

FACILITIES

Facilities Planning

Procedures for Naming School Facilities and Dedicating Areas of School Facilities or Grounds

This regulation supersedes Regulation 8170.6.

I. PURPOSE

To provide procedures for naming and renaming school facilities and for dedicating areas of school facilities or grounds.

II. SUMMARY OF CHANGES SINCE LAST PUBLICATION

- A. A new section IV., Renaming Existing School Facilities, has been added, and subsequent sections have been re-numbered.
- B. The section on renaming facilities (section VIII. in the prior version of this regulation) has moved to section V., and its title has been revised to add “non-school” facilities. Subsequent sections have been re-numbered.
- C. Section V.A. has been revised to add “non-school” facility.

III. NAMING NEW SCHOOL FACILITIES

- A. It is the prerogative and responsibility of the School Board to name new schools. In preparation for School Board action, the region assistant superintendent shall work with the appropriate School Board member(s) to elicit community preferences and to establish procedures for reviewing community input.
- B. After the attendance area for a new school has been established and the principal has been appointed, the region assistant superintendent (in conjunction with the principal and the School Board member(s) representing the area in which the new school is located), will schedule a meeting with representative members of the school community to discuss recommendations for naming the school. Notice of the meeting shall be given to the press and to affected parents at least two weeks prior to the meeting date.
- C. The following process and guidelines will be used to conduct the community meeting and to determine a community recommendation.
 - 1. Meetings are open to the general public. All persons attending a meeting may suggest names for consideration; however, voting for the school name will be limited to those participants residing in the new school's attendance area.

2. Time will be allocated at the beginning of the meeting for name suggestions, presentations, questions, and audience discussion.
 3. Similar name suggestions will be reviewed with participants prior to the vote to determine if they can be consolidated into one name. Suggested names may not be consolidated after a vote takes place.
 4. Each household will be allowed one vote for the first, one vote for the second, and one vote for the third choice names.
 5. A weighted point system will be used to determine the top three choices. First choice will be awarded three points, second choice two points, and third choice one point. The name receiving the highest point total will be recommended to the Division Superintendent for consideration. This system may also be used to reduce the number of suggested names to an agreed upon number before taking the final vote.
- D. After review of the community's recommendations derived from the process used at the community meeting, the Division Superintendent will formulate a recommendation consisting of one or more of the most popular choices according to community input. The Division Superintendent shall then transmit the recommendation to the School Board for consideration and action.
- E. The School Board may, from time to time, establish criteria or appropriate categories for names that will be considered for new or existing school facilities.

Suggested criteria to be used in making recommendations are as follows:

1. Consistency with other school names at the elementary, middle, or high school level, as appropriate. In general, elementary schools and high schools have geographic or historical names; middle schools are named for famous American writers.
 2. A preference for names reflecting geographic and historical features of an area. Submission of commercially adopted subdivision names is strongly discouraged.
 3. The avoidance of names that could cause confusion with other schools in Fairfax County and/or with schools in adjoining jurisdictions and other areas of Virginia.
- F. It is the responsibility of the School Board chairman to schedule the dates to receive recommendations for information and to take action on the naming of a new school facility.
- G. The timetable for the process of naming a new school facility shall be as follows:
1. The process begins when the appropriate School Board member(s), the appropriate region assistant superintendent, and the appointed principal meet with school community members to discuss any recommendations for a school name. Recommendations from individual students, school staff members, and school community members may be discussed.

2. The deadline for the Division Superintendent to submit a formal recommendation to the School Board shall be three weeks prior to the date scheduled for School Board action.

The process should be completed in ample time to permit the principal to purchase equipment and materials that require a school name (that is, approximately three months before the planned opening of the school).

IV. RENAMING EXISTING SCHOOL FACILITIES

- A. The School Board may also consider a change in the name of a school or facility for reasons where there exists some compelling need. Such an action will be initiated by at least one magisterial School Board member representing students attending that facility and an at-large member during a School Board forum.
- B. This action will be initiated by the School Board asking the Division Superintendent to begin community engagement processes for a possible name change. The process will include at minimum:
 1. Meeting(s), survey(s), or other tools to determine the extent to which there is community support for changing the school facility name.
 2. If there is sufficient support to change the school facility name, proposed names for consideration will be solicited.
- C. The following process and guidelines will be used to conduct the community meeting and to determine a community recommendation.
 1. Meetings are open to the general public. All persons attending a meeting may suggest names for consideration; however, voting for the school name will be limited to those participants residing in the school's attendance area.
 2. Time will be allocated for name suggestions, presentations, questions, and audience discussion.
 3. Similar name suggestions will be reviewed with participants prior to the vote to determine if they can be consolidated into one name. Suggested names may not be consolidated after a vote takes place.
 4. Each household will be allowed one vote for the first, one vote for the second, and one vote for the third choice names.
 5. A weighted point system will be used to determine the top three choices. First choice will be awarded three points, second choice two points, and third choice one point. The name receiving the highest point total will be recommended to the Division Superintendent for consideration. This system may also be used to reduce the number of suggested names to an agreed upon number before taking the final vote.

