

**McLean Citizens Association
Resolution on Starting Time of School Day
June 1, 2005**

WHEREAS, studies show that (1) teenagers need an average of over 9 hours of sleep per night, but during school days Fairfax County Public School teenagers average getting less than 8 hours of sleep per school night (a study of some Robinson Secondary School students reported that the students in the study averaged only 6.5 hours of sleep per school night); (2) the sleep-wake cycle of teenagers makes it difficult for them to fall asleep before 11 PM; and (3) sleep deprivation affects a teenager's ability to think, concentrate, perform and react properly, impairs academic performance, and increases the number of car accidents involving teenagers due to drowsiness; and

WHEREAS, studies in school districts that have shifted to later high school start times demonstrate that later start times result in improved academic performance and improved behavior and attitude; and

WHEREAS, high schools in Fairfax County start as early as 7:20 AM and buses pick up students as early as 5:48 AM; and

WHEREAS, a 1998 FCPS Task Force confirmed that sleep deprivation has a negative impact on student learning and the overall health and well being of students and that a later high school start time would benefit the students and the entire community; and

WHEREAS, nearby school districts have already shifted to later high school start times of 8 AM in Falls Church City, about 8:20 AM in Arlington County, between 8:15 AM and 8:40 AM in Alexandria, and 8:45 AM to 8:50 AM in Loudoun County; and

WHEREAS, the School Board is planning to award a contract to an outside transportation consultant to find cost-effective alternatives that would move high school start times to between 8 and 9 AM;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Board of Directors of the McLean Citizens Association that we:

1. Urge the School Board to shift to a later high school start time by the 2006-2007 school year.
2. Urge the outside consultant to develop a cost-effective solution with a high school start time of 8 AM or later.
3. Request a meeting with the outside consultant at an early stage in the information gathering process.

Fairfax County School Board

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