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South County Middle School
Lorton, VA 22079
(703) 690-5500
FAX (703) 690-5597

April 17, 2026

To the Members of the Naming Committee,

I write with respect and enthusiasm to express my full support for renaming South County Middle School's library in honor of Marsha Manning.

A school library is more than a place for books; it's a hub of learning and community. Naming it after Marsha Manning recognizes her dedication and positive impact on students and staff.

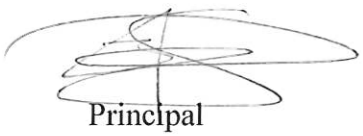
Naming this space in her honor serves several vital purposes:

- **Honoring a Legacy of Service:** Naming the library after Marsha highlights her dedication to our students and the compassion she showed our community.
- **Inspiration for Students:** Every student will see how one person's commitment can make a lasting difference.
- **A Place of Reflection:** Connecting the library to Marsha's memory creates a lasting tribute to her belief in learning.

Marsha Manning embodied the spirit of South County Middle School, transforming the lives of those who worked alongside her. Naming the library in her honor is a fitting tribute to her personal and professional legacy.

Sincerely,

Justin Simmons



Principal
South County Middle School

**Dan Storck**
*Mount Vernon District Supervisor*
*Fairfax County Board of Supervisors*
*2511 Parkers Lane*
*Mount Vernon, VA 22306*

Mount Vernon

*Telephone: (703) 780-7518* *E-mail: mtvernon@fairfaxcounty.gov*

March 27, 2026

Dear Members of the Naming Committee,

I am writing to offer my strong support for the proposal to name the South County Middle School Library in honor of Ms. Marsha Manning, the school's founding principal.

From the moment South County Middle School opened its doors in 2012, Ms. Manning set a clear vision for what the school could and should be. She created a place where every student felt seen, supported, and challenged to grow. Establishing a new school is no small task, and doing so successfully requires not only strong leadership, but also the ability to bring people together around a shared purpose. Ms. Manning did exactly that.

I had the privilege of working closely with Ms. Manning during my time on the School Board as South County Middle School was being planned and opened. From coordinating with Fairfax County Public Schools departments to ensuring the building was fully equipped for students and staff, she approached every detail with care, thoughtfulness, and a clear sense of purpose. It was evident early on that she was not only prepared to open a new school, but to build a strong and lasting community within it.

She worked closely with Fairfax County Public Schools staff, educators, and the broader community to ensure the school was fully prepared to meet the needs of all learners. Her commitment to inclusivity was evident in her support for a full continuum of services, from advanced academic programs to students with significant developmental and learning challenges. She believed deeply that South County Middle School should serve every child within its boundaries, and she built a school community that reflected that belief.

Beyond logistics and planning, Ms. Manning understood the importance of culture. She led with intention, helping to establish a distinct identity for South County Middle School that was separate from the larger secondary campus. That identity was rooted in collaboration, respect, and a shared commitment to student success. Whether engaging with students in the hallway, listening closely to parents, or supporting her staff, she brought a thoughtful and personal approach to leadership that earned the trust and admiration of the entire community.

Her impact was both immediate and lasting. As the school's first principal, she laid the foundation for a culture that continues to shape the experiences of students and staff today.

Ms. Manning passed away on August 1, 2024, following her battle with Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS). Her loss is deeply felt across the South County community. Naming the school library in her honor would serve as a meaningful and lasting tribute to her leadership, her vision, and her unwavering commitment to students.

A library is a place of learning, curiosity, and growth, and it is a fitting space to carry forward Ms. Manning's legacy.

For these reasons, I respectfully and strongly support the proposal to name the South County Middle School Library in honor of Ms. Marsha Manning.

Respectfully yours in public service,



Dan Storck
Mount Vernon District Supervisor

March 18, 2026

Dear Fairfax County School Board Chair Sandy Anderson,

When writing about the impact of Mrs. Marsha Manning on the educational community of Lorton, one must look first as she entered the scene in 2005.

Mrs. Manning was a candidate for the lead assistant principal at the newly founded South County Secondary School being located on Silverbrook Road in Lorton. Being the first secondary school (grades 7-12) built in Fairfax County since the 1980's, Mrs. Manning would have the daunting task of representing and leading the middle school program in the school. Her selection was obvious and one of the easiest interviews for the initial staff. Her knowledge of middle school curriculum and issues surrounding that along with her seemingly unending flow of energy made her an instant member of the initial administrative staff. Mrs. Manning would continually add the middle school perspective to any discussion about school policies or issues that arose. Her students quickly saw her as their champion in the larger school setting and community. Mrs. Manning's presence in the hallways and building at large was seen a positive and allowed middle school students a place or ownership in the building's culture.

