

Public Comments for Virtual School Board Meetings #9

My public comments are related to: * General Public Comments

Topic * Continuity of Learning Plan

Name * William Holley

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

Enter your comments here which will be included under Public Comments on the Agenda:

I have three concerns with the Continuity of Learning Plan presented to the parents in the 27 May Daily Update signed by the Superintendent. My first concern is the plan was rolled out before being presented and approved by the school board. Secondly the Learning Plan implies authoritative requirements on students and parents that do not yet exist for summer school attendance. And finally the Plan offers only fee options for most students in grades 9-11, in essence requiring parents to pay directly for public education.

The 27 May Daily Update states: "All students will be expected to participate in summer school; however, any family who does not wish for their student to participate will be required to complete the opt-out form." I agree it is within the School Boards authority to offer summer school but I don't understand how that authority extends to making demands on students to participate and requirements on parents to opt-out. Since this plan has not been discussed at a School Board meeting, received public comment, nor been approved by the Board, (although the Update stated the plan had been presented to the School Board) I believe it was premature to present the plan to parents as a requirement.

The proposed plan is not a "no cost" opportunity. As the plan states, "Most summer opportunities are free to all students, with the exception of new courses at T.C. Williams High School." Reviewing the list of Summer School Classes offered under the proposed program for grades 9-11 one finds repeat courses and AP enrichment programs are free of charge but new courses for credit cost \$285 each. Expecting/requiring 9-11 students to take Summer courses, if the student does not need remedial or AP programs, is in essence establishing a requirement for parents to pay for public education.

Rather than an authoritarian "expected to participate and opt-out

requirement” approach, I recommend the School Board strongly encourage students to participate in summer school. To demonstrate ACPS's commitment to summer learning, ACPS should make all course work free, including new courses for credit at grades 9–11. As the superintendent said in his Update, "It is important that we as a school division do everything within our power to ensure students' learning needs are being met, especially during these unprecedented times."
