Fairfax County PUBLIC SCHOOLS
ENGAGE • INSPIRE • THRIVE

FCPS Naming Rights Program: Framework, Timeline, and Risk Management

September 8, 2026

State of Today: Directive and Asset Scale

Directive & Policy Framework

In March 2026, the FCSB issued a directive to draft a formal naming-rights proposal for athletic facilities as a proactive strategy to address critical funding gaps.

Governance is guided by **Policy 8170** (updated October 2025). This framework mandates that all naming-rights revenue be allocated to a dedicated, restricted Facilities fund.

The implementing **Regulation 8170** is missing many key elements required to manage risk associated with a large-scale naming rights initiative.

26

High School Campuses

1M +

Visitors to FCPS Athletic Events/Venues

Strategic Risk Management & Policy Controls

Operational Threat

Threat Area:

Operational risks resulting in inequitable resource allocation across divisions.

Recommendation:

Pool revenue division-wide to ensure equitable allocation across all schools.

Reputational Threat

Threat Area:

Reputational damage arising from standard contract execution and partnerships.

Recommendation:

Mandate strict morals clauses and absolute board termination authority in every contract.

Legal & Vetting Threat

Threat Area:

Legal exposure, vetting gaps, and threat of over-commercialization.

Recommendation:

Apply uniform vetting checklists to all offers and explicitly cap nameable asset categories to prevent over-commercialization.

Testing Market Feasibility via RFI

Rationale

Recommend issuing a Request for Information (RFI) to test market feasibility and validate asset valuations prior to initiating a formal procurement or accepting unsolicited offers.

This proactive, structured process helps the school board and division to:

- **Refine Specifications:** Shape detailed project requirements and contract parameters based on actual industry norms.
- **Map Assets:** Review comprehensive inventories of physical athletic complexes, fields, and digital platforms.
- **Validate Pricing:** Establish realistic, real-world pricing ranges to mitigate under-, and over-valuation risk prior to full solicitation.

Low-Risk Market Validation

This low-risk mechanism allows the division to "test the waters" to see if regional brands have the appetite and budget to participate prior to investing in a complex, formal campaign.

Next Phase Transition

RFI outcomes will provide critical intelligence to support Regulation language, structure solicitation specifications, develop criteria for unsolicited offer vetting, ensuring all future naming rights contracts remain aligned with Board expectations.

Governance Model: Scope & Eligible Asset Categories

Board Governance Model

Final Approval Authority

To ensure complete alignment with division values and protect the public interest, the School Board is established as the **sole and final approval authority** for all naming rights contracts.

This centralized oversight model guarantees rigorous review, mitigating potential reputational impacts and ensuring that all corporate partnerships reflect local community standards.

Eligible Asset Categories

- **Major Athletic Venues:** Complexes, stadiums, gymnasiums, and diamond fields, courts.
- **Secondary Assets:** Scoreboards and concession stands, lobbies, weight rooms..

Strict Policy Exclusions

Core Instructional Spaces

Classrooms, libraries, and other spaces that students occupy daily are **strictly excluded** from corporate naming agreements to preserve and protect the educational environment.

Governance Model: Term Limits & Legal Protections

Contract Duration & Renewal

To maintain active oversight and ensure alignment with school division standards, all naming agreements are bound to a strict duration framework:

- **Five-Year Standard Term:** Every initial contract is capped at a standard **minimum** initial term of five years to prevent indefinite commitments.
- **Strict Re-Vetting Process:** Subsequent extensions trigger a mandatory, formal re-evaluation of the sponsor's fit and ongoing value.
- **Active Board Approval:** Any proposal to extend an agreement requires explicit approval from the Board.

Mandatory Brand Protections

Morals & Reputation Clauses

Strict morals and reputational-harm clauses must be integrated into every naming agreement to proactively protect the division's interests.

Absolute Right to Terminate

The School Board, in direct consultation with Division Counsel, retains the absolute, unilateral right to terminate contracts if a sponsor conflicts with the division's best interest.

