

# SLEEPinFairfax Candidate Questionnaire 2015

(Please fill in your name Sandy Evans and the name of your district or "at-large" Mason ).

(Please mark an X in the appropriate space and fill in as necessary)

- 1) Are you in favor of this year's change to an 8:10 a.m. start time for high school students and an 8:00 a.m. start time for secondary schools?

☒ Yes  
☐ No

- 2) The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) has recommended that school districts shift middle and high schools to 8:30 a.m. or later. Are you in favor of FCPS continuing to work toward later start times for middle school students?

☒ Yes  
☐ No

- 3) The current middle school start time is 7:30 a.m. What do you think is the best approach to shifting middle schools to a later time?

First we need to make sure we don't create another "false tier" of too-early dropoff times for middle school students this year but should be delivering students within the preferred window of 10-20 minutes before the bell. Because we want to make sure students get breakfast, we should look for creative ideas for students, especially those who qualify for free and reduced meals, to get breakfast at school without requiring all students to get picked up earlier than necessary for the first bell. Secondly, we can look at splitting and shortening middle school runs so pickups can be as late as possible in the morning. To get middle school closer to 8 am will require more resources and, again, we need to make sure that it's not just the starting bell that goes later but that bus pickups are later, as well. When we asked the community for their preferences, the middle-school-last option was not popular for a number of reasons. However, if a particular school community wanted to pilot a middle-school-last approach and work on solutions to various issues and concerns, I would support their doing so.

- 4) I believe later middle and high school start times benefit adolescent:

☒ Physical Health and Well-being  
☒ Safety (injury and drowsy driving reduction)  
☒ Emotional and Mental Health  
☒ Academic achievement  
☒ All of the above

- 5) What changes (if any) should be made to elementary start times?

The very latest ES times are not ideal for elementary school students and their families. This has been the case for a long time, well before we changed the high school start times. I would like to see us work to move the latest ES times earlier.

**Please respond with more detail below:**

- 6) What else should FCPS do with regard to start times and the issue of sleep health?

It's critical to educate students and parents on the importance of sleep, how much sleep children need for optimal health, how natural sleep patterns and biorhythms change at different ages, and how to get more and better sleep. We've made progress due to recent changes in the state Health and PE curriculum, so more sleep health information will be included in our health lessons. But parents also need to get clear information about how sleep affects their children's lives. We should clearly advertise the availability of first-period opt-outs for students in grades 7-12 for those who continue to struggle to get adequate sleep. We should also continue to work toward truly optimal start and end times for all children.