Public Comments for Virtual School Board Meetings #162

I would like to provide: *	Written Public Comments
My public comments are related to:	Virtual+ Plus Learning
Topic *	Hutching's Proposal
Full Name *	Matt Longley
What is your relationship to ACPS? *	Parent/Guardian of an ACPS Student
Enter your comments here OR upload below:	Questions: 1. Is the intent of this plan to communicate that there is NO option for reopening for students that are not Students with Disabilities or English Learners during Q2 or Q3? The third row in the slide is not clear. 2. Is ACPS considering survey data and community feedback by school? Will ACPS consider opening some schools and not others? It means something very different to open a school the size of George Mason vs. TC. 3. I was unable to find the survey that came out a month or so ago but if I recall correctly, there was not a clear question about whether parents want schools to open or not. Are you considering asking that question more directly? Survey data is a valuable form of feedback but can be very misleading depending on the order of questions, response rate, response scales. 4. What was the response rate for the survey? 5. What is the best way to provide feedback and feel like we are being heard as a George Mason Community? We hear from many of our friends and neighbors (including teachers) in the George Mason community that they are ready to go back in person AND are willing to help and volunteer (i.e., provide PPE, take temperature checks in the morning). Yet, it feels like sending these emails does nothing. Do we have to all just pull our kids out of ACPS to make an impact? Many people are doing this already. 6. Why is Alexandria not aligning with Arlington County's proposal? Specifically, What differences in population, resources, or rate of COVID infection are impacting Alexandria vs. Arlington in terms of this decision? 7. Related to the question above, please explain specifically what data are informing the decision to reopen, aside from the survey responses? 8. Countries across the school, including many public school systems, are open or operating under a hybrid model. Is ACPS engaging with these school systems to understand how we could adopt similar models? Feedback:

1. Virtual learning does not work for elementary school. We are in a fortunate position to have hired full time help and it is still a challenge every single day, with tears, frustration and a lot of boredom. I recently sat in on my daughter's third grade math class and for a 50-minute class, about 22 minutes were spent navigating among technology and assisting the Special Education teacher with using a breakout room.

2. We are failing our children. It is easy to say--"oh it is just a few months" and now "oh it is just a year." But as parents, as educators, and as elected officials that are supposed to advocate for their communities, we must do better. A year is a long time for an elementary school child to sit in front of the computer for 6.5 hours.

3. I encourage you all to think more innovatively about reopening schools, figure out which schools COULD open, even if some can't and rely on the community! I go back to my question above about what is really needed. If we don't know precisely what the challenges are, we are not empowered to offer our time or resources to help.

4. ACPS' response to the COVID pandemic will forever change the landscape of Alexandria's public schools. Those that have another option will seek it. I encourage you to not forget about these families, they are the backbone of ACPS and without them there will be systemic and long-term negative impacts to ACPS.