Background

- Survey was developed by Budget Subcommittee and approved by full School Committee
- Survey was open for one week (Feb. 28 – Mar. 7)
- 1,560 started the survey
- 1,198 (76.8%) completed it
- Many open responses mixed revenue and cost-cutting ideas and will require further analysis.
Which of the following will apply to you and/or your children (if any) the following in 2010-2011? (Please check all that apply.)

- Elementary school (grades 1-5)
- Homeowner in Arlington
- Arlington High School (grades 9-12)
- Middle school (grades 6-8)
- Kindergarten Full day
- Town of Arlington employee (School Dept. or...)
- Children too young for school
- Children no longer in school
- No children
- Private or parochial school (K-12)
- Other
If you have children in the Arlington Public Schools now, which of the following programs or services does your family use or anticipate using next year?
How well do you feel you understand Arlington’s budget crisis?

- Well: 59.1%
- Somewhat: 37.7%
- Not at all: 3.4%
What is your level of satisfaction with budget information presented on the School Department website and in recent budget forums and presentations?
Over the next few years, what degree of budgetary challenge do you think the schools face?

- Significant: 96.2%
- Minor: 1.9%
- None: 0.1%
- Don't know: 2.1%
In general, do you think the schools have been well managed?

- Yes: 44.5%
- No: 26.0%
- Don't know: 30.0%
How well do you think students are being educated in Arlington?

- Very Well: 60.9%
- Fairly Well: 33.5%
- Not Well: 4.0%
- Don't Know: 2.4%
Over the past five years, has the quality of education in Arlington ...

- Improved: 31.8%
- Stayed the Same: 29.1%
- Declined: 17.5%
- Don't Know: 22.2%
How do you see the quality of education in Arlington changing in the next five years?

- Will Improve: 56.8%
- Will Stay the Same: 24.0%
- Will Decline: 15.6%
- Don't Know: 4.7%
Below we will ask for your input on some of the fee options that could be considered for FY11.

- Increase the Full Day Kindergarten fee from $2,400...
- I would probably enroll my child in the ½ day...
- Increase the elementary instrumental music fee to...
- Impose a new High School extracurricular participation...
- Increase the fee to ride the Bishop bus from $205...
- Convert the middle school ACE program to an...
- Increase the high school athletic fee to $525 per...
- Charge participants in more expensive sports higher...
- Offset any rise in athletic fees by cutting some...
- Keep the family cap, even if it means...
Fee Burdens

- Answers ranging from $0 to $1,000 or more
- Some oppose any fees; feel taxes should cover costs
- Others are willing to consider self-sufficiency
- Many questions about:
  - Equal opportunity for all kids
  - Diminishing returns if aid requests climb
  - Hesitancy of some families to ask for aid
- Varied views on whether athletics/extracurricular activities should be considered core educational offering
Fee Burdens (continued)

- Spread fees across multiple payments
- Consider sliding fee scale, based on income
- Concerns with “benched” students paying same as others in fees
- Considerable support for family cap
Revenue Ideas

- Override
- Pay As You Throw
- Private fundraising
- Ads/sponsorships/naming rights
- Industry/business partnerships
- Endow specific programs
- Facility Fees
- Cell antennae, solar panels
- Admission fees to sports/activities
- Charge to ride “fan buses”
- Increase Lunch Fees
- Book/supply fee
- Flat activity fee
- Make music after-school fee program
- Make after-school programs school-run, fee-generating
- Raise tuition for Community Education programs (e.g., SAT preparation courses)
“Out of the Box” Revenue Ideas

- Ticket illegally parked cars around schools and channel money to education budget
- Charge AHS students for parking
- Monthly Arlington raffle, similar to the lottery
- Close certain streets for a weekend and charge for sledding
- High School Alumni Fund/Dane Cook Benefit Show

- Open the AHS fitness room to the adult public for a fee as low-cost fitness club
- Buy Brigham’s property and build sports center to generate revenue
- Build car wash on Town property
- BINGO nights
- Hire out the AHS jazz band for weddings, parties, anything...
- “Do we have any famous alumni who might bail us out?”
The following questions relate to Special Education.

- K-12 restructuring of SpEd management/supervision; clinical oversight...
- Reduction of a Pre-K team chair at a savings of $50K, causing coordin...
- Reorganization of elementary service delivery design, at a savings of...
- Changes in middle school and high school service delivery models, at ...
- Changes in specialist service delivery models, at a savings of $125K.
System-Wide Restoration Priorities (Lower Number = Higher Priority on a Scale of 1 to 7)

- TAs/Elementary Library
- Textbooks
- Special Education
- Professional Development
- Administration
- Custodial
- Traffic Supervisors
The following questions relate to elementary reductions.

