

Public Comments for Virtual School Board Meetings #89

My public comments are related to: * General Public Comments

Topic * Rename TC Williams

Name * Sarah Carr

What is your relationship to ACPS? * Parent/Guardian of an ACPS Student

To include your comments as part of the Public Comments agenda item at weekly Special Called School Board Meetings, enter your comments here:

Dear Board Members,

I have been shocked and disappointed by this board's evasiveness on the matter of changing Alexandria's only high school. The segregationist's name is a badge of shame.

The name on the school is not merely symbolic – it places an undue burden on black students, multi-racial students and students of color to ignore, repress and compartmentalize the racism inherent in the school's name. This is an added cognitive burden that you are directly responsible for. This isn't a neutral experience – it causes long term damage to defer the pain associated with this kind of compartmentalization – but this is what they have to do to get on with life. I have done this for decades to get by in a white-dominant culture and it causes deep scars. These students, including my daughter, are already dealing with daily, constant societal racism and YOU are requiring them to accept, repress and compartmentalize the racist name on their school for at least an additional year! Stop passing the burden of dealing with this racist messaging on to the students!

Refusing to take this necessary step head on in this moment of moral urgency is a form of institutional/systemic racism. I do care about process, and you need to know that any process that delays and avoids justice in this matter is inherently racist. TC Williams himself used bureaucracy and "process" to deny black students justice for years. EVEN WITHOUT THE INTENT to do so, this is what you are perpetuating now. The delay of justice is inherently wrong and racist. Appearing impartial or neutral now is not professional, it is racist. It is the very essence of systemic racism.

Other school districts, not just Fairfax County, have been able to move swiftly, even during this pandemic, to change school names. Your inability to do the same is unacceptable.

Seize this moment and do the right thing, now. The time is now.

Sincerely,
Sarah Carr
City of Alexandria resident
Parent of 2 ACPS students
