

# Public Comments for School Board Meetings

#510

I would like to provide: \*

Written Public Comments

My public comments are related to: \*

Budget

Topic \*

Psychologist Position

Full Name \*

Cynthia Swisher

What is your relationship to ACPS? \*

Parent/Guardian of an ACPS Student

Enter your comments here OR upload below:

I write to urge ACPS and the school board to allot a full-time psychologist staff position to Naomi L. Brooks Elementary. Brooks is one of just three elementary schools that does not have a full-time psychologist on staff. Instead, our wonderful and very dedicated school psychologist is assigned to Brooks just three days a week, and works at other sites two days a week. A part-time psychologist position is grossly inadequate for Brooks students given the high demand for her services. It is also inequitable that Brooks students have more limited access to psychology services because of the part-time assignment.

Elementary school psychologists serve an important role, including at Brooks. Our psychologist provides counseling services to students, is involved in setting and implementing IEP and 504 plans, conducts student assessments for special education services eligibility, trains staff, consults with teachers and parents about behavior issues and does so much more. Unfortunately, the number of students our psychologist can support, and the degree to which she is available, is limited because she is not at Brooks five days a week.

While it is encouraging to see the FY'24 budget increase the position from 0.6 to 0.8, it is still a part-time position, and our students need and deserve a full-time psychologist on staff. Crisis intervention, special education assessments and counseling services to more than 300 students cannot be provided on a part-time basis, and our psychologist's special skills need to be available to students every day of the week. Brooks needs to have a full-time psychologist on staff, just like the other elementary schools in the district.

