

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Christina Dickens Wins Fairfax Futures' School Readiness Educator Award**

Christina Dickens, principal of Annandale Terrace Elementary School, has been named the recipient of Fairfax Futures' 2008 School Readiness Educator Award for creating connections and inspiring others to help young children make successful transitions to elementary school. Annandale Terrace Elementary School is a Fairfax County public school.

Praising Dickens for her involvement in the School Readiness Collaborative, nominators say that Annandale Terrace's School Readiness Neighborhood Team is effective because of her dedication to smooth transitions for rising kindergarten students and their families. Dickens makes certain that prospective families understand what services her school provides, and she has established an open door policy for parents. Annandale Terrace's Parent Center, staffed by parent liaisons, helps parents understand school culture and informs the school of parents' needs. Translators are available through the Annandale Terrace Parent Center for parents whose first language is not English.

Dickens encourages Annandale Terrace Head Start and kindergarten teachers to visit neighborhood preschool programs and Head Start classrooms to see firsthand what types of experiences prospective kindergarten students are having before they enter Annandale Terrace. To help ease the transition from preschool to kindergarten, Dickens publishes a monthly newsletter for neighborhood preschool directors so they can keep their families abreast of events at Annandale Terrace. She also opens her weekly Principal's Coffee for Parents to neighborhood preschools and child care providers, community program directors, and parents of prospective Annandale Terrace students.

Dickens, who has 33 years of experience in education, has been principal at Annandale Terrace since 2003. She has worked for FCPS since 1994, when she was hired as a reading specialist and reading recovery teacher at Lake Anne Elementary School. She served as an administrative intern at Franconia Elementary School during the 1998-99 school year before being hired as assistant principal at Annandale Terrace Elementary. Dickens earned her bachelor's degree in special education and elementary education from the University of Northern Colorado and her master's degree in education from the University of Virginia.

Fairfax Futures is a nonprofit organization that invests in early childhood education and school readiness in collaboration with partners across Fairfax County.

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Note: For more information, contact Christina Dickens at 703-658-5600 or [christina.dickens@fcps.edu](mailto:christina.dickens@fcps.edu).