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***FAIRGRADE Applauds School Board Vote on Grading Policy
Will Remain Attentive Through Implementation Deadlines***

FAIRGRADE is pleased with the Fairfax County School Board vote on 1.22.09 that directs Superintendent Dale to report back to the School Board by the end of March '09 with different versions of the basic 10-point grading scale (that include pluses and minuses) for implementation beginning the 2009-2010 school year.

FAIRGRADE applauds the FCPS School Board's strong leadership in voting unanimously for the amended motion which addresses the community's concerns regarding grading scale and weights for advanced courses. Responding to the parent community, School Board members passed meaningful grading policy reforms that will benefit all FCPS students. We commend their action.

From the beginning, FAIRGRADE asked that changes to the grading policy be based on research. The FCPS Report clearly demonstrated that current FCPS GPAs are depressed compared to GPAs of students who attend equally competitive and rigorous high schools. Thursday's vote acknowledges what the community has recognized for years: FCPS' high standards are due to our quality teachers, a strong curriculum and motivated students – not the grading scale.

The amended motion also increases AP/IB weights to 1.0 and weights them retroactively for classes taken up to and after January 2009. Qualifying honors courses (including pre-AP and pre-IB) will be weighted 0.5 effective the 2009-2010 school year. FCPS will determine this summer if it is technically feasible to apply weights retroactively for Honors classes.

FAIRGRADE will remain attentive to ensure critical timelines are met for the implementation schedules. FAIRGRADE also shares the public's concerns that mid-year transcripts for the 2009 graduating class reflect the adjustment for AP/IB weighting in a timely manner so that colleges can consider this adjustment for admissions, honors program placement and merit scholarship opportunities.

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