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FAIRGRADE Sends Letters to FCPS School Board Members Top Concerns: FCPS Study Criteria & Commitment for Public Dialogue

Fairfax County, VA – Saturday, June 14, 2008 – FAIRGRADE, a parent-driven organization that is advocating for major revisions of the grading policies in Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS), today announced they have sent letters to School Board Members and FCPS officials who participated in last week’s School Board work session (6.5.08) on the grading policy issue.

FAIRGRADE Co-Founder Marcy Newberger said, “We want School Board Members to know that FAIRGRADE appreciates the efforts and resources that FCPS is applying to the grading policy issue and that we still have valid concerns to express.”

Fellow FAIRGRADE Co-Founder Megan McLaughlin says it was significant that the School Board put the issue on its work session agenda prior to the conclusion of the 2007-08 school year. “It was an excellent opportunity for FAIRGRADE to hear the School Board’s views on the grading policy issue and their questions about the joint FAIRGRADE/FCPS research study. Because the public is not permitted to speak at work sessions, we felt it important to get on the record and clarify FAIRGRADE policy positions, respond to comments made at the meeting, and to praise Chairman Daniel Storck’s and fellow Board Member Tina Hone’s calls for an open Q&A session with the public when FCPS presents the research findings in October.”

“FAIRGRADE looks forward to working in good faith with FCPS officials,” says fellow FAIRGRADE Co-founder Louise Epstein. “Now that we’ve studied the comments made at the 6.5.08 work session, we feel there needs to be a stronger partnership in devising the criteria FCPS will use for the grading policy research study.”

Sara Pacqué-Margolis, another FAIRGRADE Co-founder agreed. “We are concerned about FCPS’s interest in measuring ‘unintended consequences’, which FCPS has yet to define, and FCPS’s interest in linking grading scale to learning outcomes, which FAIRGRADE asserts is not the issue under scrutiny for this study. A priority of FCPS’s study must be the relationship between GPA earned and SAT scores.”

FCPS is scheduled to present its research finding on the issue by mid-October, 2008.

Attachments: (5) Letters total -Jack Dale/Pat Murphy, Chairman Daniel Storck, Board Members Tina Hone, Jane Strauss, Elizabeth Bradsher

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