



ARLINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT REPORT

JANUARY 28, 2026



WHAT TOOK PLACE

Arlington Public Schools held a community meeting on January 28th in the school's "Blue Gym." After a short presentation from DLR Group regarding ideas for potential facility improvements, NASB facilitated discussion around several topic areas chosen by the Board of Education. Nearly 50 community members were in attendance, which were split into 8 different table groups for discussion.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Community Engagement report reflects strong overall pride in Arlington Public Schools and a deep sense of connection between the district, families, and broader community. Community and parent involvement emerged as the district's most frequently cited point of pride, followed by the range of classroom and extracurricular opportunities, with academic indicators such as student achievement, graduation rate, and college readiness also noted. Another was the importance of quality teachers, small class sizes, low staff turnover, and welcoming district culture that are all currently present at APS.

When considering priorities for student learning over the next five years, responses placed a clear emphasis on career readiness and workforce alignment. Growth in trade and technical education was identified as the top priority, along with increased local partnerships, expanded career exploration opportunities, and instruction in financial literacy, employability skills, and emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence. These responses suggest an expectation that the district continue balancing academic achievement with practical, real-world preparation for a variety of postsecondary pathways.

Feedback related to community partnerships and family engagement reinforced existing strengths while also identifying future opportunities. Those in attendance expressed interest in family-focused events and further engagement with community partners for experiential and career learning opportunities. Current and potential communication systems were also discussed in the absence of a town newspaper. Responses, paired with attendance at the meeting show the eagerness of families and the community to support the school through various means.

General comments to conclude the evening centered around parking, accessibility, building appearance, and space limitations of the wrestling room.

WHAT'S NEXT

With a strong foundation of community trust and engagement evident in the report, the Board's next role is to translate community input into clear direction, priorities, and accountability. The data does not suggest a need for course correction, but rather for intentional alignment and follow-through.

First, the Board should use the identified priorities to affirm or refine the district's strategic direction. This may include confirming that current goals sufficiently address CTE expansion, career pathways, and emerging skills such as AI, or signaling where adjustments or new priorities are warranted. The Board's role is not to design programs, but to ensure the district's long-term vision reflects community expectations.

Second, the feedback around partnerships and engagement calls for the Board to set expectations for structured, two-way communication and community involvement. This includes asking how engagement efforts are tracked, how input is used in decision-making, and how outcomes are communicated back to families. Establishing clarity around "what happens after engagement" will help sustain trust and avoid engagement fatigue.

Third, facility-related data suggest the need for continued oversight of long-range planning. While operational details rest with administration, the Board should consider how facilities, parking, accessibility, and safety align with enrollment trends and program growth. Clear timelines, transparency, and regular updates will be important to address these points.

To conclude, the Board should view this report as a baseline for future measurement. Determining how and when progress will be reviewed will help ensure that community input meaningfully informs decisions over time (*ensure to align with Strategic Plan Strategies 3.2 and 4.1*). In short, the Board's next step is to listen, align, and lead: listen to what the community values, align district priorities accordingly, and lead through clear expectations, oversight, and communication.

Identify the points of pride, accomplishment, and achievement of Arlington Public Schools.

Field	Groups Identifying (of 8 possible)	Field	Groups Identifying (of 8 possible)
Community/Parent Involvement & Support	5	College Readiness	1
Available Student Offerings	3	Community/Family Engagement Through School Events	1
Collaboration with Youth Sports	3	Continual Growth of Young Families	1
FBLA	3	District Facilities	1
Student Achievement / Test Scores	3	Encourage Involvement	1
Athletics	2	Friendly Competition	1
FFA / Ag Program	2	Graduation Rate	1
Inclusive of All Students	2	Growth in Wrestling Program	1
Quality Teachers	2	High Quantity of Scholar Athletes	1
School Communication	2	Minimal Staff Turnover	1
Strong Reputation / Appealing District	2	Partner with Surrounding Schools	1
Teacher Engagement	2	Percentage of Teachers with Masters Degree	1
Accelerated Programs	1	Skills USA	1
Art Throughout School	1	Small Class Sizes	1
Arts	1	Striv TV	1
Classrooms	1	Student Behaviors	1
Clubs	1	Up to Date Technology/Computers	1
College Going Rate	1	Variety of Pathways	1
		Welcoming	1

What key areas related to student learning should be prioritized over the next five years?

Field	Groups Identifying <i>(of 8 possible)</i>
Trade/Technical Education (CTE) Growth	7
Local Partnerships	4
Artificial Intelligence Training for Staff & Students	3
Career Exploration Info/Exposure	3
Financial Literacy	3
Foreign Language at Younger Age	2
3D Technology / Robotics	1
Appealing Facilities/Spaces	1
Community Input for Needs	1
CTE / Ag Facility Updates	1
Dual Credit	1
Employable Skills	1
Fine Arts Skills	1
Giving Back / Volunteering	1
Improved Testing Systems	1
Learning Challenges Affecting Test Motivation	1
Low Testing Scores	1
Mentoring Program	1
Proactive Planning for Growth	1
Professional Learning for Teachers	1
Roots to Wings	1
Soft Skills	1
Special Education Needs	1
Technology Skills	1
Weight Room w/ Community Access	1

How can the district strengthen community partnerships and increase family connection, communication, and involvement?

Field	Groups Identifying (of 8 possible)
Family Events (i.e., Muffins w/ Mom, Book Bingo, Literacy Game Night)	3
Filling Newspaper Void w/ Community Updates	3
Job Fair / Dream Day	3
Partnerships w/ Local Community/Businesses	3
Alumni Presenting on Experiences/Careers	2
Classroom & Extracurricular Communication	2
Annual Community Engagement	1
Collaboration with PTO and Booster Club	1
Community Access to Weight Room	1
Community Garden	1
Community Wellness Center & Library	1
Continue with Strong Sponsors	1
Digital Messaging Board by Bus Barn	1
Easy Accessibility to Information/Involvement	1
Healthy School–Community Communication Practices	1
Job Shadowing	1
PR/Media Person	1
Representation at Community Events (i.e., Summer Sizzle, Fall Festival, Arlington Community Church)	1
Shared Facility with School/Community	1
Unified Sports	1

General Comments:

- community pride (community has been great since we moved here)
- parent expertise collected so they can be contacted as an expert speaker (engaging our community)

- parking
- handicap accessible parking for activities (move the vans)
- competing schools' bus parking

- private funding for wrestling room (would the school have interest in renting/using the space)

- community engagement 3 part? where does it go from there, how do we follow up as a board?
- hard feelings both ways, wrestling room and access. wrestling room doesn't have enough room
- 45 ish wrestlers is a safety concern (plus 79 youth)

- the appearance of our building, currently externally
- is there plans now for the building?
- What can we do now?
- current parking
- school community parking

