

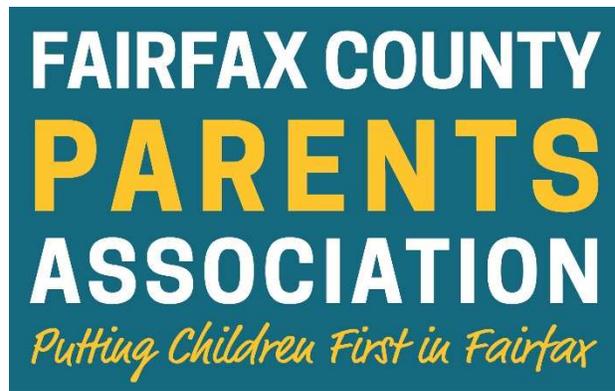
PRESS RELEASE

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Families and Teachers Still Wondering What the FCPS Back To School Plan Is

(Fairfax, VA)—Teachers report to schools in **less than three weeks**, and students are scheduled to start in less than four weeks. However, FCPS, with an annual budget of \$3.4 billion, has yet to provide families or teachers with a glimpse of the Back to School plan for school year 2021-2022. Families and teachers eager to understand what the in-person requirements will be have been left waiting as FCPS attempts to run out the clock, to convince families to re-enroll their children without showing any cards on what those children can expect to encounter in FCPS this year.

Following last year's exodus from FCPS due to its unwarranted school closures—even as local private schools and other major school systems were open to in-person learning, FCPS engaged a marketing campaign, promising to return “strong” to school this fall. The FCPS School Board, currently on its summer break, spent **zero minutes** discussing the return to school plans in any of its regular public meetings in the spring and early summer, and other than some yard signs placed in front of the driveways of FCPS school facilities, parents have no indication what FCPS intends to do this year. Yet many questions remain:

1. What is the FCPS plan to make up for learning loss caused by the missed year of in-person learning?
2. What is the plan, if any, for quarantining individual students, classes, or entire schools?
3. Are there plans for testing of asymptomatic students, and what authority do parents have in that matter?
4. Will FCPS guarantee it will not close schools again contrary to health department guidance?
5. After last year's 11th hour change to the first day of school, can parents rely on the August 23 start date?
6. Will children be treated differently with a system of “**separate, but equal**” educational offerings if they are vaccinated or unvaccinated?
7. Will children be required to wear masks? Inside and outside? What about sports? Music? Theater?
8. Will all teachers and staff be required to be vaccinated against COVID-19?
9. Staffing concerns were repeatedly blamed on FCPS's inability to open fully last year. Have staffing concerns been resolved?
10. What is the transportation plan? Should parents plan on driving their children to alleviate the burden?

FCPS should have provided answers to these questions long ago, through an open, public discussion. Less than three weeks before teachers are to report for duty is cutting it too close. Parents in the Fairfax County Parents Association respectfully request answers as soon as possible.

* The Fairfax County Parents Association seeks to ensure students are the first priority in Fairfax County Public Schools. This is accomplished by educating parents about the governance and administration of the school system and empowering parents to advocate on behalf of their children. The FCPA seeks to ensure the school board is governed in accordance with the law, specifically that the roles are non-partisan. The FCPA will work to support teachers and staff of the school system to aid their efforts to educate our children. We encourage all residents of Fairfax County, but especially parents, to stay informed and sign up for communications from the FCPA, including how to join: FairfaxParents.org