


Public Comments for Virtual School Board Meetings #247

I would like to provide: *	Written Public Comments
Select the meeting date:* *	
My public comments are related to: *	School Renaming
Topic *	Alexandria Community High School
Full Name *	James S Roberts
What is your relationship to ACPS? *	Community Member
Upload a copy of your public comments or other supporting documents:	 renaming_tc_williams._3.8.2021.docx 15.59 KB . DOCX

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Renaming T.C. Williams High School.

Dear Board Member.

I am writing to urge adoption of the name **Alexandria Community High School (ACHS)** as a unifying choice for renaming T.C. Williams. Here are the reasons why this offers the best available choice.

1. I have read, considered, and discussed (including with three family members, graduates of TCW) the roster of possible candidates from the community. That list has been winnowed down to a final three for consideration by the Board. The final selections (with favoring percentages) are Alexandria High School (34.20), Titan Community High School 21.26). and Ruth Bader Ginsberg High School (10.13).
2. By combining the top two choices to Alexandria Community High School, it would not create an entirely untested new candidate, but rather propose a hybrid version of the final choices with a combined support of 55.46 percent.
3. Many renaming schools are using concepts (Liberty, Freedom, etc.) as names, not persons. Others are using the names of worthy individuals (especially Ruth Bader Ginsburg in our case). I would do neither. Such names may be hard to explain, may change meaning over time or fall out of fashion, and might not meet the desire to build new traditions and create a positive image as a result of renaming.
4. While Alexandria High School would serve adequately as a geographical identifier, it seems bland and spiritless. By adding the word "Community" to it, it would add life and energy to how a single high school in a proud city is perceived by ourselves and across the state.
5. The practice of cheering "Go TC" would only be slightly altered to "Go AC" -- perhaps indistinguishable from the current name if said loudly and often enough. We can preserve the excitement and enthusiasm that students and graduates currently exhibit.
6. It would avoid the redundancy created by using "Titan Community Titans" as team names and identity.
7. If anyone would say "What happened to TC Williams? Where is the famous school of Remember the Titans fame? I love that movie. It inspired me," it would allow a simple explanation of the name, and to how the Alexandria community evolved in its understanding of the meaning of this name. It would preserve the ability to explain the values of the image-making movie and evoke the fame and wide awareness created by the name.

I would reiterate the point that this is not a newly (and late) emerging candidate, but rather a combination of the best of the final selections. It would not, in my opinion, require a full re-visit to the renaming process but rather a compromise final recommendation consistent with the existing choices.

These are the reasons for ACHS. Thank you for your consideration.

James S. Roberts