



**Vinson Xavier Palathingal**  
Vinson For School Board  
P.O. Box 661  
McLean, Virginia 22101

To,

## Voices of Fairfax:

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to participate in this survey. I believe that our public schools belong to the communities they are located in. That's how we make sure our communities remain stronger and kids grow up as part of the communities they live in. Hours-long bus rides are hurting the students, the environment, the traffic situation, community spirit, and our public finances. Bussing children around is not the solution for decades of inefficiency, lack of proper oversight and irresponsible and special interest driven political behavior of the current school board.

See below my answers to the questions presented by the 'Voices of Fairfax':

1. What is your position on the proposed change to School Board Policy 8130.7 that was presented to the school board on July 22nd, 2019?
  - o [https://go.boarddocs.com/vsba/fairfax/Board.nsf/files/BDZRXU6E7FD2/\\$file/20190711\\_Draft\\_Policy8130\\_REDLINE.pdf](https://go.boarddocs.com/vsba/fairfax/Board.nsf/files/BDZRXU6E7FD2/$file/20190711_Draft_Policy8130_REDLINE.pdf)

I am vehemently opposed to the proposed changes. The policy currently in place has many valid criteria to be satisfied before any boundary change proposals can be adopted. Those can't be just erased without proper public debate, thorough analysis and proven need for revision. The way the school board was trying to change the policy was without any of these and a deceptive manner. School board has to set aside politics and listen to its constituents first before making decisions that affects 1000s of people's lives.

2. How will One Fairfax affect your decisions as a school board member?

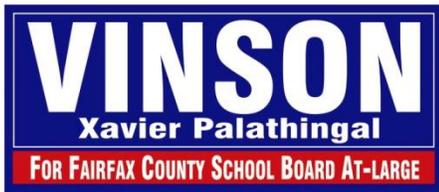
Thought processes and action plans that try to centralize the decision making for a large number of people are seldom in the best interest of all people. Such approaches may sound expedient and seem easy to implement, but will destroy the identity of smaller communities that are part of the vast expanse of land area.

Fairfax is a huge county with over 400 square miles of land area and 1.2 million people. "One Fairfax" is a phony and utopian socialist idea that will do irreparable damage to the county as we know it. I will represent the people and will be ready to do the hard work that is required to develop solutions to enable all schools in the county to become capable of producing great results. Just like any socialist idea, "One Fairfax" at its best will be able to just distribute whatever good the county has left and as a result will make the overall system mediocre. I have personally witnessed such destruction of excellence in the

+1 (703) 568-8070  
✉ Vinson@VinsonForSchoolBoard.Com

@VinsonPalathingal   
<https://www.facebook.com/VinsonForSchoolBoard/>   
vinson\_palathingal 

[www.VinsonForSchoolBoard.com](http://www.VinsonForSchoolBoard.com)



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socialist state that I left about 27 years ago. My goal is to make the whole of Fairfax excellent. Distribution of excellence by “One Fairfax” that will make all schools mediocre is not what I can root for.

3. How should racial and/or socioeconomic diversity influence establishing or changing school boundaries?

High achievement by most immigrant groups in Fairfax county without any regard to the perceived privilege, race or skin color is well documented. School boundaries, zip codes and/or ethnicity is not found to have any role in such achievement. For the exact same reason, racial and/or socioeconomic diversity should not have any influence in establishing or changing school boundaries.

We have to really nail down the reasons for academic excellence of some so that we can replicate the same opportunities for ALL. The most obvious reasons for their success are high expectations from families and very hard work. But there is one additional thing that is very common to these high achieving immigrant groups that we can replicate in FCPS. Even when they are not rich, they send their children to supplemental private education in addition to FCPS, by spending thousands of dollars every year. Such supplemental education centers such Kumon, Mathnasium, C2 Education as well as numerous weekend schools organized by various ethnic groups contribute heavily to their apparent success. These centers use direct instruction methods at the elementary level, in contrast to the inquiry-based learning FCPS currently uses. Such methods for teaching arithmetic and phonics-based reading instructions with adequate drilling will benefit ALL students. This seems to be working very well for immigrants — so why not incorporate some of the same techniques and methods into FCPS, so ALL of our children can benefit?

