



Alexandria City Public Schools

WS 4/1/03

MEMORANDUM

TO: The Honorable Mayor Kerry Donley
 Members of City Council
 The Honorable Mark Eaton, Chairman
 Members of the School Board
 Phil Sunderland, City Manager

FROM: Rebecca L. Perry, Superintendent

SUBJECT: City/Schools Joint Meeting, April 1, 2003
 Responses to Questions

DATE: April 9, 2003

Rebecca L. Perry

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Superintendent of Schools
Rebecca L. Perry

Attached are responses to questions from Council members at the April 1, 2003 Joint City Council/School Board meeting.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any additional questions or would like other information.

School Board

Chairman
Mark R. Eaton

Vice Chairman
Susan J. Johnson

Members
Sally Ann Baynard

Linda D. Cheatham

Mary M. Danforth

V. Rodger Digilio

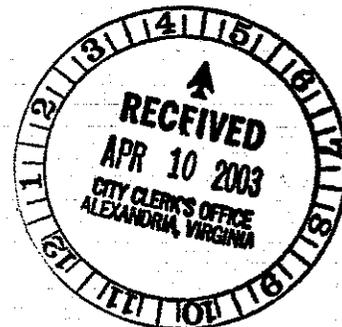
Stephen J. Kenealy

Gwendolyn H. Lewis

Mark O. Wilkoff

RLP:jf

Attachment



**Responses to Questions from the April 1, 2003 Joint Budget Work Session
of the Alexandria City Council and the Alexandria City School Board**

1. Question from Councilwoman Joyce Woodson:

Why is there an increase in salaries and benefits if the number of positions is decreasing?

Response: While the number of positions in the budget for FY 2004 is decreasing by 18.5 FTE for a savings of approximately \$1,000,000, there are a number of new budget items that account for the net increase in salaries and benefits. These new budget items are listed below:

- Step increase for all eligible employees: \$2,657,856
- Revised compensation plan for licensed staff, lengthened instructional year, and alignment of salaries for system leadership: \$2,239,249
- Increase in health insurance benefits for current employees and retirees: \$1,078,700
- Achievement incentive pay for schools accredited with warning: \$125,000
- New housing program for teachers: \$25,000
- Increased tuition assistance for support employees: \$12,000

The increase in salaries and benefits from FY 2003 to FY 2004 is \$4,650,548. If the savings from personnel reductions is added to this figure, there is a gross increase of \$5,713,424. The new budget items listed above total \$6,137,805. To make an equivalent comparison, there is a decrease of \$424,381 in salaries and benefits from FY 2003 to FY 2004 before the addition of the new budget items listed above.

2. Question from Councilman David Speck:

On page D-3 in the budget document, why are there such dramatic changes in the Special Education enrollment column?

Response: Between 1974 and 1990, the enrollment in the special education column comprised special education students who had not been assigned to a specific grade level. In 1991, all special education students except trainable mentally retarded (TMR) were assigned to a grade level. Thus, between 1991 and 1999, the special education column comprised only TMR students. In 2000, the designation was changed to reflect all students enrolled in district-wide special education programs. District-wide special education programs are those programs housed at a particular school but attended by special education

students from across the school system. The physically handicapped program at Jefferson-Houston is one example of this type of program.

3. Question from Mayor Donley:

Could you elaborate on the other projects in the technology budget?

Response: The Technology Plan budget for school year 2003-2004 is \$2,603,003, an \$815,435 *reduction* from the 2002-2003 budget of \$3,418,438.

Other than the Minnie Howard Laptop Initiative, the budget is composed of the following three categories:

Integrated Learning Systems/Intelligent Tutoring Software \$42,072

These funds are for the purchase of software that will be used at four elementary schools in 2003-2004. The funds also support the Boxer Math programs used in grades six through twelve and teacher training.

Technology Infrastructure \$757,138

These funds are for hardware enhancements and upgrades. Due to steadily increasing student use of school networks and to rapidly increasing backup and storage requirements, the transmission speed of the local area networks in all schools is being increased from 10 megabytes to 100 megabytes. The schools addressed in 2003-2004 are the middle schools (the portions not newly constructed), Maury Elementary, and the elementary schools using Intelligent Tutoring Software.

Scheduled network file server upgrades, as well as administrative systems and servers, are included in this category.

Instructional Technology Support \$490,915

These funds support training training for instructional technology resource teachers, technology training for all teachers, training on data driven decision making for administrative and instructional staff, extensions and enhancements to student information systems, and internet access for all students.

4. Question from Councilman David Speck:

What are the proposed teacher salary comparisons from the surrounding jurisdictions?

Response: Arlington County has not released their scale for 2003-2004. At present, Arlington anticipates a 2% COLA for all staff and no other changes in its salary scale.

Please see attached proposed FY 2004 teacher salary scales for Alexandria and Fairfax County. Fairfax County is adding two days to the teacher contract (equivalent to a 1% increase) and proposes a 2% COLA.

5. Question from Councilwoman Joyce Woodson:

What does National Board Certification mean?

Response: Currently, ACPS has twelve teachers who have been certified by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (the "National Board.").

