Stakeholder Participation in Major Construction Projects
In accordance with School Board Policy F-5.7 Construction and Maintenance, the School Board appoints members to a Building Level Planning Committee (BLPC) to facilitate stakeholder participation in a Major Construction project. The School Board appoints a BLPC chair and one of its members as liaison to each BLPC. The School Board adopts a charge for each BLPC to include, at a minimum, the student capacity, the instructional program, the school year, in time for which the school is to open, and the funding for the Major Construction project approved by the School Board.

Stakeholder Groups Represented on the BLPC
The School Board appoints members to represent the following stakeholder groups to the BLPC as applicable for each Major Construction project. BLPC members representing stakeholder groups may vote on recommendations to be made to the School Board regarding the Concept and Schematic Design proposals developed during the BLPC process.

- Parents: when the project involves improvements at an existing school or program, and when an existing school or program is to be relocated, members of the Parent Teacher Associations (PTA) or other groups representing parents of students at the school and sending schools as applicable.
- Parents: when the project is a new elementary or middle school or program, members of the PTAs or other groups representing parents at neighboring elementary schools or programs as applicable.
- Parents: when the project is a new high school or program, members of the PTAs or other groups representing parents at neighboring middle schools or programs as applicable.
- Students: when the project involves improvements at an existing high school or program, or an existing high school or program is to be relocated, members of the student organization as applicable.
- Students: when the project is a new high school or program, members of the student organizations at other high schools or programs as applicable.
- Special Education Parent Teacher Association (SEPTA): one member of SEPTA.
- Arlington Special Education Advisory Committee (ASEAC): one member of ASEAC.
- Civic Associations: members of the civic association in which the school or program is located or to be located, and of the civic associations that are adjacent to it.
- Advisory Council on School Facilities and Capital Programs (FAC): one member of FAC.
- Budget Advisory Committee (BAC): one member of BAC.
- Student Advisory Board (SAB): one member of SAB.
- Other Stakeholder Groups: the School Board may appoint members of other stakeholder groups with interest in the project as applicable.
- School Staff: the principal nominates up to six members of staff including him or herself when the project is at an existing school or program, or an existing school or program is to be relocated.
- School Staff: the Assistant Superintendent, Teaching and Learning, nominates up to six members of staff at existing schools or programs, including a principal, when the project is a new school or program.
Arlington Public Schools Staff Assigned to the BLPC
The Assistant Superintendents, Teaching and Learning, and Facilities and Operations appoint staff members to the BLPC to support its work and to provide direction to the BLPC and the Architecture/Engineering team on specific requirements for the project to meet Arlington Public Schools’ instructional, design, functional, operations, maintenance, cost and schedule standards and requirements. BLPC members appointed by APS staff may not vote on recommendations to be made to the School Board regarding the Concept and Schematic Design proposals developed during the BLPC process.

School and County Boards
The School Board adopts the charge for and appoints members to the BLPC for a Major Construction Project. The School Board awards a contract for design of the project to an Architecture/Engineering Team. The School Board approves the Educational Specifications, Concept, Schematic and Final Designs for a Major Construction project. The School Board awards a contract for construction of a Major Construction project to a Construction Manager at Risk or a General Contractor.

The County Board has adopted a charge for and appoints members to the Public Facilities Review Committee (PFRC). The County Board approves a Use Permit for most Major Construction projects after the School Board has approved the Schematic Design.

The School Board and County Board may convene work sessions before and during the design phases of the project to review design options and receive feedback from the BLPC, the public, and relevant County Commissions. Facilities and Operations staff informs BLPC members of School and County Board meeting agenda items related to the project. On School and County joint use projects School and County staff provide information to their senior staff and Board on project progress and design.

Public Facilities Review Committee
The Arlington County Board adopts a charge for and appoints members of County Commissions to the PFRC to advise it on APS and County capital projects. The County Board appoints members of civic associations affected by a specific facility project to the PFRC for that project. The PFRC and BLPC communicate and collaborate with one another throughout the Concept and Schematic Design phases of an Arlington Public Schools Major Construction Project. Civic associations and members of the PFRC may also be members of the BLPC. Joint meetings of the PFRC and BLPC may be held and are encouraged.

At the end of the Concept and Schematic Design phases the PFRC chair writes a letter to the County Board chair summarizing the recommendations of the PFRC on the Concept and Schematic Designs developed during the BLPC/PFRC process.

Role of BLPC
The BLPC makes recommendations to the School Board. The final decision on all matters considered by the BLPC rests within the sole discretion of the School Board. The BLPC meets regularly with the Architecture/Engineering team during the initial Concept and Schematic
Design phases of a Major Construction project, and occasionally as the project proceeds through subsequent design and construction phases, to provide input and feedback, and to make recommendations to the team and Arlington Public Schools staff.

- BLPC members facilitate communications with the stakeholder groups they represent as the Architecture/Engineering team develops the design of a Major Construction Project through the Concept and Schematic Design phases; BLPC members keep stakeholder groups informed and updated on progress by soliciting feedback from them and by sharing their feedback with the BLPC.

- The BLPC communicates and collaborates closely with the PFRC throughout the process; BLPC and PFRC members recognize that the design of the project will be influenced by and benefit from their joint communication and collaboration.

- Members of the BLPC understand that, while all Arlington Public Schools facilities are community assets and are shared with Arlington County programs and community members to the greatest extent possible, the prime purpose of a Major Construction project is to provide student learning environments that comply with the Educational Specifications, student capacity, instructional program, project schedule and funding approved by the School Board.

- Members of the BLPC help to manage expectations among stakeholder groups regarding additional amenities and features that may be desired by community members, but are not included in the Educational Specifications, and that, if added, such amenities and features would cause the cost of the project to exceed the funding approved by the School Board, and would reduce funding available for other much needed capital projects.