- Cut 11 classroom teachers and 2.7 specialists (art, music, PE), saving...
- Cut an additional 8 classroom teachers & .7 specialists (art, music, ...)
- Eliminate 15 hr/wk administrative assistants, saving $70,000 but redu...
- Eliminate elementary ACE (1.4 FTE), saving $90,000 but eliminating th...
- Reduce PE to 1x per week (state mandated minimum), saving $102,000, re...
- Reduce Gr. 1-5 art and music by ½, saving $85,000 (requiring 2.5 TAs ...)
- Eliminate remaining ½ Gr. 1-5 art and music, saving $68,000 requiring ...
- Eliminate kindergarten art and music, saving $50K, requiring kinderga...
Elementary Restorations (Lower Number = Higher Priority on a Scale of 1 to 8)

- 11 Classroom Teachers
- Additional 5 Classroom Teachers
- Physical Education
- Full Gr. 1-5 Art & Music
- ½ Gr. 1-5 Art & Music
- K Art & Music
- ACE
- Principal Support
The following questions relate to middle school reductions.

- Cut 4 cluster teachers, saving $200,000 but reducing 6th grade from 4...
- Eliminate 2.5 Grade 6 World Language, saving $125,000
- Cut 6 Elective teachers, saving $255,000 but reducing offerings in FA...
- Tech Engineering (in Gr. 8 only), Research Skills and replacing them ...
- Eliminate Drama program, saving $50,000
- Eliminate Library program, saving $45,000
- Eliminate ACE program, saving $50,000
- Reduce math support, saving $50,000
- Reduce reading support, saving $50,000

Legend:
- Orange: Strongly agree
- Blue: Agree
- Purple: Neutral
- Red: Disagree
- Green: Strongly disagree
Middle School Restoration Priorities (Lower Number = Higher Priority on a Scale of 1 to 8)

- 4 Cluster Teachers
- 6 Elective Teachers
- 2.5 Grade 6 World Language
- Math Support
- 1 Reading Teacher
- Library
- ACE
- Drama
The following questions relate to high school reductions.

1. In conjunction with a move to block scheduling, cut 12.5 teachers, in... (Bar chart)
2. Reduce secretarial/clerical by 2 positions, saving $80,000 (Bar chart)
3. Cut 1 guidance counselor, saving $50,000 but increasing caseload on r... (Bar chart)
4. Cut an additional 1.5 teachers, reducing additional elective offering... (Bar chart)
5. Reduce stipends by $25,000 for club advisors, reducing after-school a... (Bar chart)

Legend:
- Orange: Strongly agree
- Blue: Agree
- Purple: Neutral
- Red: Disagree
- Green: Strongly disagree
High School Restoration Priorities (Lower Number = Higher Priority on a Scale of 1 to 5)

- 12.5 teachers
- 1.5 elective teachers
- 1 Guidance Counselor
- 2 secretarial/clerical
- After school club advisor stipends
Ideas

- Remember that home value and quality of schools linked
- Conduct energy audit. Many feel that schools too warm.
- Rely on parents and older students as volunteers
- Concerns with ongoing labor dispute and breakdown in health insurance negotiations
- Switch to lead teachers, instead of department heads
- Have kindergarten art and music handled by kindergarten teachers, rather than specialists
- Concerns about losing so many younger teachers
More Ideas

- Combine some grade levels, if there is previous dialogue with parents
- Concerns with block scheduling
- Redistrict
- Lobby for relief from State
- Look at Metco

- Create four budgets:
  - Minimum legal required expenditures
  - “Realist” budget, based on available funds
  - Level-service budget
  - “Doing-it-right” budget
Conclusions

- Most respondents feel well-informed and that their children currently receive a good education, but are very pessimistic about the coming years.

- Desire to maintain athletic and extracurricular offerings and willingness to accept some graduated fee structures to better reflect program costs, but concerns about financial burden that would be placed on many families.

- Priority on keeping teachers – both general education and specialists (art/music/PE).

- Administrative support prioritized low by respondents.

- Special education proposals require more definition.
Next Steps

- Post this presentation and raw survey results online
- School Committee and Administration to further analyze responses, factoring these into final budget proposal