



ON THE LEVEL

FY 2016 BUDGET RELEASED

On January 8, 2015, Superintendent Garza released the FY 2016 Proposed Budget of \$2.6 billion. This is an increase of \$64 million from the FY 2015 Approved Budget. Many issues are driving the requested increase in the budget from last year. The Superintendent is very concerned about being able to offer compensation increases for employees, and cited the fact that many teachers have left for nearby school systems that offer higher salaries than FCPS. FCPS' enrollment continues to grow yearly with changing student demographics. Projections are that student enrollment growth could cost an estimated \$20 million dollars annually.

In the next few months the School Board will hold many public hearings about the budget along with the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors. Community members and other interested parties can all testify with their ideas. The final approved budget will occur on May 21, 2015.

STEM ESSAY CONTEST

Governor McAuliffe and the Virginia Council on Women have announced the 4th annual STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) Essay Contest for high school junior and senior girls. The Council will award one \$5,000 scholarship to a female junior or senior who will be pursuing a STEM career at an institution of higher education. To be eligible, one must be a female who resides in Virginia and holds at least a 2.5 GPA. Applications and guidelines are available online at : STEM Essay Contest. Entries must be submitted by February 25.

MID-YEAR ASSESSMENTS COMING

January is the time for the Mid-Year Performance Assessment. If you receive a 'Needs Improvement' or 'Ineffective', call the FCFT office at 703-451-6840 immediately for assistance. Do not delay. An FCFT Labor-Relations Specialist will help you. Your call is confidential. If you are disappointed with your Performance Assessment, you may want to write a letter of response to the review for your building file. We can assist you.



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A Point of Interest:

When you call our office, the receptionist will ask for your name to verify membership in FCFT. We want to ensure that you are eligible to draw upon your benefits. Your call will remain confidential.

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A REMINDER WHEN DRIVING

According to a national poll sponsored by the National Safety Commission, 71 percent of Americans have not heard of “Move Over” laws. Forty-nine states have “Move Over” laws. The laws are aimed at protecting emergency responders working along the roadside. Fairfax police report that many local residents are not observing the law. They are asking everyone to become aware of the law and obey it. The law is in the news again since an emergency responder was hit and killed on the VA Beltway in early January. The law requires that drivers, upon noticing an emergency vehicle or police car with flashing lights on the side of the road, move their vehicle by one lane. If that is not possible, drivers must reduce their speed and pass with due regard for safety. A violation of this law is a Class 1 misdemeanor and additional penalties will be imposed if a crash occurs. The issue is a very serious one. The National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund reports that since 1999, 164 police officers have been killed after being struck by vehicles along America’s highways.

MEET SUPERINTENDENT GARZA

The Superintendent’s Listening Tours will continue in the next two months.

Tuesday, February 17 at 6:30 p.m. Falls Church High School, 7521 Jaguar Trail, Falls Church, VA 22142 Region 2

Tuesday, March 3 at 6:30 p.m. Chantilly High School, 4201 Stringfellow Road, Chantilly, VA 20151 Region 5

The Superintendent has already conducted listening tours in Regions 1,3, 4 during the fall of 2014. Try to visit one of the winter tours if you can.

Dr. Garza will listen to ideas, comments, and questions from the audience. Be present at a Listening Tour if you can.

THINKING ABOUT RETIREMENT?

If you have been teaching for many years, you may be considering retirement. During the school year, the ERFC office holds meetings for those people who are within two years of retirement. You can access your own accounts with ERFC and VRS also. Be prepared to spend an hour or more with your computer when you do this. You will also need to write down passwords and answer questions, so you need to retain a record of what you write. If you are within five years of retirement, you can make an appointment with a counselor at the ERFC office. The Human Resources office has all the information on line and forms that you will need to read before you make any decisions. Give retirement a great deal of thought before you do it.



Look at the FCPS home page. Scroll down to Human Resources for information and forms about retirement.