

To: Northern Virginia Track and Field Community

Subj: **Indoor/Winter Track and Field Programs in FCPS at Risk**

Date: Wednesday, 6 January 6, 2010

From: Dan Woolley, President/CEO, Friends of Indoor Track (FIT)

It is with a heavy heart that I am writing this note, but again our FCPS High School Indoor/Winter Track and Field Program is a risk...

Tomorrow evening, Mr. Dale will present and release the proposed budget for the Fairfax County School District and we have been led to believe that he will recommend significant cuts in all FCPS High School sports programs. Areas where we have been told cuts could be made include all freshmen sports, Indoor /Winter Track, Women's Gymnastics and potentially any program that requires facility use fees such as Swim and Dive and Cross Country track among others. Although we have not seen the final budget these programs may well be targets according to sources close to the budget process. Each of you need to be braced and ready to act if you believe, as I do, this is important to our children's future in Northern Virginia.

We all know the budget is in dire straits and cuts will have to be made but again Mr. Dale and his team have been working behind closed doors and not engaging the communities to be impacted. In looking at the information, we have been able to gather, issues associated with administrative overhead, transportation, consolidation of programs and basic business management have not been reviewed instead they have taken a big "red" pencil and drawn lines through items without really looking at and examining the associated "domino" effect.

A few facts that we believe should be communicated if these cuts are proposed:

1. Last year we had over 3000 FCPS athletes involved in the Indoor / Winter Track Program.
2. The overall cost of Indoor / Winter Track is projected for next year to be just shy of \$300,000. Rounding the numbers the cost per athlete over the course of the season breaks out to be just under \$10.00 a week.
3. Indoor /Winter Track involves all grade levels (9-12).
4. Indoor / Winter Track has more opportunity for girls to compete than any other winter sport.
5. Transportation is over half of the cost of the program (\$160,000)
6. Indoor / Winter Track provides the opportunity for EVERY athlete to compete

In the coming weeks I will begin to send, to you, information to keep you apprised of the actions of the FCPS team and I will ask you to reach out to the Board of Education and the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors. Simple messages, from you to our elected leaders, may get the FCPS administration to actively engage our community so that we can help to shape these important issues.

Something to ponder – if all freshmen sports are eliminated then there is no place for our up and coming athletes to go except our Cross Country, Indoor/Winter and Outdoor Track programs. We can embrace these young athletes with little or no additional expense. With the proposed cuts not only are there no programs that can involve these athletes but we also put 3000 more kids on the streets after school hours. Do you think this is an educated and well thought through decision...

Following the release of the budget, tomorrow night, I will provide an update and may ask you to reach out via e-mail to your elected leaders asking for their help and intervention. When I do, I will provide you with e-mail address and fact sheets you can use to rapidly communicate our issues. We cannot sit back – we will need your help again in organizing your local communities of parents and supporters of Track and Field.

You all made a huge difference last year and I hope I can again count on you to assist us in insuring programs, so important to the well being of our young adults, are not dealt a needless fatal blow.

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