- D. After review of the community's recommendations derived from the process used at the community meeting, the Division Superintendent will formulate a recommendation consisting of one or more of the most popular choices according to community input. The Division Superintendent shall then transmit the recommendation to the School Board for consideration and action.
- E. The timetable for the process of renaming an existing school facility shall be as follows:
 - 1. The deadline for the Division Superintendent to submit a formal recommendation to the School Board shall be three weeks prior to the date scheduled for School Board action.
 - 2. An approved name change will take effect at the beginning of the next school year following the School Board vote. Information on official records and documents such as transcripts will not be changed retroactively.

V. RENAMING NON-SCHOOL FACILITIES

- A. The School Board may rename a non-school facility for a variety of reasons, including its use for a new purpose or the desire to recognize an individual's contributions to FCPS. Recommendations from staff members and/or community members may be forwarded to the chairman of the School Board, in written form, at any time after the facility has discontinued operating as a school. The deadline for submitting such written recommendations shall be three weeks prior to the date scheduled for School Board action on the renaming of the facility.
- B. Recommendations for renaming should consider the new use of the facility and/or the possibility of honoring a specific individual who is no longer an active employee and who has contributed greatly to the effectiveness of the school system.
- C. School system staff members shall inform the local community of the proposed change of facility use and/or name and provide adequate time for comments.
- D. The final action of the School Board shall be in the form of a resolution renaming the facility.

VI. DEDICATING AREAS OF SCHOOL FACILITIES OR GROUNDS

Exceptional contributions to a school or to the school division may be recognized by naming an appropriate area of a school facility or school grounds in honor of an individual not actively serving Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS). Groups wanting to initiate such an action should use the following procedures:

- A. Begin by contacting the School Board member in whose district the school or facility is located for support of the naming or dedication.
- B. Contact the principal or region assistant superintendent for support of the naming or dedication.

- C. Obtain a minimum of four letters of support from a broad range of community members (e.g. PTA, business partner, booster club, faculty members, and students).
- D. Contact the appropriate region office for additional information on the process and School Board Office format requirements for preparation of the resolution.
- E. Ensure that the hard copy resolution packet includes a copy of the draft resolution, letters of support, and a cover memo from the principal to the School Board through appropriate region assistant superintendent. The principal will forward the resolution packet and an electronic version of the resolution to the appropriate region office.
- F. The region office shall be responsible for ensuring that the resolution packet meets all requirements before forwarding the packet and electronic version of the draft resolution to the School Board office. The region office will coordinate with the clerk of the Board to schedule the recognition at a future Board meeting. The recipient of the resolution and/or family members should be available to attend the School Board meeting to receive the resolution.

Recommendations may be submitted, according to the foregoing procedure, at any time. Formal School Board approval must precede any local arrangements for dedications, plaques, etc.

VII. NAMING RIGHTS

Naming rights are intended to recognize sponsorship and contributions either of a monetary nature or those which involved a voluntary and extraordinary expenditure of time and effort by a private or corporate entity that benefits Fairfax County Public Schools. Naming rights shall be assigned to appropriate areas of school facilities (library or media center, common area, gymnasium, etc.) or to school grounds (field, courtyard, stadium, etc.).

The procedures specified above for dedicating areas of school facilities or grounds in honor of an individual shall be used to initiate such action with the addition to ensure that a naming right has not already been assigned to a school facility or school ground.

VIII. LIMITATIONS TO NAMING RIGHTS

- A. Naming rights shall be valid for an initial period of five years, unless otherwise specified by the School Board at the time of approval.
- B. Naming rights shall be reviewed on a periodic basis, and a naming right may be renewed for an additional five years or for another length of time specified by the School Board.
- C. The School Board shall have discretionary authority to rescind a naming right at any time based on any action by the private or corporate entity that is deemed by the School Board to be inappropriate and/or in conflict with FCPS values.

IX. SIGNAGE LOCATION

- A. Exterior signage shall adhere to all county regulations and the Fairfax County Zoning Ordinance.
- B. To the extent possible, signage location, size, and lighting shall not be visible from adjacent residential properties or public right-of-ways or as may otherwise be permitted by county regulation.
- C. Where applicable, signage shall require a sign permit in accordance with the Fairfax County Zoning Ordinance.

See also the current version of: Policy 8170, Naming School Facilities and Dedicating Areas of School Facilities or Grounds