

# Public Comments for School Board Meetings

#855

I would like to provide: \*

Written Public Comments

My public comments are related to: \*

General Public Comments

Topic \*

Jefferson Houston Leadership

Full Name \*

Kate and Brian Bartholomay

What is your relationship to ACPS? \*

Parent/Guardian of an ACPS Student

Enter your comments here OR upload below:

Dear ACPS School Board,

We appreciate the efforts that are underway to understand the March 19 incident at Jefferson Houston. We also understand that ACPS is constrained from sharing full details at this time. We are happy to wait until all the facts are known before coming to any conclusions regarding whether the March 19 incident and ACPS's response to it was handled appropriately.

As parents of two Jefferson Houston students, we can report that the combination of ACPS's action to place Dr. McCain and Ms. Young on leave and the limited information ACPS has been able to provide has led to significant confusion within the Jefferson Houston community. Since Dr. Kay-Wyatt's announcement that the Jefferson Houston leadership team would be placed on leave, we have come to learn that the student involved in the March 19 incident was part of the pre-K program run by the Early Childhood Center and SPED. We have also learned that while this program is housed within Jefferson Houston, it is administered by ACPS and not Jefferson Houston's leadership team. Given these factors, and that (as we understand it) ACPS was made aware of the incident on the day that it happened, it remains unclear why placing the school leadership team abruptly on leave three weeks after the incident was necessary to complete a thorough investigation. The public nature of the change in leadership has invited speculation and concern and caused significant disruption to the school community. We hope that the investigation into the March 19 incident is successful and that, when it is concluded, ACPS will be able to provide a full explanation regarding why such disruption was necessary. We

also hope that school leadership will feel that they were treated fairly given their limited role overseeing the pre-K program at Jefferson Houston. Thank you for your efforts and for your consistent attention to the well-being of Jefferson Houston's students.

For our part, we plan to continue supporting Jefferson Houston through volunteering and communicating with fellow parents, school leadership, and the broader Alexandria community. We have no doubt that Ms. PreeAnn Johnson is a fine educator and capable administrator and look forward to hearing her plans for helping students and teachers navigate this time, especially with upcoming SOL testing and other significant events for the school on the horizon.

Best,

Kate and Brian Bartholomay.

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