- BLPC members understand that the design of a project is greatly influenced by the funding approved for it by the School Board, and that changes may be necessary to reconcile the design with funding approved based on total project cost estimates prepared by the Architecture/Engineering team, the Construction Manager at Risk and Arlington Public Schools staff prior to completion of the Concept Design, Schematic Design, Design Development and Construction Document phases, at final bidding for construction and during construction.

- BLPC members understand that some aspects of the Schematic Design approved by the School Board may change as design documents are prepared by the Architecture/Engineering team to comply with County and other statutory requirements prior to submission of the project for approval of a Use Permit by the County Board, and prior to approval of required permits for construction.

- The BLPC chair writes letters to the School Board chair at the conclusion of the Concept and Schematic Design phases summarizing the recommendations of the BLPC on the Concept and Schematic Designs developed during the BLPC process.

- BLPC members may assist Facilities and Operations staff at community meetings prior to presentation of the Concept and Schematic Designs to the School Board for information and action.

**Role of Architecture/Engineering Team**

The School Board awards a contract for Architecture/Engineering services on a Major Construction project in accordance with Policy Implementation Procedure F-5.7 PIP-5, Selection of Architectural Engineering Firms. The Architecture/Engineering team includes civil
engineering, landscape architecture, transportation/parking, mechanical, electrical, plumbing, structural and other engineering and design consultants.

- The Architecture/Engineering team contracted for a Major Construction Project develops the Educational Specifications for the project based on Arlington Public Schools standards, and on direction from and interaction with the Departments of Teaching and Learning and Facilities and Operations.
- The Architecture/Engineering team plans and designs the project with input and feedback from the BLPC based on its charge, with input, feedback and direction from the Department of Teaching and Learning and school administrators as applicable, and with input, feedback and direction from Department of Facilities and Operations staff.
- The Architecture/Engineering team and Facilities and Operations staff are responsible for compliance with the Educational Specifications, student capacity, instructional program, project schedule and funding approved by the School Board, and for helping to manage expectations among the BLPC and broader Arlington community regarding what may be achieved within the funding approved.

Role of Arlington Public School Staff Members

- Department of Teaching and Learning and Department of Facilities and Operations staff submit the Educational Specifications for a Major Construction Project to the School Board for approval.
- Department of Facilities and Operations staff manage the BLPC process, including scheduling and developing agendas for meetings, and submitting drafts of presentations to be made at meetings to members no later than 24 hours before the meeting takes place.
- Facilities and Operations staff updates and meets with the BLPC occasionally as the project proceeds through the subsequent Use Permit, Design Development, Construction Documents, Bidding, Construction and Post Construction phases.

Communications

Members of the BLPC are appointed by the School Board and are therefore subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act. Effective communications with citizens and stakeholder groups interested in and affected by the planning and design of a Major Construction project are critical. BLPC members serve as communication liaisons between the BLPC and the stakeholder groups they represent. Members of the BLPC maintain active communication with their stakeholder groups to share updates, obtain feedback and facilitate community support for the resulting design. BLPC members share updates through multiple methods to ensure effective community and stakeholder engagement, including: email lists, web pages, social media, stakeholder group meetings and communications, and community meetings. Key roles have been developed for BLPC members to ensure that communications are effective and that citizens and stakeholder groups become and remain engaged in the process.

- The PTA, or other groups representing parents, and other parent members of the BLPC collaborate with the school principal to keep parents informed of the progress and design of the project and relay feedback received to the BLPC for consideration.
- Facilities and Operations staff schedule design presentations to parents and relay feedback received to the BLPC for consideration.
Student members of the BLPC notify and communicate progress and design of the project to the student organization and other students, and relay feedback received to the BLPC for consideration.

Civic association members notify and communicate progress and design of the project to the communities they represent, and relay feedback received to the BLPC for consideration.

The chair and FAC member of the BLPC provide information on the progress and design of the project to the greater Arlington community, and relay feedback received to the BLPC for consideration.

The school principal and other school staff members of the BLPC keep school staff informed of the progress and design of the project through staff meetings and other regular communications, and by posting drawings and other informative materials in the school; comments are solicited and shared with the BLPC for consideration.

Individual members of a BLPC recognize that the committee acts only as a whole. Individual members may not represent their own personal opinions or comments verbally or in writing as those of the BLPC or Arlington Public Schools. When communicating with the media, members of the community, or other individuals or institutions, BLPC members exercise caution to ensure that, unless authorized by majority vote of the committee, they specifically indicate that any opinions or comments expressed are, in fact, their own.

School Facilities Committee

A School Facilities Committee may be formed to perform a similar role to that of a BLPC on specific projects that have an estimated construction cost under $10 million, or have a defined scope and/or short duration such as interior renovations, playgrounds and landscaping at existing schools. On such projects the Assistant Superintendent, Facilities and Operations asks the principal of the school at which the project is located to appoint a Special School Committee. Members of the committee include the school principal or designee, school staff, parents and Facilities and Operations staff members as applicable.

Information Provided to BLPC and School Facilities Committee

At the first meeting Facilities and Operations staff provides the information needed by the BLPC or School Facilities Committee to facilitate and direct its work. Such information may include, but is not be limited to, the following:

- A roster of BLPC members for the project
- The School Board’s adopted charge for the project
- The student capacity, instructional program, project schedule and funding approved by the School Board for the project
- The request for proposal for Architecture/Engineering services including the general scope of work on which the Architecture/Engineering team’s contract for services on the project is based
- Educational Specifications for recent relevant projects as appropriate
- Current ten-year student projections
- Existing County plans and studies relevant to the project
References
Policy F-5.7 Construction and Maintenance

Policy Implementation Procedure Adoption and Revision History
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