

<b>I would like to provide: *</b>	In-Person Virtual Public Comments
<b>Select the meeting date:* *</b>	January 7, 2021
<b>My public comments are related to: *</b>	Virtual+ Plus Learning
<b>Topic *</b>	I would like to encourage ACPS to move forward with return to school plans, and I would like to share our family's experience with Virtual+ Plus Learning. I am a single parent who has struggles to work and support my daughter in online learning.
<b>Full Name *</b>	Melissa Hagemann
<b>What is your relationship to ACPS? *</b>	Parent/Guardian of an ACPS Student

**January 7, 2021**

**School Board Organizational Meeting**

**Public Comments by Melissa Hagemann**

Hello, my name is Melissa Hagemann and I would like to thank you for this opportunity to present to you today. I encourage ACPS to move forward with return to school plans. I am a single parent who works full time and I would like to share my experience of the Virtual Plus Program, as it could be reflective of what other single parent families in our community are facing.

My daughter is in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade at MVCS. She has always loved school and excelled in it. She loves Principal Burrell and her teachers, and we are so grateful for all of the support they have provided.

Unfortunately, a few months ago my daughter began losing weight. Actually, she lost 8 lbs., which is quite significant for an 8 yrs old. Her pediatrician referred us to a gastroenterologist, and after many tests, the gastroenterologist, pediatrician and a wonderful therapist I was able to find for her, all concluded that she is suffering from anxiety. She started the school year in September, sitting in the bathroom beside the toilet with her camera off.

I was hopeful that the Virtual Plus programs would help, and spent thousands of dollars on the ASA program. The coaches were great, however after a few weeks, my daughter concluded that she was the only one in her class not doing zoom school from home, thus she felt like she stuck out, began refusing to attend ASA, and this only made her anxiety worse. Now she is doing zoom school from home.

My own performance and productivity have greatly suffered, as I have to constantly monitor her, as she often hops off zoom and misses school assignments. On Mondays I can't schedule professional calls, as I have to sit with her while she does her asynchronous learning assignments and then keep her entertained the rest of the day, or she will revert to her ipad, which she became addicted to in the spring. As a single parent, it is particularly worrying that I am unable to devote the time needed to my job.

My daughter pleads with me to homeschool her or send her to a private school, and it breaks my heart when I have to tell her that I can't do either.

My daughter's doctors have advised that what she needs most is to return to a normal school routine. This is also what the American Academy of Pediatrics has advised in their updated guidance as they indicate that what is most needed is a return to in-school learning. I would urge ACPS to move forward with return to school plans.

Thank you again for this opportunity to present and thank you for serving on the school board.