Mrs. Manning would continue her visage in both high school and middle school academic events that further showed her depth of knowledge on content and curriculum. With massive overcrowding happening in the second year of the program, Mrs. Manning viewed all room use with a sense of balance as many rooms had to be dual purpose and use, It is no understatement that her efforts tremendously assisted the entire program moving forward and South County Secondary School bursting onto the scene as Fairfax County Public School's latest achievement.

When time came for the middle school to be built (due to the enrollment bulge and building capacity strain), the community openly asked who could lead their students and build a program that would continue to accent "Excellence in Every Endeavor"-the SCSS motto, and make the middle school students feel welcome in a new adjacent location. It was an obvious choice to both the community at large as well as the faculty who enjoyed her leadership and vision for middle school students. Upon her selection by the committee, the entire community breathed a sigh of relief knowing that all will be well and continue to move forward.

I believe Mrs. Marsha Manning was the perfect leader and correct selection for the first principal of South County Middle School. Her tireless energy and focus helped install and instill an essence that continues to this day. She was an impressive leader, educator and citizen!

I applaud and endorse the nomination of her name to be added to the SCMS Library. Communities deserve to remember the leaders of note and the selection of her name to this particular learning place in the building has both meaning and purpose. She is an excellent choice for this accolade!

Sincerely,

Dale S. Rumberger
Retired Principal, South County Secondary School

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8115 Gatehouse Road
Falls Church, VA 22042-1203

DATE: March 29, 2026

TO: Sandy Anderson, Fairfax County School Board Chair

FROM: Gordon Stokes, Executive Principal, Region 5

RE: Support for naming the South County Middle School Library in honor of Marsha Manning

Dear Ms. Anderson,

I am writing to share my full support for the naming of the South County Middle School library in honor of Marsha Manning. I was an assistant principal at South County Middle School from spring 2012 through June 2015. I had the honor to work under Ms. Manning's leadership when she was the charter principal of the school. I cannot think of a more fitting tribute for Ms. Manning. She was a dedicated educator, lifelong learner, and wonderful person who cared deeply about the South County community. Naming the library in her honor affirms her legacy and impact on this school, the students, and the staff.

Marsha committed much of her career to FCPS, in particular the South County area of our county. As an assistant principal, she was heavily involved in the beginnings of South County Secondary School. In this role, she proved herself as an impactful instructional leader by collaborating to build the systems that enabled a new secondary school to launch. Through her clear communication and knowledge, Marsha established a high level of trust with her colleagues. She was sought after for her ability to gracefully lead and problem-solve through the myriad of situations that a school encounters during an academic year. When South County Middle School began to take shape, it was without question that Marsha would emerge as the principal of this new school. Both staff and community were immensely in favor of her taking on this incredible opportunity. It speaks volumes that an assistant principal who had never led a school was the overwhelming favorite to lead a brand-new building. Marsha did not disappoint. Through careful planning, continuous conversations, and visionary thinking, Marsha opened a school that was welcoming to the community and provided a positive impact on the trajectories of all students who entered its doors. Her leadership helped to unite a staff in their new space and develop school traditions that still last through the present. South County Middle School continues to flourish due to the solid foundation that Marsha established.

The principal of a school is often referred to as the "lead learner". Marsha embodied that title in her time at South County Middle School. Marsha wanted the staff to bring a level of skill and compassion to their work. She found it was essential for the staff to understand current educational thinking and practices that they would use to provide great experiences for their students. Upon South County Middle School's opening, Marsha dove into growth mindset

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concepts and made this a focal point of collective understanding for the staff and students. A common language was established and used to frame actions in a fashion that inspired individuals to strive for greater outcomes. Through her characteristic calm and thoughtful approach, Marsha guided other learning opportunities for students and staff throughout her tenure as principal. She enabled people to actualize possibilities that may have been murky. Her actions were remarkably like what a vibrant library inspires for its patrons. A library is a place where people go to get inspired, discover new information and put ideas into action. The library named in Marsha's honor would be a lovely reminder of the importance that she placed on learning in a space where students and staff alike come to dive into new concepts and ways of thinking.

The South County Middle School library is an open, bright space that is welcoming to students and designed to be inviting and foster learning. As the opening of the school approached, Marsha pored over the library's details. She knew that something like the design and color of the carpet would leave an impression that would elevate the user's experience in this space. Marsha saw the library as a vital element of the welcoming learning environment she wanted to create. She knew that students sought their library as a place to bond with peers or enjoy calm refuge. The South County MS library has achieved this status in the life of the school. Students, teachers, and librarians make wonderful use of the space for teaching, learning, and extending the school's community. Marsha would certainly be proud of what happens in this part of the school on a daily basis.