Please follow the link below to see my perspectives on Bridging the Achievement Gap:

[https://fairfaxgop.org/bridging-the-achievement-gap-an-immigrants-perspective/?fbclid=IwAR0-hZPiL\\_va7DY4kO2ZPyMtQLUyoy0JgOjUgWfKBIWfewHctjjsihwZl4M](https://fairfaxgop.org/bridging-the-achievement-gap-an-immigrants-perspective/?fbclid=IwAR0-hZPiL_va7DY4kO2ZPyMtQLUyoy0JgOjUgWfKBIWfewHctjjsihwZl4M)

4. What is your proposal to relieve McLean High School overcrowding for the short-term and for the longer term?

Explosion of growth in Tysons is a big factor in the overcrowding of McLean and other schools in Dranesville district. Amazon coming to Northern Virginia with 1000s of new jobs is going to aggravate the situation. When corporations produce such pressures to the local communities, they have a moral responsibility to contribute resources to alleviate the situation. As a leader of the local community and elected school board member, I would start a corporate outreach and publicity campaign for a public-private partnership to come up with the money to build necessary infrastructure required at Mclean and

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other schools. Big and bold ideas and actions are what is required to come up with innovative solutions to complex problems without adding any additional tax burden to citizens.

I will start with my long-term solution first as the beginning and progress of work on that long-term solution is the key in getting community acceptance and approvals for my short-term solution.

Vinson's long-term solution: My goal will be to create a \$500 million fund with the help of 20 major corporations with offices in the area, to ease the school overcrowding due to Tysons expansion and Amazon's arrival in NoVa. If we can develop a framework in Fairfax county with the proactive participation of Board of Supervisors, School Board and the State of Virginia legislators, getting the commitment from 20 major corporations to raise \$500 million should not be such a difficult task. Quick action from the government side will be the key to success and as an At-Large School Board member, I will provide the leadership on the government side for the necessary approvals and agreements.

Vinson's short-term solution: 5 years is what I think will be required to achieve the long-term solution I prescribed above. I will work hard in early 2020 for that idea to get traction, to gain acceptance from all stakeholders and to receive commitments from corporates. Once I am able to muster that level of support, I will go to the Great Falls and McLean communities to reach an agreement for a sort term reassignment of enough incoming freshmen students from McLean to Langley in 2020 school year. This will be a purely temporary solution wherein these freshmen assigned to Largely in 2020 Fall will be able to graduate from Langley in 4 years by the time McLean expansion is completed. Part of 2020 freshmen batch will be the only batch that will be reassigned and 2021 freshmen enrollment will fall back to the 2019 boundaries. Since the long-term solution for McLean overcrowding is already in progress by the time this happens, there will be much less resistance from both communities for such a temporary boundary adjustment that affects just a section of one batch of students.

5. How do you propose to address Langley High School under-capacity?

My short-term solution above will address the Langley under-capacity from 2020 Fall and until 2024 Fall. In the longer term of after that 4 years, that is after the graduation of the reassigned Mclean students from Langley, I don't expect to see a problem of under capacity in Langley. When talking to residents in Langley boundary, I am already hearing about 2 potential high-density residential developments inside the current Langley boundary. I am in the process of getting more information on those projects. My goal will be to have about 95 percent utilization for any school as an optimum percentage utilization. Being in a jurisdiction such as Great Falls which is so close to Tysons, it is very hard to believe that Langley will not have enough students after 4 years to have that optimum level of capacity utilization.

6. Is there a way to change the CIP process so that it can be more responsive to increases in school enrollment?

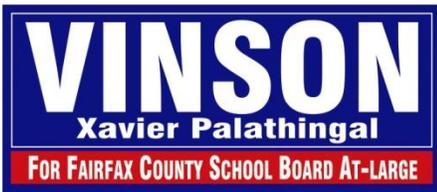
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If people, politicians and administrators across different jurisdictions (county/state/federal) come together without partisan and/or special interests, anything should be possible. Whatever changes in legislation required can be passed if the support is unanimous. The long-term solution for McLean HS overcrowding that I am proposing is such a change in the CIP process. We are Americans and anything for commongood should be doable in this country. If citizens are unanimous in their support for solutions that considers their interests paramount, like in the case of McLean overcrowding issue, it will be feasible to implement that solution. I am committed and willing to do all the hard work that is required to change the established and standard CIP processes.

7. How will you ensure that Great Falls (and surrounding areas currently zoned to Langley) remain in the Langley pyramid?

Langley has no overcrowding at present and so need for anyone to be zoned out. That means everyone currently in Langley pyramid will continue to remain that way. Per my short term solution, whatever overcapacity we currently have at Langley is going to be utilized for the 2020 incoming McLean freshmen who will be reassigned to Langley. Once they graduate and McLean's new construction is over by 2024, Langley will have more students as a result of the Tysons growth and there will still be no chance for zoning out anyone from Langley.

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@VinsonPalathingal

vinson\_palathingal

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