

Resolution in support of retaining 30 Custodial Positions in the Alexandria City Public Schools

WHEREAS, the School Board approved Superintendent Dr. Gregory Hutchings' \$285.5 million Operating Budget on Jan. 24th in a 6-3 vote, including outsourcing of 30 custodial positions to private contracting;

WHEREAS, 3 votes were cast against the budget because of the custodial issue;

WHEREAS, it eliminates the positions of 30 custodians, who have less than 20 years of service, for an estimated cost savings of \$500,000 in FY 2020, pays them a severance package of \$1,500 for every year of service to the school system and provides unemployment benefits and job services;

WHEREAS, outsourcing of custodial positions has been an ongoing process since 2007, the former policy was to do it only through attrition, i.e.: retirements and resignations;

WHEREAS, to meet budget needs the school board chose to eliminate low paid workers, on the bottom rung of school employment;

WHEREAS, this move does not improve efficiency as ACPS will continue to have both full-time employee custodians and contract custodians

WHEREAS, Alexandria is a compassionate city that believes in the dignity of work and caring for the whole community;

WHEREAS, the majority of these 30 custodians are African American, and other people of color;

WHEREAS, full time custodians have built relationships with the kids in their schools, and these are our citizens, neighbors, parents, and responsible adult figureheads who daily interact with our children;

WHEREAS, we all benefit when people who work in our community can afford to live in our community;

WHEREAS, municipal employees in Virginia cannot strike, and the custodians cannot collectively bargain;

WHEREAS, the Education Association of Alexandria has asked the Alexandria School Board to reverse the decision;

WHEREAS, the School Board decides how the money allocated to schools from the city budget is spent, the City Council decides how much money is allocated, and can allocate more money, requesting it be used for a specific purpose;

WHEREAS, the responsibility of care rests on our entire community and not on one political body or another;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Alexandria School Board and the Alexandria City Council examine their budgets and find the funding needed to maintain our current custodial staff, and allow them to

continue until retirement with the public schools, so that they can continue contributing to their pensions and receiving benefits, including medical;

IT IS FURTHER RESOLVED that they achieve this without impacting educational programs or student achievement;

IT IS FURTHER RESOLVED that the Alexandria School Board and the superintendent look at the long term policy of outsourcing cleaning services with the main purpose of achieving budget savings, and look at the whole picture of the value of having long term employees who work directly for the school system in the schools and interact with our children, and how learning is affected by clean, well maintained buildings;

IT IS FURTHER RESOLVED that Alexandria City Public Schools show that we are a city that values all members of our community, keeps its promises, and sets an example of respect and dignity for all work to our students.

PASSED and APPROVED this RESOLUTION on this 1st Day of April 2019.