

SLEEPinFairfax Candidate Questionnaire 2011

Ilryong Moon, School Board Member, At-Large

1. *Are you in favor of later start times for high school students?*

Yes. I believe that the optimal start time is 8:00 AM or later and, where feasible, will work towards the goal of later start times. Peer school districts in Arlington County, Alexandria and Loudoun County—to name a few—have successfully implemented this change, and although the size of FCPS does present some logistical complications in this consideration, we should be able to find a way to do this for our students' health, well-being and academic success.

2. *Are you in favor of later start times for middle school students?*

Yes.

3. Later secondary school start times would benefit adolescent physical health and well being; safety; emotional and mental health; and academic achievement. The consensus among professionals and a growing body of literature on this topic leave little doubt in my mind that this is more than just a matter of belief.

4. *Would you vote in favor of a new FCPS policy to require that high schools start after 8:00 AM in the morning?*

My decisions on matters before the board are informed through a range of factors, such as the input of affected stakeholders and the community as well as an analysis of the costs and benefits of new proposals. As stated above, I support the goal of pushing back start times and would support a feasible proposal to implement this objective. Just as neighboring school systems have accomplished this change, I believe we should be able to find a way to do so that is practical, supported by public, and educationally sound.

5. *Would you put forth a motion to vote on such a policy?*

As stated above, I would support a feasible proposal vetted by community and stakeholders and a thorough analysis of benefits and costs.

6. *Which non-transportation alternatives would you support to help students get healthy amounts of sleep?*

I would support:

- Adding information about child and teen sleep needs to the FCPS health curriculum, including the negative impact of inadequate sleep on physical, mental and academic health.

- Changing policy to allow an opt-out of first blocks for students who present a plan to earn enough credits for graduation.
- Offering an alternative schedule to allow students to replace first period with a late class, an “eighth-period,” if feasible.
- Allowing high school students to take on-line courses in place of one or more first block classes.
- Identifying and evaluating best practices, i.e., successful approaches used to change bell schedules in other school systems.

7. *How would you proceed on the issue of school start times?*

With the ultimate goal of changing start times to be not before 8:00 AM, I will first explore giving students flexible scheduling options for the first period. Such options may include on-line classes which can be taken at any time of the day or even an opt-out. Opting out of the first period will require a policy change by the School Board. We also need to make sure that we have sufficient staffing at on-line campus to provide students an on-line option for the first period. Furthermore, even though I do not believe that we need a waiver from the State Board of Education to provide such options, we will want to seek a confirmation from the State Board of Education.

With regards to extracurricular activities and other logistically complicated aspects of pushing back the start time for all schools or all high schools, I will ensure that any proposal I support will be embraced by community stakeholders, be cost-effective, and bring much benefits to our students.

8. *Have you seen the documentary Race to Nowhere? Tell us your thoughts on the film’s message as it relates to FCPS.*

Yes. All stakeholders (students, parents, teachers, administrators and policy makers) need to work together to reduce the level of competitiveness and pressure on students. The amount of homework needs to be carefully monitored and controlled. We also need to engage college admissions offices to help reduce such culture as it is directly related to the ever-increasing competitiveness of college admissions.