

## Update from the FCCPTA Meeting on 2/5/2007

- 1) The FCCPTA invites all constituents to attend their General Membership Meeting at Luther Jackson Middle School in the Lecture Hall on Feb 26, 2007 at 7:30 p.m. There will be a discussion of the 2007-2008 FCPS budget. School Board Member, Janie Strauss, will attend.
- 2) There was a discussion on the status of some of the bills under consideration by the Virginia Legislature.
  - a) A bill which requires schools to supply textbooks for students for home use has been passed by the House floor and is now under consideration by the Senate. (Note: FCPS is lobbying against this legislation because of the cost. The VAPTA and FCCPTA support this legislation.)
  - b) House Bill 1442 which requires high school students to take two technical or career education electives was passed by the House. On February 1<sup>st</sup>, FCPS proposed alternative language in Senate Bill 1147. The revised language below carves out options for students that would still allow them to take fine arts electives.

*“The requirements for a standard high school diploma shall, however, include ~~at least two sequential electives chosen from a concentration a~~ *career and technical education two credit sequence* of courses selected from a variety of options that ~~may be planned to ensure facilitates~~ the completion of a focused sequence of elective courses. Students may take such focused sequence of elective courses in consecutive years or *in any two years of high school. Such focused sequence of elective courses shall provide instruction that (i) prepares students for entry into the workplace; (ii) leads to an industry certification or occupational competency assessment approved by the Board of Education; and (iii) provides a foundation for further education or training or preparation for employment and shall be developed by the school division, consistent with Board of Education guidelines and as approved by the local school board. Exemptions from this requirement shall be granted to graduating seniors in the advanced studies diploma program who fail to meet the requirements for an advanced diploma, and to limited English proficient students who utilize their electives for English comprehension, if they have completed one career and technical education course in high school. Additionally, students completing a fine arts Specialty Center-Academy program, fine arts Magnet program, junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps program, or a program that provides a three- or four-year sequence of specialized courses in a designated career pathway, shall be exempt from this provision ;”**

The Bill (SB 1147) was unanimously passed by the Senate on February 6th and was referred back to the House. The original bill was raised as a concern by Betsy Smith at the January PTA Meeting. I forwarded the revised language and she's okay with the bill now that the new language has been added.

- 3) The Virginia Legislature has also identified a number of areas to conduct studies prior to implementing legislation:
  - a) Pre-k initiative
  - b) Childhood obesity
  - c) Prevention of gang activities
  - d) Staff compensation
  - e) Local Composite Index (LCI) reallocates Northern Virginia tax dollars to downstate school divisions in Virginia.
  
- 4) The FCCPTA passed a resolution to support FCPS delegates in their request to obtain a one-year waiver to continue to allow students with Limited English Proficiency (LEP) to take an alternative to the SOL reading and writing exam. FCPS will use the time to develop a more appropriate exam for the LEP students. The Department of Education has denied the request for the waiver and has threatened sanctions. For more information on this issue, you can view an article in the Washington Post from January 10<sup>th</sup> at [http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/01/10/AR2007011002542.html?nav=rss\\_print/asection](http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/01/10/AR2007011002542.html?nav=rss_print/asection)

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