

SLEEPinFairfax Candidate Questionnaire 2015

(Please fill in your name Jane K. "Janie" Strauss and the name of your district or "at-large" Dranesville).

(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?

We will likely be able to find more efficiencies in our bus routes as we work through the current high school changes. This may allow some movement to later middle school start times for little new costs. However, we need to keep on the table the discussion of allocating additional funding for more buses and drivers if needed to move middle school start times to after 8:00 AM.

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?

Some elementary start times are now too late and are thus dismissing too late in the afternoon. It would be better if no elementaries started later than about 9:00 or 9:10 allowing dismissals to also be earlier in the afternoon than the current schedule. This would require a compression of the transportation schedule - transporting more students at the same time. It would likely require more buses and drivers and incur additional costs.

Please respond with more detail below:

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

Continue to educate parents and students about the need for adequate sleep. The current research on the effect of the blue light spectrum (the light spectrum now common on computer screens, TV screens and home lighting) is important. This spectrum can retard a person's natural sleep cycle. Thus turning off screens and maybe even turning down home lighting at a certain time before bedtime may help families establish a healthy sleep cycle. It is also important to educate students about adopting a work/life balance that allows adequate sleep on a daily basis while apportioning reasonable schedules for school, family and recreational activities. The recent sleep research also addresses adult sleep needs. Everyone is more productive and healthy when they regularly get enough sleep.