



FAIRFAX COUNTY
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Office of the Superintendent
8115 Gatehouse Road
Falls Church, Virginia 22042-1203

February 24, 2009

Dear Parent or Guardian:

Your child's school has been selected to participate in the administration of the *2009 Fairfax County Youth Survey* pilot. The *Fairfax County Youth Survey* was administered in 2001, 2003, 2005, and 2008 to a randomly selected group of sixth, eighth, tenth, and twelfth grade students and the results have helped identify protective and risk factors in students.

The 2009 pilot edition has been revised to include items that reflect the behaviors identified in the goals established by the School Board for Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS). This survey will be administered to approximately 2,000 students in grades 6, 8, 10, and 12. The survey is designed to allow students to complete the survey in one class period. Although there will be no analysis of the data, the responses will guide our selection of items for the comprehensive *Fairfax County Youth Survey* that will be administered to all students in grades 6, 8, 10, and 12 beginning in 2010.

All responses are confidential and individual students will not be identified. If a student is uncomfortable with any question on the survey, the student does not have to answer that question or may elect to discontinue the survey. Additionally, while it is hoped that as many students as possible will participate, you have the option of declining permission for your child to participate in the survey by completing and returning the attached opt-out form.

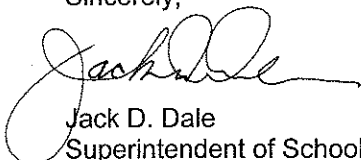
The survey will be administered during the week of March 30 – April 2, 2009. The survey questions may be previewed prior to its administration by accessing the web site at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/demogrph/youthsurvey_pilot.htm or by contacting your child's school counseling office for an appointment.

The results of this survey will be extremely helpful in determining the protective factors in place that guide our students toward making good choices as well as identifying the extent to which youth engage in behaviors that pose a risk to their current and future health. In addition, the findings will assist our school division and our community in supporting appropriate education, prevention, and intervention programs.

Participation in the survey is voluntary and an alternative activity will be available for students who do not participate.

If you do not wish for your son or daughter to participate, please complete the enclosed opt-out form and return it to your child's school counseling office by March 27th. If you have questions, please feel free to contact Dede Bailer at 571-423-4250 or Dede.Bailer@fcps.edu.

Sincerely,



Jack D. Dale
Superintendent of Schools

JDD/dsm
Enclosure

cc: Leadership Team
Dede Bailer

**2009 Fairfax County Youth Survey
OPT-OUT FORM**

Please complete this form **only** if you **do not** wish your child to participate in the survey. Return this form to your child's school counseling office no later than March 27, 2009.

I do not give permission for my child to participate in the confidential 2009 Fairfax County Youth Survey. I understand that my child will be assigned to an alternative activity during the administration of the survey. I also understand that my child will not be subjected to unfavorable comment or stigmatization for the decision to abstain from participation in the survey.

Student's name (please print): _____

Student's school (please print): _____ Grade: _____

Signature of Parent or Guardian: _____

Please return this form to the school counseling office

NO LATER THAN March 27, 2009

only if you **do not** give permission for your child to participate.

Thank you.