



ARLINGTON COUNTY  
SPORTS COMMISSION  
2100 Clarendon Blvd., Suite 414  
Arlington, Virginia 22201



December 17, 2019

The Honorable Christian Dorsey, Chair  
Arlington County Planning Commission  
2100 Clarendon Blvd., Suite 300  
Arlington, VA 22201

Re: Arlington Career Center Athletic Field and Sports Facilities

Dear Mr. Dorsey,

The Sports Commission vigorously supports the inclusion of a full and robust array of athletic fields and sports facilities at Arlington's public high schools. For this reason, the Commission feels compelled to express our surprise and concern with the recommendation set forth in the Arlington Facilities and Student Accommodation Plan (AFSAP)<sup>1</sup> to divert funds dedicated to building a sports field at the Arlington Career Center (ACC) campus to other purposes.

According to the AFSAP and other Arlington Public School (APS) documents, the ACC redevelopment plan will bring almost 2200 high-school seats to the ACC campus.<sup>2</sup> Nevertheless, on the page 5 of the Executive Summary, the AFSAP recommends that the School Board "[c]onsider shifting funds, currently planned for the Career Center field and parking garage, to address middle or elementary school capacity needs" in the 2021–30 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP).

The Commission understands the delicate balancing act the County and School Board face each and every day between the costs and benefits of programs and facilities. But we feel that the construction of a public high school housing hundreds of full-time students lacking even a single

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<sup>1</sup> Available at <https://www.apsva.us/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/AFSAP-2019-v12-September-23-2019.pdf>.

<sup>2</sup> According to APS, the redevelopment of ACC will bring 250 new full-time seats for the Arlington Tech program (bringing the total number of full-time students to 600) and 800 new full-time seats for an option program yet determined. Together with other full-time programs at the Career Center (Academic Academy, HILT Institute, PEP, and Teen Parenting) and Career-Technical Education (CTE) seats, APS expects to host approximately 2200 high-school students on the ACC campus every day. See, e.g., Arlington Career Center Expansion Project, BLPC Charge (available at [https://go.boarddocs.com/vsba/arlington/Board.nsf/files/BFJQQB6A633D/\\$file/F-1%20Career%20Center%20BLPC\\_Charge.pdf](https://go.boarddocs.com/vsba/arlington/Board.nsf/files/BFJQQB6A633D/$file/F-1%20Career%20Center%20BLPC_Charge.pdf)); Career Center Educational Specifications, slide 3 (available at [https://go.boarddocs.com/vsba/arlington/Board.nsf/files/BHPKZ4543B2D/\\$file/F-1%20Arl%20Career%20Center%20Ed%20Spec-%20Presentation%20-%20REV%2011-7-19.pdf](https://go.boarddocs.com/vsba/arlington/Board.nsf/files/BHPKZ4543B2D/$file/F-1%20Arl%20Career%20Center%20Ed%20Spec-%20Presentation%20-%20REV%2011-7-19.pdf)).

sports field—not to mention the other sports and recreational facilities enjoyed at the other public high schools—would be an injustice to the students and the community.

The AFSAP's recommendation for no athletic field at the ACC campus is particularly troubling given that this school would be located in an economically diverse and health-challenged community. For example, Arlington's own Report of the Destination 2027 Steering Committee shows that almost all the neighborhoods located within walking distance of the ACC campus have populations likely to experience poorer health outcomes or disparities than other neighborhoods in Arlington.<sup>3</sup> To require students at this school to take buses to sports facilities or otherwise be compelled to accept lesser opportunities than those available at the other Arlington public high schools could be interpreted as a determination that these students and this community are not deserving of fair and equal treatment.

Moreover, this school would be starting its sports program from scratch. The sports programs at the other schools provide a rich culture of hard work, determination and pride. We should endeavor to provide these opportunities and benefits to the students and community of our next high school.

For the above stated reasons, the Sports Commission supports the fullest possible array of sports facilities – including fields, gymnasium, and swimming pool -- at the ACC campus, regardless of the educational focus of the high school. We request that you share our views with the PFRC, BLPC, and others involved in the planning process and encourage them to adequately provide for sports capacity at this location.

Sincerely,



Shirley Brothwell, Chair  
Sports Commission

Cc: County Board Members  
Mark Schwartz, County Manager  
William Ross, Chair, Park and Recreation Commission  
Jane Rudolph, Director, Department of Parks and Recreation  
Ted Black, Chair, Career Center BLPC  
Jim Lantelme, Chair, Career Center PFRC

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<sup>3</sup> See Life Expectancy: Who you are and where you live can make a decade of difference, page 2 (available at <https://arlingtonva.s3.amazonaws.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/25/2019/04/A-Decade-of-Difference-D2027-Report.pdf>).