



January 13, 2022

Dear Arlington School Board Members,

The Friends of Arlington's David M. Brown Planetarium wish to convey our strong support for committing the entire proposed \$220,000 in year-end closeout funds to purchasing a replacement planetarium projection system. Doing so at your January 20th meeting would enable Science Program staff to initiate the procurement in time for the new system to be installed and ready for the Planetarium re-opening this Fall. Once the final configuration and costs of the updated system are known, the Friends will raise the additional funds as necessary to support an appropriate state-of-the-art installation.

The Friends are committed to maintaining quality Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) education for all Arlington students. To do so, we believe the Planetarium must re-open as soon as conditions permit and be fully functional at that time. Acting now will restore the Planetarium as a vital and dynamic STEM resource for our schools and community.

The Arlington Public Schools purchased the current projector in 2012 using funds raised by the Friends. At the time, the projection system transformed the planetarium into a modern facility, which offered enriching content and field trips for all students in grades K-12. Since then, over 25,000 children per year have enjoyed "sitting under the stars" and been inspired by a wide variety of STEM presentations. As all computer technology does, the current projection system has reached the end of its service life and the manufacturer will no longer cover it with a maintenance agreement. Replacing the existing system with contemporary equipment will ensure compatibility with the latest planetarium programs, and offer expanded instructional capabilities, allowing APS to continue to provide an inspiring and up-to-date curriculum.

Thank you for your consideration and your commitment to educating our young people. Please let me know if you have any questions related to this request or our organization.

With Warm Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Jennifer Lynn Bartlett'. The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Jennifer Lynn Bartlett, PhD  
President, Friends of Arlington's David M. Brown Planetarium