

**Fairfax County Federation of Citizens' Associations
Resolution on Hiring and Retention in FCPS
Approved by the Membership 28 September 2023**

WHEREAS, Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) have attracted fewer qualified applicants per open teaching position over the past two years, while failing to meet their target of a 97.5 percent fill rate by July 1, and is “in danger of not being able to fully staff its teaching positions”¹; and

WHEREAS, FCPS’ FY22 retention rates for both teachers and operational staff were at the lowest level they have been over the last five years;² and

WHEREAS, nearly three-fourths of teachers nationwide believe their salary is unfair for the work they do,³ while locally the salaries for FCPS’ most experienced staff and its maximum salaries are not market competitive⁴; and

WHEREAS, the leaders of FCPS’ largest teacher unions agree that one of the largest non-financial factors driving teacher dissatisfaction is that education has turned political over the past three or more years;⁵

WHEREAS, teachers consistently identify increased planning time as one of the top elements that would improve retention and job satisfaction, while the number of hours spent on compliance training and other professional development tasks continues to increase; and

WHEREAS, FCPS teachers report they lack tools to address disruptive behavior,⁶ even as they witnessed a surge in such conduct when students returned to school after the Coronavirus pandemic; and

WHEREAS, benefits such as health insurance, sick leave, maternity leave, and retirement plans can help compensate for lower salary levels only if they are both generous and reliable; and

¹ Fairfax County Public Schools. “Strategic Plan: Goal 3, Premier Workforce: Final Report on the FCPS SY 2018-20 Strategic Plan Focus.” December 1, 2022. p. 7.

² *Ibid*, p. 11.

³ Madeline Will. *Education Week*. “Teacher Job Satisfaction Hits an All-Time Low.” April 14, 2022.

⁴ See Fairfax County Public Schools *supra*, note 1.

⁵ Leslie Houston and David Walrod. Meeting with Federation Education Committee. April 25, 2023.

⁶ *Ibid*.

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WHEREAS, FCPS performs exit interviews for approximately 20 percent of departing staff,⁷

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Federation:

1. We continue to support improvements in FCPS' market position for teacher and staff compensation, especially as such improvements focus on providing a compelling salary level for our most experienced staff; and
2. We urge a return to deliberative, open, and research-focused policy-making processes on issues of public controversy before changes are enacted, which may include public hearings, panel discussions, studies, pilot programs, and task forces; and
3. We suggest FCPS review and diminish the number and type of teachers' non-pedagogical responsibilities to ensure that teachers remain focused on areas where they have relevant expertise; and
4. We urge FCPS to formally review and cull, wherever advisable, its professional development requirements in order to provide staff more flexible planning time; and
5. We suggest a "teacher-centered" review of the Student Rights and Responsibilities document, as well as a review of other policies which may inhibit teachers from maintaining order in their classrooms; and
6. We thank FCPS staff for intervening to renegotiate certain elements of FCPS' current CIGNA health plan; and
7. We propose that the FCPS Department of Human Resources collaborate with union leaders and other staff to perform a methodical analysis of FCPS benefits, focused on maximizing staff satisfaction; and
8. We urge FCPS to require exit interviews for all departing staff, to increase the number of "stay interviews," and to compile the results so that FCPS is able to implement administrative and policy changes that might improve retention rates.

⁷ Sherry Wilson and Mitsuko Clemmons-Nazeer. Meeting with Federation Education Committee. March 21, 2023.