

FCPS Strategic Plan Parent/Guardian Consent for Student Participation in School Focus Group (Gr. 3-6)

Instructions: Please read this consent form, then provide the requested information at the end indicating whether you give permission (consent) to your child's participation in the focus group. Return the completed form to your child's principal by February 2.

Why does FCPS need a new Strategic Plan?

FCPS wants to make all schools better and ensure we are all moving in the right direction together. The last Strategic Plan was created five years ago. A lot of things have changed since then. It is time for us to set a new direction based on where FCPS is now.

What is the purpose of the student focus groups?

The purpose of the focus groups is to understand how students feel about school and what they think needs to be improved. Students can help us understand how our students feel about school and what students think can be improved. All schools are holding these focus groups so we can hear from many students. The information will be used to guide development of the new strategic plan.

What will my child be asked to do?

Your child will engage in a group discussion that lasts up to 90 minutes with a small number of other students. Specific activities that your child will be asked to do are described below.

Students in grades 3-6

1) FCPS staff will read a book and ask students to share **ways they "use their voice."** This will be a warm-up activity and their responses will not be gathered.

2) Students will review data from the [FCPS Strategic Plan Student Survey](#). They will be asked to share their thoughts on **what is happening in school that would contribute to those responses**. Student responses will be captured electronically by an FCPS staff member serving as a notetaker.

3) Students will be asked to "design an ideal school" or "school day." They will create these on posters.

Pictures of the posters will be gathered and compiled for the teams developing the plan.

What good things might happen if your child is in the focus group?

The information students provide will help the FCPS School Board, Superintendent, teams developing the strategic plan, and the community better understand student experiences and what is most important to include in a new Strategic Plan. Your child's participation may help your child and other students at your child's school. The information should also help students in other FCPS schools. Many students also find it helpful to express their feelings and describe their experiences learning in school.

What unpleasant things might happen if your child is in this focus group?

Answering questions, drawing and sharing about your picture with others, and speaking in a group can sometimes be uncomfortable but we think most students will find it comfortable taking part in these activities. To make it easier, students do not have to share any personal information, but can draw and speak more generally about what they have experienced and what they think about school.

Focus groups will take place outside of school hours.

Does a student have to participate?

The focus group is optional. In addition to you giving permission, each student will be asked whether they want to participate in the group. Even if a student agrees to participate in the group, the student may choose not to answer any question or stop participating in the focus group at any time.

Will all students who have parent/guardian permission and want to participate be part of a focus group?

Yes, all students with parent/ guardian permission will be invited to participate in the focus groups.

Will other people know what my child said?

FCPS staff and the consultants overseeing the focus groups, as well as the students in the focus groups will be asked to keep everything said during the focus group private and only discuss it in general terms. All the drawings and written responses from students will be recorded without their names.

Where will the information from the focus groups be kept? How will the information be used?

All the information from the focus group will be shared with the company FCPS has hired to help create the Strategic Plan. This company is Performance Fact, Inc. The focus group information will be saved within FCPS' digital environment, where the advising company and FCPS staff supporting the development of the new Strategic Plan, will have direct access to the anonymous student responses. The data may be shared along with other people's ideas with the community, so everyone understands each other's views. Anything that is shared from students will be anonymous, meaning no one will know which student said what or even the names of students who were part of the focus groups. Students will be told not to put their names on the drawings.

The focus group information will be saved within FCPS' digital environment, where the advising company and FCPS staff supporting the development of the new Strategic Plan, will have direct access to the anonymous student responses. The data may be shared along with other people's ideas with the community, so everyone understands each other's views. Information gathered will be analyzed by Performance Fact Inc. staff by categorizing themes and used to inform the new strategic plan.

I have no questions, please complete the remainder of this form. If you have questions, please contact Leona Smith (lsmith3@fcps.edu) or Kevin Morris (kmorris@fcps.edu) before continuing.

Once all your questions have been answered, please complete the information below:

Choose one of the following options by placing an X to the left of your choice:

I do not have any questions and agree to let my child participate in the focus group.

I do not agree to let my child participate in the focus group.

Print your child's name and grade, then sign and date below to confirm your choice:

Print Student's First and Last Name

Student's Grade

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

Please return your completed form to your child's principal by February 2.