



Christopher DeCarlo
8706 Duvall Street
Fairfax, VA 22031

Dear Mr. DeCarlo,

I am writing to you as the Chair of the Fairfax Arts Coalition for Education. We represent the interests of Arts Education in the Fairfax County Public Schools and within the county.

As Arts advocates, we would like to know your opinions on the following four questions so that we may share them with our constituency in the Providence District. Hopefully, your answers will help you in your bid for a FCPS School Board seat.

As we are getting very close to election day, please return your answers to me ASAP at mscello@cox.net

- 1) Have you or your children participated in a fine arts program in FCPS?
Yes. I currently have a 3rd, 5th, and 6th grade student attending Mantua Elementary School. The 5th and 6th graders are participating in the strings and band programs. It is a fabulous program for them. All three participated in the PTA talent show for the last two years. My 6th grader wants to be a cartoonist. All three children have entered numerous school poster contests as well as the PTA sponsored Reflections program.
- 2) How do you view the importance of fine arts instructional programs in light of the current emphasis on student performance on Virginia SOL tests?
The fine arts instructional programs are more important than the SOL testing regime. There are strings attached to Federal funds that put emphasis on student and teacher performance standards which diminishes the enthusiasm for teaching and learning to the detriment of the educational system.
- 3) How will you insure that our elementary band and string programs are maintained in the current FY2011 budget?
I would encourage parents to organize a coalition that demands better customer service and funding from the School Board and the Board of Supervisors. Please see my accompanying document, "Blueprint for Preserving Programs."

4) What is your vision for the future of the fine arts in Fairfax County Public Schools?

My vision is to continue its development and growth as requested by the students and parents. It is an impressive program.

Thank you in advance for sharing your answers with the residents of the Providence District and we look forward to hearing from you!

With regards,

Mary Wagner
Chair, FACE