

Public Comments for School Board Meetings

#508

I would like to provide: *

Written Public Comments

My public comments are related to: *

Budget

Topic *

Brooks Elem School Class Sizes

Full Name *

Allison Loud

What is your relationship to ACPS? *

Parent/Guardian of an ACPS Student

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I strongly support the school board's priority for small classroom sizes for ACPS in this year's budgeting process. However, the proposed budget will result in classroom sizes in grades 3 and 5 at Naomi Brooks that exceed the 26 student capacity limit for these grades. The proposed Brooks staffing budget should be changed to assign two additional homeroom teachers to Naomi L. Brooks Elementary, so that Brooks has three homeroom teachers at each grade level in FY'24. I'd like to share with you why I feel this is important.

My 3rd grade child's class has 28 students this year. My child's overall enjoyment in going to school has decreased significantly from 2nd to 3rd grades. He complains of peers being off-task or distracting much more often than in prior years, and he gets very discouraged when individual or class-level incentives are not met due to the chaotic classroom environment. He complains of not receiving any individualized instruction. His test scores on the standardized tests have completely flat-lined - he has gone from the 87th percentile to the 54th percentile and is not following the curve expected at all.

My child is a student who, prior to 3rd grade, has always loved school. He has always participated in class discussions constantly, been engaged in the lessons, and conversational at home about the things he's learning. This year, that has all changed. While I recognize that several factors may be at play in the change, it's hard to ignore the larger class-size as an impactful variable.

The children currently in grades 3 through 5 have had it rough during COVID. These kids were asked to learn to READ over Zoom. They shouldered a heavy burden during the pandemic to help protect their communities. Now it's time for our school district community to look after these same kids to ensure that their needs are met after a tumultuous two years; to ensure that further learning losses are not encountered, and that these students are set up with every tool needed to succeed. I believe strongly that this effort must include smaller class sizes.

I therefore urge you to allot two additional homeroom teachers to Brooks so that students currently enrolled in grades 3 and 5 may return knowing their class sizes will be within ACPS capacity limits.
