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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Arlington, VA - We are devastated to lose another Latino student due to an opioid overdose. We send our most sincere condolences to the family, the loved ones, and to the entire Wakefield Community. The fentanyl crisis is wreaking havoc on the Latino communities of Arlington, claiming multiple lives and tearing our families apart. This tragedy marks the second [death from a student at the same school this year](#). Our community is facing an urgent crisis that demands immediate, powerful and lasting action from Arlington County Government and our leaders. The LULAC Arlington Council and the NAACP Arlington Branch come together to demand that our county government and elected leaders take decisive steps to combat this deadly epidemic today to save lives.

We cannot afford to wait any longer; we must act now. Community leaders have called on the County Manager to establish a meeting to no avail. As two of the nation's oldest and largest civil rights organizations, and on behalf of the thousands of residents of color we represent, we demand action.

We demand that Arlington County and Arlington Public Schools immediately hold an emergency session on the opioid crisis. "Government agencies, healthcare providers, civic organizations and other community stakeholders *must* begin to receive the proper resources, funding, and information to combat the deadly crisis effectively. This starts with an action-oriented meeting with all of us," said Christopher Concepcion, President of the Arlington Council of The League of United Latin American Citizens.

We demand comprehensive and modern solutions to eliminate drug use, including equitable mental health services, and access to youth addiction, treatment, and prevention programs. Arlington Public Schools must immediately reimagine after school activities. The current programming simply is not working and the community is crying out for change. Mike Hemminger, President of the NAACP Arlington Branch said, "Our kids have no trusted safe space in our community. They are roaming the streets, being harassed and pressured into drugs because there's nothing to do." **Today, we call on Arlington County and Arlington Public Schools to work together to immediately commit to funding a full service teen center located in our community.**

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About LULAC:

The League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) is the nation's largest and oldest civil rights volunteer-based organization that empowers Hispanic Americans and builds strong Latino communities. Headquartered in Washington, DC, with 1,000 councils around the United States and Puerto Rico, LULAC's programs, services and advocacy address the most important issues for Latinos, meeting critical needs of today and the future.

About NAACP:

Founded in 1909 in response to the ongoing violence against Black people around the country, the NAACP is the largest and most pre-eminent civil rights organization in the nation. Our mission is to achieve equity, political rights, and social inclusion by advancing policies and practices that expand human and civil rights, eliminate discrimination, and accelerate the well-being, education, and economic security of Black people and all persons of color.