

MVCCA Resolution (ED) 2015-6 School Funding in the FY2016 County Advertised Budget

(1) WHEREAS the Fairfax County School Board's Advertised FY2016 Budget adopted February 5, 2015, ("FY2016 School Budget") requests a transfer increase from Fairfax County ("School Transfer") of \$70.6M for full funding, and

(2) WHEREAS Fairfax County's Fiscal Year 2016 Advertised Budget Plan, released February 17, 2015, ("FY2016 County Budget") proposed continuation of the FY2015 real estate tax rate of \$1.09 and included a School Transfer increase which is \$14M less than requested in the FY2016 School Budget ("Budget Shortfall");

(3) WHEREAS, the Mount Vernon Council of Citizens Associations ("MVCCA") by Resolution adopted February 25, 2015, urged the Board of Supervisors ("BOS") to adopt a FY2016 residential and commercial real property tax rate ("Maximum Rate") at least adequate to fully fund the School Transfer increase, among other things, and thereby permit meaningful citizen input in the FY2016 budget process hearings, and

(4) WHEREAS on March 3, 2015, the BOS nevertheless adopted a Maximum Rate of \$1.09 which is not adequate to fully fund the School Transfer or other critical core services, curtails the public's right to meaningful input and continues a pattern of failing to fund identified needs; and

(5) WHEREAS Fairfax County Public Schools is a critical core service, a major County asset for all citizens and an important contributor to the County's status as a premier community, but its value is threatened by years of underfunding, steep cuts to programs, massive uncompensated enrollment growth and decline in FCPS' ability to retain and attract quality teachers through erosion of competitive salary position; and

(6) WHEREAS additional funding from the Commonwealth of Virginia may reduce the Budget Shortfall in FY2016, the fact remains that FCPS is a critical core asset to every citizen of Fairfax County and cannot continue to make steep cuts indefinitely and still retain its value and pre-eminence in the region where it routinely posts among the highest achievement scores, with the lowest administrative costs, and mid-range per pupil costs; and

(7) WHEREAS continued failure to adequately fund FCPS will accelerate the decline of this critical core asset, fail to provide Fairfax students with the quality education needed both for their future success and for creation of the quality workforce needed for a thriving business climate; and

(8) WHEREAS student enrollment in Mount Vernon District includes high numbers of disadvantaged students who are among the most vulnerable to reduction or inadequacy of school resources but all students and all communities are also negatively affected by failure to fund schools and core services;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Mount Vernon Council of Citizens' Associations, in consideration of all of the above, urges the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors in adopting a Budget for FY2016 to:

- (1) Maintain the FY2016 residential real property tax rate at the FY2015 rate of \$1.09;
- (2) Fully fund the School Board FY2016 Advertised Budget;
- (3) Utilize all revenue sources available in FY2016 and in the future to ensure adequately funded critical core services, including schools.