

## FCPS: QUALITY SCHOOLS, TAXPAYER VALUE

Are Fairfax County taxpayers paying too much for excellent schools? Here are some things to consider:

- FCPS managers continually look for ways to do more with less and have implemented many economies.
- Fairfax County funds a much larger portion of its school budget with county funds than do other Virginia school divisions.\*
- Excellent schools increase property values; poor schools decrease them.
- FCPS' SAT average of 1639 exceeds both the state average of 1520 and the national average of 1511.

In its May 2007 issue, *Newsweek* magazine listed all FCPS high schools in the top 3 percent of public high schools in the nation, based on the annual Challenge Index, which measures a school's effort to challenge students.

Locally, FCPS ranks fifth in the region in average per-pupil cost, \$1,298 less than Montgomery County, Maryland, the most comparable local school system, in FY 2008. The majority of FCPS' budget, over 87 percent, is for employee compensation and 92.1 percent of FCPS-funded positions are school based.

Fairfax County Public Schools supports Fairfax County government in many ways, cooperating on: a summer reading program for students throughout the county; emergency planning and crisis preparedness activities; affordable housing for employees; gang awareness and prevention; and awards to honor excellence for both county and school employees. FCPS also supports the county through community use initiatives. Last year, 9,000 community use applications were processed; 250,000 people used recreational facilities; 95 religious and cultural organizations used schools each week; 160 Park Authority classes were held in FCPS schools; 55 school sites were used for Rec-PAC programs; and 132 schools served as School Age Child Care (SACC) sites.

Good schools are good for everyone in Fairfax County—they attract businesses and enhance property values. The quality of schools is one of the most important items in determining the value of a home. FCPS delivers a world-class program cost-effectively. We educate more than 167,000 students and employ over 22,000 people. Excellent schools are an investment for the whole community.

\* The average Virginia school division receives approximately half its financial support from its local government; FCPS gets almost three quarters of its budget from county funds. FCPS receives 21 percent of its funding from the state; on average Virginia school divisions receive 43 percent of their funding from the state.