

Public Comments for School Board Meetings

#530

I would like to provide: *

Written Public Comments

My public comments are related to: *

Budget

Topic *

Class sizes at Naomi L. Brooks Elementary

Full Name *

Krista Gill

What is your relationship to ACPS? *

Parent/Guardian of an ACPS Student

Enter your comments here OR upload below:

To Whom It May Concern:

I was recently troubled to hear that the ACPS budget proposal for next year would not provide for any additional teachers for next year's 3rd and 5th grade students. I know that staffing and budget are both challenging, but this does not seem like the area to cut back. My child is currently in 4th grade at Brooks, and having only 2 homeroom teachers and large class sizes (both last year and this year!) is difficult for both the students and the teachers.

I am a room parent for my child's classroom, and having volunteered for class events, I can attest that the room is very crowded and chaotic. It is quite difficult to even move around the room because of the number of desks required for 26+ students. Additionally, there have been HVAC issues requiring large, noisy heating units be added to both of our 4th grade classrooms! It is amazing that the teachers have not lost their voices in having to provide instruction over the sound of this equipment and 28 children every day. If ACPS is at all concerned about teacher retention, alleviating this situation could go a long way. Putting 28 kids in a classroom is not going to lead to success for that teacher or those students.

In our most recent parent-teacher conference, my child's Social Studies teacher indicated that my child rarely talked in class, to the point that he was not sure what her voice sounds like. This is shocking to me, as she talks constantly at home! My child has indicated that the classroom is too loud, and she often becomes overwhelmed and withdraws from participating in class. If this is happening with my typically very outgoing,

confident kid, it is not a stretch to imagine the classroom experience of a child who is already less inclined to participate in class.

Our children missed half of 1st grade, had 2nd grade on Zoom, and have been crammed into large classes ever since. I am alarmed that these class sizes may persist for their final year in elementary school, a critical year that will prepare them to launch into 6th grade. Our teachers deserve to have the breathing room they need to provide more individual support to students, and our kids deserve to have a final opportunity for a "normal" year at Brooks to prepare them for middle school and beyond. I ask that the proposed budget be reconsidered, and funding provided for additional teachers at the 3rd and 5th grade levels at Naomi L. Brooks Elementary.

Respectfully yours,

Krista Gill (parent of 4th grade student at NLBES)
