

SLEEPinFairfax Candidate Questionnaire 2011

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

Ted Velkoff, Candidate At Large

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

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

Yes

No

1a) What is your definition of "later"? What do you believe is the optimal time for high schools to start?

If students are to truly benefit from a later start time, it should be one or two hours later than their current start time. I favor the current schedule because of the community's concerns about negative impacts of changing high school end times.

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

Yes

No

3) I believe later secondary school start times would benefit adolescent:

Physical Health and Well-being

Safety (injury and drowsy driving reduction)

Emotional and Mental Health

Academic achievement

All of the above

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

Yes

No

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

Yes

No

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

Providing parents with a sample schedule to show how students can achieve adequate sleep (8 ½ to 9 ¼ hours a night) within the constraints of the current bell schedule.

Changing policy to allow an opt-out of first block(s) for students who present a plan to earn enough credits for graduation; with no transportation provided.

Offering an alternative schedule to allow students to replace first period with a late class, an "eighth-period," with no transportation provided.

Allowing high school students to take online 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.

Please respond with more detail below:

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

If there is clear, broad community support for later high school start times, I will openly and thoroughly consider all proposals. To date, the community has strongly weighed in against changing high school start times because of the impact on after-school extra-curricular activities, childcare, transportation, teachers and staff, and family schedules. While I will not initiate proposals concerning later high school start times, if elected, I will honorably and openly consider all issues brought before the School Board.

8) Have you seen the documentary *Race to Nowhere*?

Yes

No

This film explores the anxiety of students competing in a pressure-packed culture. Tell us your thoughts on the film's message as it relates to FCPS.

I have not had the opportunity to see Race to Nowhere, only due to scheduling conflicts at each local showing. Having read about the film and discussed it with others, I understand that it presents a clear and compassionate view of one side of the debate about school pressures on students. I am in favor of educating students who thrive while at FCPS and later as adults. Reducing unnecessary pressures on students can be one helpful component toward this goal. I will also be interested in ideas to help increase the discovery of personal interests and the development of self-direction and self-discipline for our students.

Concerning Question #3, the benefits listed are all benefits of increased sleep for students. I distinguish the identification of the problem (need for sleep) with a specific solution to that problem (later high school start times).