

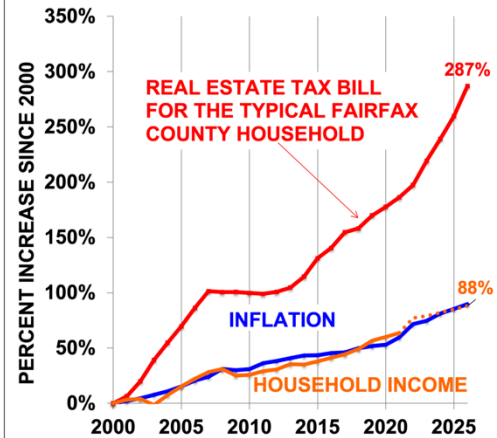
*Watchdog of the Taxpayer's Dollar Since 1956*

## Tie School Salaries to Academic Achievement

Testimony to the Feb. 10, 2026, Fairfax County School Board FY2027 Budget Hearing

*Note: Speakers at the hearing were given only two minutes.*

### FAIRFAX COUNTY REAL ESTATE TAXES ARE INCREASING THREE TIMES FASTER THAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME



HOUSEHOLD INCOME AFTER 2022 IS ESTIMATED. SOURCE: FAIRFAX COUNTY BUDGET DOCUMENTS. ANALYSIS BY FAIRFAX COUNTY TAXPAYERS ALLIANCE - ARTHUR PURVES, PRESIDENT. 3/17/25

Members of the School Board:

I am Arthur Purves, president of the Fairfax County Taxpayers Alliance.

For 25 years Fairfax County real estate taxes have been increasing three times faster than household income to pay for raises. Taxpayers are leaving.

The GMU Center for Regional Analysis reports that the Arlington-Alexandria-Reston metro area ranks 747 out of 949 for corporate development.

The requested \$138 million increase in the Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) FY2027 budget represents a 4-cent increase in the real estate tax rate.



Metro Area/Division	Rank Among Largest	Overall Rank	Prime Workforce Rank	Economic Strength Rank
Las Vegas-Henderson-North Las Vegas, NV MSA	1	54	352	32
Indianapolis-Carmel-Greenwood, IN MSA	2	99	216	120
Miami-Miami Beach-Kendall, FL Metro Div	3	103	599	21
Nashville-Davidson--Murfreesboro--Franklin, TN MSA	4	245	332	258
West Palm Beach-Boca Raton-Delray Beach, FL Metro Div	5	264	769	74
New York-Jersey City-White Plains, NY-NJ Metro Div	6	269	802	63
Fort Lauderdale-Pompano Beach-Sunrise, FL Metro Div	7	294	727	117
San Antonio-New Braunfels, TX MSA	8	307	320	355
Fort Worth-Arlington-Grapevine, TX Metro Div	9	310	698	148
<b>Arlington-Alexandria-Reston, VA-WV Metro Div</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>747</b>	<b>844</b>	<b>530</b>
<b>Washington, DC-MD Metro Div</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>888</b>	<b>833</b>	<b>845</b>

Source: <https://www.areadevelopment.com/> Total Metro Areas: 949

To justify this, the proposed budget cites SAT scores.

However, what SAT scores really reflect is the affluence of families able to hire tutors.

Among our 25 high schools, average SAT scores vary by 300 points, depending on demographics.

**FIVE FAIRFAX COUNTY PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOLS HAVE AN AVERAGE SAT SCORE ABOVE 1240, THE MINIMUM NEEDED FOR ADMISSION TO COMPETITIVE COLLEGES.**

2025 RANK	HIGH SCHOOL	2025 AVERAGE SAT SCORE	2025 PERCENTILE*
1	Thomas Jefferson	1436	95
2	Langley	1311	87
3	McLean	1292	85
4	Woodson	1253	82
5	Oakton	1245	82
6	Madison	1232	80
7	Chantilly	1228	80
8	Marshall	1206	77
9	South Lakes	1195	76
10	Robinson	1187	75
11	Lake Braddock	1186	75
	<b>FCPS</b>	<b>1183</b>	<b>74</b>
12	West Springfield	1172	73
13	Westfield	1166	72
14	Centreville	1164	72
15	Fairfax	1156	71
16	Herndon	1143	69
17	South County	1121	66
18	Hayfield	1120	66
	<b>Virginia</b>	<b>1112</b>	<b>65</b>
19	Edison	1101	63
20	Justice	1082	60
21	West Potomac	1065	58
22	Falls Church	1040	54
	<b>Nation</b>	<b>1029</b>	<b>53</b>
23	Lewis	1029	53
24	Mount Vernon	1027	52
25	Annandale	1002	48

\*PERCENT OF THE 2,004,965 SAT TAKERS THAT GOT A LOWER SCORE. Example: 71 percent of the 2,004,965 students who took the 2025 SAT got a lower score than the average score (1156) for Fairfax High School.

A truly excellent school system would have high achievement regardless of demographics.

As it is, only five of the 25 high schools have average SAT scores of 1240 or higher, the minimum to get into a competitive college.

Moreover, the FCPS average SAT score fell 28 points since 2020. Lower scores nationwide do not excuse lower scores here.

Thomas Jefferson’s SAT score fell an unprecedented 82 points in 2025.

Thirty-six percent of FCPS students qualify for subsidized meals. When they graduate, will they be self-sufficient? No, because the school board’s goal is to graduate global citizens, not self-sufficient citizens.

The Taxpayers Alliance recommends a salary freeze until:

- 1) The FCPS “Portrait of a Graduate” includes self-sufficiency.
- 2) The board rectifies the 28-point drop in SAT scores.
- 3) The board rectifies the 82-point drop in TJ SAT scores.
- 4) Collectively bargained salaries are tied to academic achievement
- 5) School achievement is high regardless of demographics.

Thank you

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