

## Reduced Resources in the Arlington Public Schools FY05 - FY11

This document lists reductions that have been made in the Arlington Public Schools during recent years. These service reductions were caused by budget constraints in virtually all cases, rather than by a systematic curriculum review. At the same time that the District has been forced to eliminate or reduce programming, schools have managed to be creative and innovative with their remaining resources, resulting in continual student improvement and high achievement as measured by MCAS scores, school-based formative and summative assessment, and, at the secondary level, by high college acceptance rates. The purpose of this listing is to document these cuts and to state firmly that the reduction of additional resources jeopardizes the ability of schools and teachers to guarantee the continued high achievement of APS students.

District wide changes include...

- Arlington lost 32 teaching positions in FY11 (7.5% of our teaching staff)
- Arlington has had to make over \$7 million in reductions to the school budget since FY07
- Arlington schools used to have certified librarians who taught research skills applicable to the networked world of our students...
  - Eliminated at elementary schools in FY05
  - Eliminated at Middle School in FY11
  - Eliminated at High School in FY11
- Crossing guards greatly reduced in FY11

Changes for elementary students include...

- Full-day Kindergarten fees were as low as \$1,000 – fees are now \$3,000
- Free elementary instrumental music offered during school hours until 1986 when a \$25 fee was charged – the fee is now \$435
- Spanish as part of regular curriculum – eliminated FY05
- Instructional computer specialists – eliminated FY05
- ACE (programs for gifted and talented students) – eliminated FY11
- Elementary PE twice per week – one day eliminated for K-3<sup>rd</sup> grade FY11
- Average class size has risen from 19 in FY02 to 22.3 in FY11, with the range in class size changing from 15-26 in FY02 to 17-31 in FY 11

Changes for middle school students include...

- Class sizes in English Language Arts, Math, Social Studies and Science range from 15-30 this year, compared to 13-27 in FY09 and 10-28 in FY08
- Sixth grade changed from 5 small clusters designed to create a positive transition environment to 3 large clusters that are fully departmentalized – increases the number of students 6th grade teachers see each day, and reduces the ability to schedule longer activities for the full cluster.
- Guidance counselor staffing has not kept pace with growth in enrollment
- Health classes for 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders – taught as a separate class until 5 years ago when included in Physical Education program, reducing the time spent on physical activity
- Reading instruction class sizes – increased from under 5 students to over 10 students in FY11, requiring a change in the type of instruction offered
- Course offerings recently lost include:
  - ACE (programs for gifted and talented students) – eliminated for 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade in FY11
  - Students no longer offered three full years of a foreign language – in FY11 a 6<sup>th</sup> grade exploratory language course took the place of the first year of language study
  - Drama and sustained silent reading classes – no longer offered to 6<sup>th</sup> graders in FY11
  - SOAR– no longer offered in FY11
  - Classes in organizational skills, research skills, analytical skills – no longer offered in FY11
- Reduction in courses offered results in an increase in directed studies – in FY11 many students have 9 directed studies in a two-week schedule, compared with 2 directed studies in a two-week schedule in FY10

Changes for high school students include...

- Fee for high school sports in 1997 was \$175 per sport, with a family cap of \$375 – fees are much higher now and Arlington ranks 1<sup>st</sup> in our league in terms of highest sports fees
- Core regular education classes range from 21-33 this year, compared to 8-30 in FY09, and 7-28 in FY08 – in prior years, more class sections allowed students to fit their first choice classes into their schedule and also resulted in a few very small classes, particularly at the AP and Honors level
- Guidance counselor individual support time with students – decreased due to increased administrative duties placed on guidance counselors because of reductions in secretarial and administrative staffing
- Since 2004, students have lost 20 different electives in English Language Arts, Math, Social Studies, Technology, Family & Consumer Science, Arts, and Special Education – classes lost are:
  - America in the Television Age/Vietnam
  - AP Computer Structures
  - AP Statistics
  - Automotive I and II
  - Building Strategies
  - Culinary Arts II
  - Culinary Arts Management
  - Fundamentals of Computer Programming
  - Intermediate Computer Programming
  - Introduction to Computers
  - Introduction to Psychology
  - Irish Literature (semester course)
  - Mass Media/Communications
  - Reading/Writing Workshop
  - Science Fiction (semester course)
  - Television Production
  - Women's Choir
  - Women's Literature (semester course)
  - Woodworking Technology
  - Young Adult Living
- The reduction in electives has resulted in an increase in directed studies in junior and senior students' schedules with some students having 3 per week and most having 6 to 9
- The reduction of double block science in all science courses, and the environmental science course was reduced from a full year to a half year course