



Faith Alliance for  
Climate Solutions  
Arlington



SIERRA CLUB  
POTOMAC RIVER GROUP

October 31, 2022

Arlington County School Board  
Dr. Francisco Duran, Superintendent

**Re: Revising Policy F-2 Goals to set appropriate APS climate and energy targets**

Dear Chair Goldstein, School Board Members, and Superintendent Duran:

On behalf of three locally-based environmental groups representing thousands of Arlington parents, students, volunteers, and community members, we ask Arlington Public Schools to adopt policies that reflect its commitment to addressing the ongoing climate emergency.

Adopting these policies will help protect current and future APS students – our children – from the worst consequences of climate change. It is one of the most important things we must do to ensure a future in which they can thrive.

The ongoing review of Policy F-2 Goals relating to APS Facilities and Operations is the right place, at the right time, for APS to adopt appropriate goals in this area. That document has not been revised since 2003 and does not reflect a modern understanding of the climate crisis and the steps APS must take to address it. We propose adding the following new section:<sup>1</sup>

***Climate Change***

*Arlington Public Schools is committed to achieving carbon neutrality in its operations by 2040. Important goals in furtherance of this commitment include:*

- 1. Provide carbon neutral facilities through new construction and major renovation of Arlington Public Schools-owned buildings. Achieve Zero Carbon Certification or Zero Energy Certification from the International Living Future Institute (ILFI) when feasible.*
- 2. Reduce the exposure of students and the community to unhealthy fossil fuel pollutants and reduce the cost of operations, maintenance and fuel by transitioning the Arlington Public Schools bus fleet to zero emission buses by 2035.*
- 3. Achieve net 100% renewable electricity for APS operations by 2027. [Arlington County Government will reach this goal by year-end 2022.]*
- 4. Improve indoor air quality, reduce risk of fire and explosion, reduce exposure to volatile fossil fuel prices, reduce operations, maintenance and fuel costs, and eliminate onsite greenhouse gas emissions by purchasing electric appliances and equipment in place of fossil-fuel powered equipment when electric alternatives are available.*

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<sup>1</sup> These goals alternatively may be incorporated under pre-existing headings with the same policy effect. We believe adding a new section will communicate goals with greater clarity.

5. *Systematically improve energy efficiency in APS facilities. Explore Energy Savings Performance Contracts (ESPCs) and other cost-effective strategies to reduce energy use and achieve operational cost savings.*
6. *Assess the rooftop solar potential of all APS-owned facilities and install solar arrays where feasible.*
7. *Reduce waste of all kinds. Increase waste diversion to at least 90 percent by 2038 to meet Arlington County's zero waste commitment.*

The overarching goal of achieving carbon neutrality by 2040 provides an important framework for each of the seven subsidiary goals. The 2040 goal has been adopted by peer school systems including [Fairfax County Public Schools](#). It is worth noting that FCPS adopted its 2040 goal prior to passage of the federal Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act and the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA). These federal initiatives provide hundreds of billions of dollars of financial support for school bus electrification, charging systems, renewable electricity, energy efficiency and building electrification costs.

Achieving the 2040 goal will require sustained effort, but the funding and policy environment today is more favorable than it has ever been.

Our organizations recommend setting ambitious goals in this area. We need goals that will motivate, inspire and expand possibilities in the face of an inherently uncertain future.

Fortunately, APS can move quickly in this area by building on its own impressive experience in building net zero energy schools and learning from the extensive and detailed work done by our peer school systems and local governments. Time is of the essence and we do not recommend a long and involved process for goal-setting in this case. Instead, we recommend devoting significant time and resources to operational planning and implementation.

Our organizations would welcome the opportunity to discuss these goals and to provide more detailed information on any aspect at any time.

Sincerely,

Elenor Hodges  
Executive Director, EcoAction Arlington

Julie Rosenberg  
Leader, Faith Alliance for Climate Solutions, Arlington Hub

John Bloom  
Executive Committee Chair, Sierra Club Potomac River Group