

Remarks by Ed Saperstein on FY 2012 FCPS School Budget on behalf of Board of Fairfax County Federation of Citizens' Associations—May 17, 2011 Fairfax County School Board Meeting

I am Ed Saperstein. Tonight I am speaking on behalf of the Board of the Fairfax County Federation of Citizens' Associations. *

I'll focus on 4 points: 1) Compensation, 2) Full Day Kindergarten, 3) Class Size Experiment, and 4) Discipline.

As to #1, for FY 2012 to the extent there are funds available for a market scale compensation increase, we recommend that this be a flat dollar amount for each employee rather than a percentage increase. We are sympathetic to giving each FCPS employee some raise after two years of no pay increases. We think a flat dollar amount better helps those at the lower rungs of our pay scales who are most in need of added funds.

As to #2, Full day Kindergarten, the delay in implementing the 3rd year of this 3-year phase-in can foster a sense of unfairness in school areas that still do not have Full Day Kindergarten. We note with appreciation the Approved Budget Recommendation Released last week by the Superintendent to fully implement Full Day Kindergarten in all our elementary schools in FY 2012. We urge the School Board to accept this recommendation for full implementation in FY 2012 even if this means reducing funds available for other worthy investments.

As to #3, Class Size, as mentioned in our January 24th talk to the School Board, because of various class size pressures, we recommend considering expanded use of on-line learning technology, and also that the following experiment be tried in some high schools which might require a waiver or discussion with state authorities.

The experiment is to ask each high school principal to choose 1 or more courses to have much larger class sizes than normal, and use the related cost savings to have reduced class sizes in some other courses or to add an elective. These larger classes could be, for example, in rooms with portable dividers or an auditorium. Teachers teaching the larger classes could perhaps get a bonus or reduced number of teaching periods, but this should be done in a way to lower the overall cost for teaching that course.

As to #4, we support the School Board's reviewing the disciplinary procedures. We recognize this is a complex and sensitive issue. One that involves taking into account factors such as flexibility and common sense, as well as having a safe and enriching school environment.

Thanks for your collective service to the children in our communities.

* The 3 Co-Chairs of the Education Committee are: Leonard Bumbaca, Tim Thompson and Ed Saperstein.