

Public Comments for School Board Meetings

#548

I would like to provide: *

Written Public Comments

My public comments are related to: *

Budget

Topic *

Increase Number of Teachers Hired Due to Excessive Class Sizes

Full Name *

Shannon Twenter

What is your relationship to ACPS? *

Staff Member

Enter your comments here OR upload below:

I have been a teacher for 17 years and this is my 5th year with ACPS, so I know how to weather all that is put upon us. However, this year I feel for the first time in my career I was given a situation in which I cannot succeed. It is hurting me and my students, and I don't think it is a job that is possible with this class load. I started the year with 178 students on my roster, and 40+ IEP/504s. I teach 5 classes of Hon Eng 12 or Eng 12 and 1 class of Creative Writing. That means I have MANY essays to grade. Because my immediate principal (English) left the first week of school and main administrator left early into the school year, I had no one to really advocate for me who knew my track record as a teacher. (Our main administrator had worked with me at an ACPS middle school, as well.) I spoke to Mr. Speich and Mr. Balas about this early in first quarter, and presented to them my data on how many additional work days are needed to grade the minimum 9–10 assignments required per quarter for each class, but no changes were made. Last year was my first year at ACHS where I had to create 3 new preps, so it was an intense year but I managed. With 178 students, I cannot. In the first month of the year, I taught 200 students as kids were shuffled in and out of my classes. Until January, I taught between 170–176 students. I am now in the 160's because I had a semester change of my Creative Writing class and the number went down. Based on what happened first semester, most likely I will continue to see students put into that class as the semester rolls out. I also foresee that my 4 Honors Classes, all of which were at 30 a piece for most of first semester, will likely refill to 30 for each one. Some of the students who left my roster were due to going to St. Jude's for cancer, two

moving and crying to me as they did, and 1 being killed over Christmas. I mention this because not only is this workload effecting my personal and professional life, but each one of these kids needs a teacher who can give them the care they need and I cannot do that with this number. I hope the board will choose to create a mission and budget that allows high school teachers to be set up to succeed, the present class loads are not.
