



April 28, 2026

Bethany Zecher Sutton, Chair
Arlington School Board
Syphax Education Center
2110 Washington Blvd,
Arlington, VA 22204

Re: Advancing the Climate Resolution in the Upcoming CIP

Dear Chair Sutton and School Board Members,

As you work to develop the upcoming Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) we recognize the significant and growing needs across the school system for repairs, deferred maintenance, modernization, and capacity improvements in the face of fiscal constraints, particularly the limited bond capacity available to address the full scope of these priorities. We also note that the CIP will have important consequences for the Schools' ability to meet climate action commitments contained in the Arlington School Board's Climate Action Resolution and the 2024-30 Strategic Plan.

Given this reality, we respectfully urge Arlington Public Schools (APS) to more fully consider alternative financing mechanisms—specifically public-private partnerships (P3s) and energy savings performance contracts (ESPCs)—as part of the CIP development process. These tools can help bridge the gap between identified needs and available bond funding, while also advancing the Schools' climate and sustainability goals.

Public-private partnerships offer a flexible framework for delivering complex capital projects by leveraging private sector expertise, innovation, and financing. P3s can accelerate project delivery timelines, transfer certain risks away from the public sector, and provide lifecycle cost efficiencies. For example, the Prince George's County Public School System has successfully implemented a large-scale P3 program to deliver multiple school facilities more quickly than would have been possible through traditional procurement.

Energy savings performance contracts (ESPCs) present another compelling opportunity, particularly in light of APS's sustainability commitments. ESPCs enable school systems to implement energy efficiency upgrades—such as HVAC improvements, lighting retrofits, and building automation systems—with little or no upfront capital cost. The resulting energy savings are then used to pay for the improvements over time. This model not only addresses critical infrastructure needs but also reduces greenhouse gas emissions and operating costs. School districts such as Montgomery, Manassas, Alexandria, Fairfax, and Loudoun County have successfully used ESPCs to modernize facilities, lower utility expenses, and make measurable progress toward climate goals.

We realize these financing mechanisms are not a panacea as they can add to the cost of debt service, but they can enable APS to accelerate much-needed improvements, and align capital investments with the County's broader climate objectives. These approaches are not replacements for traditional bond financing, but rather complementary tools that can help ensure that more projects move forward sooner.

Thank you for your dedication to Arlington's students, educators, and community. We would welcome the opportunity to discuss these approaches further and support APS in advancing sustainable, innovative solutions in a fiscally responsible and forward-looking way.

Sincerely,

/s/_____

Elenor Hodges
Executive Director, EcoAction Arlington

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

Dean Amel
Chair, Sierra Club - Potomac River Group

Cc:

Dr. Francisco Duran, Superintendent, Arlington Public Schools
Andy Hawkins, Business Manager, APS Finance & Management Services
Kimberly Graves, Chief of School Support
Renee Harber, Assistant Superintendent for Facilities and Operations