Marsha Manning was a wonderful person who provided her expertise and passion to set forth a great place of learning. Naming the library, such an important hub within this school, in her honor would provide a lasting acknowledgement to her life and legacy. Thank you for taking this information into consideration.

Sincerely,

Gordon Stokes

Executive Principal, Region 5, Fairfax County Public Schools

Katherine Johnson Middle School
3801 Jermantown Road
Fairfax, VA 22030

Mar 28, 2026

Ms. Sandy Anderson

School Board Chair

Fairfax County Public Schools

Re: Letter of Support for the Naming of the South County Middle School Library in Honor of Marsha Manning

Dear Ms. Anderson & Members of the Naming Committee,

It is with a profound sense of respect that I write to formally support the proposal to name the South County Middle School library in honor of our founding principal, Marsha Manning. Marsha was not just an administrator; she was the architect of the school's soul, a fierce champion for children, and a mentor who transformed the lives of those who worked alongside her.

Marsha's legacy is woven into the very fabric of South County. From her early days as an Assistant Principal opening South County Secondary School in 2005 to her historic tenure as the first principal of South County Middle School, she led with a vision that was both expansive and deeply personal.

## A Vision Painted in Stone and Spirit

Marsha's philosophy was anchored in three words that remain painted in the main lobby today: **Capable, Connected, and Contributing.** She didn't just want students to pass tests; she wanted them to be whole human beings who understood their value within a community.

- **The Power of Connection:** Perhaps nothing illustrates Marsha's heart better than the community rock garden. By tasking every student and staff member with painting a river stone—each linked by a single gold line—she created a visual testament to her belief that while we are all individuals, we are inextricably connected when we build something together.
- **A Champion for Self-Advocacy:** Marsha understood the unique turbulence of the middle school years. She was a pioneer in developing self-advocacy curriculum, famously asking parents to "step back so students could step forward." She empowered students to find their voices before they ever reached high school.

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Fairfax, VA 22030

## A Leader of Leaders

On a personal note, Marsha was an extraordinary mentor to me during my first years as an assistant principal. She possessed a rare leadership style that balanced being petite and soft-spoken with being fiercely protective and visible. She didn't believe in top-down management; she believed in strength-based leadership. She worked tirelessly with our administrative team to identify our individual talents, dividing responsibilities so that each of us could lead from a place of authenticity and excellence. She empowered us, championed us, and taught us that quiet strength is often the most impactful.

## Why the Library?

The library is the heart of any school—a place of discovery, reflection, and connection—and there is no space more fitting to bear Marsha's name. Before she was an administrator, Marsha was a dedicated middle school English teacher and a lifelong avid reader. She remained a fierce advocate of literacy, believing that the ability to read and communicate was the ultimate tool for the self-advocacy she championed. She knew that a library wasn't just a room full of books; it was a sanctuary where students could become the "capable, connected, and contributing" citizens she envisioned.

Naming this space the **Marsha Manning Library** would serve as a permanent reminder of the gold line she drew through all of our lives. Even as she faced the unimaginable challenges of ALS, her legacy of kindness and "fierce" advocacy remained unshaken.

It is my unbelievable honor to recommend that we preserve her memory in the halls she loved so dearly.

Sincerely,

Heather Bousman-Stanczak

Assistant Principal, South County Middle School (2012-2019)

Dear Sandy,

I know this is past the date for consideration but I still felt impelled to write a note in favor of naming the South County Library after Marsha Manning.

I worked with Marsha at Twain Middle School and followed her to the opening of South County Secondary School. She was instrumental in opening the school with Dale Rumberger and others. She was our defacto head of the middle school.

When the middle school was set to open, the staff rallied around having Marsha as our principal. She was someone who listened to people's concerns and we felt heard even if there were disagreements. But she had a firm hand when dealing with members of the school community.

Marsha then was the key driver in setting up the middle school and was a key reason why we had such a great staff. She stood for principles even if it was not the easiest road to take. This was very evident when the English Department wanted to share a certain book and speaker that was very relevant to the 8$^{th}$ grade students. Many outside the school told her not to put up a fight to keep the book but she had the total support of the staff. She fought for the principle and was successful. Picking the library to honor her is highly appropriate as she loved sharing knowledge and experiences and strongly focused on having students understand and participate in reading more.

Thank you for continuing to pursue this honor.

Tom Verdin

South County Middle School