Ensuring Impact of New Resources and Resolving the Equity Concerns

Division-Wide Revenue Pooling

Addresses critical concerns regarding the risk that well-resourced schools might capture disproportionate sponsorship benefits while schools in need struggle to attract high-value deals.

By revising policy language to allocate all naming rights revenue into a centralized athletics facility and capital asset replacement fund, an equity-conscious revenue-allocation model is embedded in the regulation from day one.

Equity Strategy: Asset Bundling & Pooling

Asset Bundling Strategies

Bundle high-demand and lower-demand naming assets into combined sponsorship packages. This approach ensures that corporate partners seeking premier placement also provide vital support to schools with lower visibility, preserving system-wide balance.

Division-Wide Pooling

Actively pursue multi-venue and division-wide partnerships to aggregate resources. By pooling revenues, the division eliminates regional imbalances, strengthens structural opportunities, and ensures equitable funding across all schools.

Rigorous Vetting Workflow & Legal Protections

Fairfax County PUBLIC SCHOOLS
ENGAGE • INSPIRE • THRIVE

01 / Internal Review

Mandates a comprehensive, multi-departmental evaluation process to thoroughly analyze all naming proposals:

Participating Staff:

- Facilities & Budget
- Procurement & Equity
- Chief of Schools

02 / Legal Integration

Requires proactive legal oversight early in the drafting process rather than at final review:

Direct Integration:

Mandatory collaboration with Division Counsel to guarantee all policy stipulations, liabilities, and legal conditions are thoroughly vetted before progress.

03 / Board Action

Defines the ultimate threshold for legally binding decisions, precluding any pre-approvals:

Non-Binding Notice

No informal agreement or naming commitment is binding until **Division Counsel review** and formal **School Board action** are fully complete.

Policy 8170 Changes & Regulation Checklist

Fairfax County PUBLIC SCHOOLS
ENGAGE • INSPIRE • THRIVE

Policy Amendments

Board Approval Mandate
Strictly require formal School Board approval for all naming agreements and sponsorship proposals to ensure complete oversight.

Prohibited Naming
Prohibit revenue-contingent naming rights to protect district branding and maintain neutral educational environments.

Facilities Fund Allocation
Establish a dedicated Facilities fund to manage and allocate incoming sponsorship revenues directly toward capital improvement projects.

Regulation Checklist

✓ **Eligible Asset Categories**
Define clear classifications for school assets that qualify for corporate sponsorship and naming rights.

✓ **Uniform Vetting Standard**
Apply identical vetting criteria and compliance rules to both solicited and unsolicited commercial offers.

✓ **Signage Aesthetics**
Enforce strict guidelines governing the size, color, materials, and placement of commercial logos on campus.

✓ **Local Permit Compliance**
Mandate strict adherence to County sign-permit codes directly within the legal terms of all negotiated contracts.

Key Discussion Questions for Board Input

Fairfax County PUBLIC SCHOOLS
ENGAGE • INSPIRE • THRIVE

01

Facility Commercialization Boundaries

What are the acceptable boundaries for facility commercialization in final regulation draft parameters?

02

Contract Scale & Appetite

What is the Board's appetite for numerous small contracts versus seeking only large-scale agreements?

03

Marketing & Procurement Strategy

What is the optimal mix of internal marketing efforts, engaging a broker, or utilizing a formal RFP process?

04

In-Kind Valuation & Foundation Role

How should we evaluate the role of Educate Fairfax and value in-kind partnerships?

Phased Implementation Roadmap

Nov / Dec 2026

Issue RFI

Launch the RFI to test market feasibility, assess brand appetite, clarify project requirements, and validate pricing scales prior to formal solicitation.

February 2027

Adoption & Marketing Preparation

Formal adoption of Policy 8170 and Regulation. Coordinate optimal market entry leveraging the procurement channels identified during the RFI review.

Fall 2027

Go-to-Market

There may be advantages to timing contracts to begin with the start of school year (sign production/installation).