

# Public Comments for Virtual School Board Meetings #45

My public comments are related to: \* General Public Comments

Topic \* Rename the High School (Public Agenda Item 18)

Name \* Thomas Ballantine

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

**To include your comments as part of the Public Comments agenda item at weekly Special Called School Board Meetings, enter your comments here:**

Thank you for taking up the issue of renaming the High School. The proposed motion takes a significant step, but too slowly. As the proposed motion states, "It is well documented that throughout his tenure as Superintendent, Thomas Chambliss Williams exhibited racism, fought to maintain segregation in ACPS, and promoted the school division's massive resistance to desegregation efforts." In that light, it is most important the Alexandria un-name our High School as soon as possible, even as the press of work of education during the pandemic means that finding a new name may take time. Thus, the Board should amend the motion to exercise its power under Section V.E of Regulation FF-R, which states that "The School Board reserves the right to rescind the naming or renaming of any school or school division facility." There is no reason not to start with a blank slate when the current name demeans our students and our city.

I ask that the proposed Board motion be amended to strike "I THEREFORE MOVE, pursuant to Section III.B. of Regulation FF-R, that the School Board officially consider the request to rename T.C. Williams High School" and replace it with "I THEREFORE MOVE, pursuant to Section V.E. of Regulation FF-R that the School Board rescind the name "T.C. Williams" from the Alexandria City High School. I FURTHER MOVE, pursuant to Section III.B. of Regulation FF-R, that the School Board consider renaming the High School through an appropriate process." The motion could then continue unchanged from the sentence beginning "Accordingly," except that "T.C. Williams" should be replaced with "the" in that sentence.

This approach would establish that Alexandria is acting today against racism and segregation.