

Public Comments for Virtual School Board Meetings #171

I would like to provide: *	Written Public Comments
My public comments are related to:	Virtual+ Plus Learning
Topic *	Phase 2 return to school
Full Name *	Dawn Ramsburg
What is your relationship to ACPS? *	Parent/Guardian of an ACPS Student

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I am concerned about the lack of transparency on the return to school plan and the cloak of equity seemingly shielding making any decision for anyone other than a small few groups of students. Our 2nd grader is doing better than expected with distance learning. BUT we have seen tremendous regression in her self-confidence and she has shown much greater anxiety in everyday activities (Won't play in a room by herself anymore). This started in March with school closure and hasn't improved. She greatly wants to be in her class with her teachers and peers who all help her confidence. But rather than be straight with parents and the community – ACPS is overcrowded and can't socially distance in current space – we get a confusing plan that will only allow less than 5% of students to return next quarter. Why aren't staggered schedules (or hybrid) being considered? Why aren't community spaces being identified? Why did we stay home in fall when outdoor spaces could be used? Why are school repairs keeping existing facilities from the pool of options (eg John Adams)? If we want equity for all, then ALL students need an in-person option, not just a few kids with labeled needs. Do I want ACPS to consider safety first? Absolutely. But mental health is important too to go with the academics and this plan is not sufficient to meet either of those needs. I encourage the Board to push harder on finding more options to help overcome the challenges presented by the pandemic and not simply live with the space capacity issues as the reason for doing nothing to get students back in school. Thank you.