li>• Actively seek out diverse voices and opinions, even the quietest ones</li> </ul>