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For Immediate Release  
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### **School Board Re-evaluates School Starting Times No Changes Recommended**

The Falls Church City School Board has decided to make no changes to the school starting times for the 2006-2007 school year. Prior to making the decision, the board considered feedback from parents who responded to a recent survey. The board also took into account recent reports on bus transportation and safety from the school division's resource officer and from the division's transportation supervisor.

The primary area of concern had been that this year's 7:30 a.m. starting time for middle school students was too early. However, survey results indicate that the vast majority of families have adjusted to the earlier time, and the transportation report indicated that the departure time from bus stops is only 10 minutes earlier than last year for middle school students. School Resource Officer Steve Rau also reported that parents have adjusted well to new traffic patterns around the middle and high schools, which share the same campus.

The board had considered the option of adding buses to the fleet to enable a later starting time at the middle school and still meet the demands of subsequent bus runs at other schools. However, competition from surrounding school divisions makes it difficult to hire and retain qualified bus drivers, and purchasing new school buses would be cost prohibitive.

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Last year's decision to change school starting times was made to ensure safe arrival and dismissal at both George Mason High School and Mary Ellen Henderson Middle School, which opened this year. State transportation officials required separate starting times to help ensure student safety and a free flow of traffic on the shared campus.

The school starting times for the 2006-2007 school year will remain as follows:

7:30 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.	Mary Ellen Henderson Middle School (Grades 5 – 7)
8:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.	George Mason High School (Grades 8 – 12)
8:45 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.	Thomas Jefferson Elementary School (Grades 2 – 4)
8:45 a.m. – 3:20 p.m.	Mt. Daniel Elementary School (Grades K – 1)

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