

SENATE OF VIRGINIA

STELLA PEKARSKY
36TH SENATORIAL DISTRICT
PART OF FAIRFAX COUNTY

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COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS:
AGRICULTURE, CONSERVATION AND
NATURAL RESOURCES
EDUCATION AND HEALTH
LOCAL GOVERNMENT
TRANSPORTATION

April 24th, 2025

Dr. Reid & Esteemed Members of the Fairfax County School Board,

Ahead of the important vote and discussion this evening regarding the SRR, which includes adopting an updated cell phone use policy in Fairfax County Schools, we wanted to make sure that we add some clarity to your discussions.

The VA law that was passed last month unanimously requires that during “bell to bell,” from the start to the end of regular school hours, students are prohibited from the use of their cellphones on school grounds. The intention of lawmakers in passing this law was to clarify that during class, lunch, and between classes, students are NOT permitted to use their cellphones at any time. While this does not dictate a cellphone possession ban on school grounds or require phones be stored where they are completely inaccessible, it does mean that students are barred from using them.

Yesterday, we were all horrified to see the violent tragedy that struck West Potomac High School when a student was stabbed during a fight. During the fight, students were able to easily record both the fight and subsequent victim. Within half an hour, incredibly traumatic, graphic, and violent videos were circulating amongst students throughout the district and on social media. Students and families throughout the county had the disturbing details of the violence that occurred, traumatizing not only West Potomac students and staff, but countless others that witnessed this mortifying event.

We are praying for the student who remains in critical condition, their family, and the students that will forever be traumatized by witnessing this act of violence, as well as the young aggressor whose life will be also impacted forever. No student should have to witness the violence, and no victim should have the most harrowing moment of their lives recorded and plastered on the internet for others to witness it.

It is my hope that tonight, you as a member of the School Board, will be reminded of these actions and the profound and avoidable impact they have on countless lives and underscore the need to fully adopt the a bell to bell cell phone policy and be in full compliance with the VA code.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Stella Pekarisky".

Senator Stella Pekarisky
Senate District 36

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Scott Surovell".

Senator Scott Surovell
Senate District 34