

MEMORANDUM

DATE: October 22, 2023

TO: Members of the Alexandria City School Board

FROM: Budget Advisory Committee
Ryan Reyna (Chair); Bill Pfister (Vice Chair); Jenica Patterson (Secretary);
Abdulah Abdalla; Nancy Drane; Christina Hildebidle; Bridget Shea Westfall;
Lillian Vagnoni

SUBJECT: 2023-2024 Scope of Work

CC: Robert Easley, ACPS Director of Budget & Financial Systems & Reporting
Dominic Turner, ACPS Chief Financial Officer
Kathy Stenzel, Alexandria City Budget and Fiscal Affairs Advisory Committee

The School Board Budget Advisory Committee (BAC) submits the following scope of work document for the School Board's review.

BAC's 2023-2024 Scope of Work will include the following:

1. Joint Memo with City Council Budget and Fiscal Affairs Advisory Committee

As is customary, BAC will draft a joint memo with the City Council Budget and Fiscal Affairs Advisory Committee (BFAAC) with a projected 2024 Q2 or early Q3 delivery date. BFAAC and BAC leadership will meet over the next three months to determine the specific topics to cover. Given the impending collective bargaining discussions, we anticipate that discussions about how City and Schools political leaders and staff work together to set budget boundaries and the process for engagement between the bodies will be up for discussion. Additionally, there may be interest in identifying and exploring different revenue sharing options the City and Schools might explore in the future. Several City and Schools elected leaders have mentioned an interest in learning more about and better understanding the opportunities related to revenue sharing as a potential path to mitigate budget implications arising from collective bargaining.

2. Supplemental Memo on Budget Rules of Engagement and Budget Process Resolution

In conversations with members of the Board, they have expressed interest in learning about how other jurisdictions in Virginia and outside Virginia structure the engagement of the Board, City/County, and community related to the development and approval of the Operating Budget, as well as what processes are used for resolution. In particular, they are interested in questions around timing and process, such as: where in the budget calendar the community has the opportunity to offer feedback, to what extent and how do Board members make changes to the Superintendent-developed budget, how do other jurisdictions engage city/county officials, etc.

This review will also hopefully encompass questions about engagement in preparation for and through collective bargaining processes. Similar to the approach used for the development of the 2021-2022 memo on budget related communications, BAC will identify a selection of similarly-sized, -demographic, and structured school divisions and review their processes for Board and community budget engagement. Findings from the review will be summarized and potential opportunities for improvement will be shared with the Board and division staff.

3. Other Memos, as appropriate:

As always, BAC will continue to be available to the board to address any other issues of interest, and may reach out to the board from time to time on other topics. For example, BAC continues to remain interested in supporting further community outreach and engagement on the budget. BAC's EOY 2022-2023 [memo](#) recommends a number of actions, and we look forward to supporting the Board and Division in the further study and/or implementation of those.

Finally, BAC would like to formally offer our appreciation to the Board for its efforts to expand the Committee's membership. Our recently updated bylaws call for each member of the School Board to nominate one individual to serve on the Committee. As BAC's May 2021 recommendations stated, "[i]f it had a full complement of members, BAC might also be utilized to solicit and synthesize public feedback on the budget and then submit it to the School Board for its consideration." We strive to provide value to the Board and believe our value can increase even further with additional members.

BAC appreciates the School Board's support of its work and will endeavor to continue to provide the best recommendations possible on the budget and fiscal affairs of Alexandria City Public Schools. Board members are welcome to reach out to BAC with any feedback on BAC's proposed 2022-2023 Scope of Work. Chair Ryan Reyna may be reached at 703-678-7243, bac@acps.12.va.us, or ryan.reyna@gmail.com.