National Board Certification® measures a teacher's practice against high and rigorous standards that the Board has developed in 26 fields. The standards identified for each field are founded upon the five core propositions that outline what the National Board values and believes should be honored in teaching:

1. Teachers are committed to students and their learning.
2. Teachers know the subjects they teach and how to teach those subjects to students.
3. Teachers are responsible for managing and monitoring student learning.
4. Teachers think systematically about their practice and learn from experience.
5. Teachers are members of learning communities.

The certification process is an extensive series of performance-based assessments that includes teaching portfolios, student work samples, videotapes, and thorough analyses of the candidates' classroom teaching and student learning. Teachers also complete a series of written exercises that probe the depth of their subject matter knowledge as well as their understanding of how to teach those subjects to their students.

Teachers who have participated in National Board Certification overwhelmingly describe the process as the most powerful professional

development experience of their careers. They say the experience changes them as professionals and that through the process they deepen their content knowledge and develop, master, and reflect on new approaches to working with students.

As of March 2003, legislative and policy action creating incentives and recognition for National Board Certification has been enacted in 49 states and in approximately 476 local school districts, including the District of Columbia.

6. Question from Councilwoman Claire Eberwein:

Please describe the laptop program at Charles Barrett Elementary.

Response: There is no structured laptop program at Charles Barrett Elementary. The school has 30 Dream Writers that it purchased through an ACPS technology grant. These machines have no hard drive and very limited memory. They are successfully used to teach keyboarding to fourth grade students. The students may take them home to practice exercises. The 30 machines purchased in 1998 can be temperamental.

If a machine fails to perform adequately at home, the child tells the teacher the next morning and is allowed to do the practice on another computer. Some children do the assignment on their own home computer and bring in the printed evidence. While the network resource teacher has heard from time to time from parents that the machine did not perform as expected, the principal has had no complaints. Although the machines are not perfect, they are the best the school had available to allow students to take home for practice.

The school also has 10 Apple E-Mates purchased with another ACPS technology grant and local funds. These are used only by children with identified learning disabilities. Students are allowed to check out these computers.

NEW 2003 - 2004 Salary Schedule

192 Day Contract

Licensed staff must meet the following criteria in order to receive an annual salary step increment:

- (1) Hold a valid Virginia teaching license
and
- (2a) Receive a final performance rating of 'Satisfactory'
or
- (2b) Receive a final performance rating of 'Meets or Exceeds Expectation' (PEP).

Step	BA
A	\$34,182
B	\$35,378
C	\$36,616
D	\$38,448
E	\$39,601
F	\$40,788
G	\$42,624
H	\$44,542
I	\$46,547
J	\$48,641

Step	BA
K	\$50,830
L	\$53,117
M	\$55,507
N	\$57,450
O	\$59,460
P	\$61,244
Q	\$63,082
R	\$64,975
S	\$66,924
T	\$68,932

Criteria for Master's and Master's plus 30 Compensation

Staff will receive additional compensation for an MA and MA+30 in approved areas. The base salary increases are:

- MA degree – an additional \$9000
- MA+30 degree – an additional \$11,000

Effective July 1, 2003, any employee who begins a Master's program must receive prior approval in order to qualify for additional compensation upon program completion.*
Prior approval will be based on the following:

- Related to the current teaching area
- Critical shortage teaching areas
- Targeted specialized training
- Identified division priorities

***Employees currently pursuing a Master's degree or a Masters + 30 program are to be grandfathered and will be compensated when the degree is conferred.**

Fairfax County Proposed FY 2004 Teacher Salary Scale

Days Degree	195 BA	195 BA+15	195 BA+30	195 MA	195 MA+30	195 PhD
1	35,813	37,137	38,461	40,382	41,955	43,723
2	36,369	37,694	39,017	40,939	42,512	44,280
3	37,826	39,150	40,474	42,395	43,968	45,736
4	39,337	40,661	41,985	43,906	45,479	47,247
5	40,911	42,236	43,559	45,481	47,054	48,822
6	42,545	43,870	45,193	47,115	48,687	50,455
7	44,249	45,573	46,897	48,818	50,391	52,159
8	46,019	47,344	48,667	50,589	52,161	53,930
9	47,860	49,185	50,508	52,430	54,002	55,770
10	49,583	50,908	52,231	54,153	55,725	57,493
11	51,368	52,693	54,016	55,938	57,510	59,278
12	53,217	54,542	55,865	57,787	59,359	61,128
13*	55,133	56,458	57,781	59,703	61,275	63,043
14	56,898	58,222	59,545	61,467	63,040	64,808
15	58,718	60,043	61,366	63,288	64,860	66,628
16	60,597	61,922	63,245	65,167	66,739	68,507
17	62,536	63,861	65,184	67,106	68,678	70,447
18	64,538	65,862	67,185	69,107	70,680	72,448
19	66,603	67,927	69,251	71,172	72,745	74,513
20	68,734	70,059	71,382	73,304	74,876	76,644
21	68,734	70,059	71,382	73,304	74,876	76,644
22	68,734	70,059	72,757	74,678	76,251	78,019
23	68,734	70,059	72,757	74,678	76,251	78,019
24	68,734	70,059	74,159	76,080	77,653	79,421
25	68,734	70,059	74,159	76,080	77,653	79,421
26	68,734	70,059	75,589	77,511	79,083	80,851