

I would like to provide: * In-Person Virtual Public Comments

Select the meeting date:* * January 7, 2021

My public comments are related to: * Virtual+ Plus Learning

Topic * virtual plus learning and child care

Full Name * Bridget Shea Westfall

What is your relationship to ACPS? * Parent/Guardian of an ACPS Student

Enter your comments here OR upload below: Comments provided on next page.

January 7, 2021 Organizational School Board Meeting

Public Comments

Public Comments by Bridget Shea Westfall

Good afternoon Dr. Hutchings, members of the School Board teachers, parents, students and community members. I would also like to recognize any Virginia Education Association members and representatives. My name is Bridget Shea Westfall. I am an ACPS parent to a Maury first grader, Jameson. Jameson is attending an ACPS Virtual Plus Partner through The Campagna Center at George Mason Elementary School. My comments focus on teacher engagement and child care in Phased Re-Entry.

For Phased Re-Entry to be a success, it is important to include all stakeholders. How is ACPS engaging teachers? Please consider the impact of the salary step freeze on teacher morale, the economic impact of schools being closed on teachers' incomes, the need for mental health resources and child care. What resources and incentives can ACPS provide? Additionally, I am concerned with the rollout of vaccines dependent on being employer driven for teachers. Right now, only an employer can sign up teachers. How do you intend to make sure teachers are able to access an employer-sponsored vaccination? Does ACPS have a target date for vaccinations?

Regarding child care, this week, parents wondered about operations with community partners in the winter and had many unanswered questions from providers about the continuity of care in the hybrid model. Based on our family needs and my son's request, we chose the hybrid model. After hearing me discuss a survey from Campagna, my son got incredibly angry with me, lost his temper, bawled up his face and cried. The thought of him losing his "school" (Campagna) was too much for him.

Absent in-person learning, my son affiliates with his first-second grade classroom at Campagna, no longer wears his Maury uniform, confided in me that he focuses on his teacher on Zoom, because seeing his classmates, many of whom he has never met or do not remember him, is too hard for him. While his classmates might take breaks at the Maury playground, he has to worry about missing his next class while at Campagna, nervous because he just learned to tell time. Asked to have executive functioning skills, when he cannot yet read and write. He was one of the kids who received 2s in the Q1 grades report. This is despite having every resource available to him: a Book Buddy who tutored him over break, group leaders at Campagna and a teacher at Maury who collaborate to meet his academic needs and a retired reading recovery specialist as a second tutor outside school hours.

My son is socially aware enough to have pause about schools being unsafe when he has been in an ACPS classroom in an ACPS school, not his own, since September. I encourage Dr. Hutchings and the Board to visit these sites and note promising practices for implementing a safe return to schools.