

**ORDER OF SPEAKERS FOR BOARD OF EDUCATION PUBLIC HEARING
OCTOBER 28, 2020**

No.	Speaker
1	Conor Curran (CRASC)
2	Russell Leone (TAAAC)
3	Edie Picken (AEL)
4	Moriel Hayes (AFSCME)
5	Helen Wilkerson (SAAAAC)
6	Mallory LaFon (AACCPAs)
7	Kristopher Hood
8	Erica Chandler
9	Laura Bardill
10	Rachael Berg
11	Samantha Weaver
12	Kristen Caminiti
13	Kris Patterson
14	Judith Keeler
15	Amanda Strickland
16	Mary Cascio
17	Sarah Kugelman
18	Andrew Bray
19	Quinn Cavallo
20	Shannon Davis
21	Tony Knight
22	Aaron Beger
23	Kinley Bray
24	Laura Booth
25	Alison Hamilton
26	Lawrence Twigg
27	Diane Briczinski
28	Samantha Ritts
29	Maria LaVerghetta
30	Nancy Kules
31	Keion Dorsey
32	Jessica Pachler
33	Adam Wyndham
34	Erin McVeigh

No.	Speaker
35	Laura Palermo
36	Nicholas Christman
37	Cynthia Bolin
38	Kalli-Anne Hymons
39	Lauren Thompson
40	Janet Norman
41	Graham Whaples
42	Tamara Beger
43	Sebastian Serrano
44	Sarah Cruz
45	Chris Buterbaugh
46	Ryan, Zach & Connor Caminiti
47	Kevin Chroniger
48	Allyson Wells
49	Michael Raschiatore
50	Jennifer Smith
51	Sarah Seiler
52	Adria Watt
53	Joanna Tobin
54	Tamatha Cho
55	Sarah Lacey
56	Anne Canaday
57	Anne Rogers
58	Shannon Meers-Gimon
59	Lauren Werley-Wolf
60	Jessica Wieder
61	Emmanuelle Carr
62	Jennifer Van Riper
63	Alyson Bradford
64	Kathryn Truman
65	Eileen Bell
66	Tracy Therese
67	Aimee Stafford

No.	Speaker
68	Kathryn Burke
69	Nate O'Toole
70	India Ochs
71	Amanda Malanowski
72	Wayne Thomason
73	Michael Haley
74	Tina Weibe
75	Mike Pachler
76	Greg Nagurka
77	Lauren Jackson
78	Jamie Trevitt
79	James Patterson
80	Naomi Ray-Dulany
81	Sam Hultzman
82	Yuripzy Morgan
83	Mackenzie Carroll
84	Michelle Galvanek
85	Lisa VanBuskirk
86	Jim Chandler
87	Amanda Higgins
88	Esther Schroeder Hans
89	Deborah Hunter
90	Camila Wolfe
91	Kathleen Walters
92	Chelsea Treadwell
93	David Riley
94	Arlene Reuss
95	Lee Hagan
96	Carmenlita Makell
97	Teri Cain
98	Charis Cephias
99	Lori Patterson
100	Victoria Hyman

Speakers 1 through 6, representing groups, will be allotted up to five minutes each; all other speakers will be allotted up to two minutes each

The following testimony was submitted for the October 28, 2020, Board of Education Public Hearing. The “...” designation indicates the cutoff of testimony due to it exceeding the word the limit. The full version of such testimony has been provided to the Board.

TESTIMONY SUBMITTED FOR PUBLIC HEARING

1. Hello My name is Olivene Blake and I live in the Elizabeth Landing community in Pasadena, MD. My testimony below.

Hello my name is Olivene, and I am a resident in Pasadena, MD and have children that attend AACPS. I know AACPS is doing everything in their power to keep our children safe. However, I am not understanding why the county isn't allowing parents, in a safe manner, to view classroom setup for children returning to school, to ensure safety. Similar to parent teacher conferences, safely, before the children return to school. No information on ventilation systems in the schools. No information on temperature checking by the school. No information for children who live in poor neighborhoods who cannot afford masks. What about special needs elementary school children who need hands on interaction from teachers. How will that work for social distancing? We need to be able to keep our teachers and children safe, especially with scientists and doctors predicting a surge for the fall and winter in states that are COLD. I just need some answers, please.

Warm Regards,

Olivene Blake

2. I am a retired teacher from Illinois. I continue to work as a special education teacher with AACPS because I want to serve. I work at Annapolis Middle School and I love what we are doing for families.

I do not envy the decision you must make. There is no doubt kids belong in school. I do not think that time is now.

I want to let you know that we are learning more about virtual learning every day. We are making adjustments and improving our delivery every day. Students will benefit from our training and changes. I need work place consistency to focus on teaching and learning. I will not thrive in an inconsistent or changing work location and I do not believe changing environments are good for kids or families.

My teacher friends from Illinois opened in various formats. All of their schools have opened and closed based on positive Covid tests. Schools are spending valuable time with contact tracing, notifications, sending kids home for 14 days and altering the learning environment. We are teaching and building relationships with our families. It isn't easy and I'm spending many hours beyond my duty day to make this work. But we are teaching! The school personnel that will be assigned to contact trace and notify families are currently supporting teachers and families. We are all focused on our kids and families. Don't give that up. It is the right thing to do now. 100% virtual school is a safe and consistent response. Please continue on this path.

Maria Buchwald

3. Romie Eyring

Glen Burnie resident

Highschool teacher

All I ask when you open is to be as committed as possible to keeping students there. My students are just finding a routine online. To send them back and then put them back on line when/if someone in a school gets corona will set this progress back. I would love to go back to normal, I only ask that you realize that it wouldn't be good to have the students yo-yoed around.

4. My name is Alissa Casey and I live in Jessup, Maryland. My children currently attend Meade High School. I am writing as an AACPS parent and a teacher for Montgomery County Public Schools. I appreciate the school system's efforts to improve student learning opportunities and to support parents who need to get back to work. I am concerned, however, about the AACPS plan to have some teachers simultaneously teach students online *and* in the physical classroom. I know firsthand how challenging it is to teach online and keep students engaged. I am wondering if Board members have ever participated in an online class of elementary age students. Lessons that may be relatively simple in a physical classroom take longer and are more complicated to achieve online. Technology issues for both students and teachers add another layer of complexity and are a distraction from teaching and learning. Asking teachers to support two separate groups of students simultaneously will diminish the attention and care the teacher can provide to either group. I request that you consider having teachers focus on *either* online students *or* students in the physical classroom. All children deserve a teacher whose attention is as focused as possible, not divided. Please assign teachers to an online classroom or to a physical classroom, not both simultaneously. The children of AACPS deserve better than that.

5. Lisa Fecteau

Meade High School Teacher

Pasadena Resident

I come to you as a passionate parent, educator, and human. I love my students. They are my "Why". I love AACPS. I have been a part of our AACPS family for over 8 years. I look forward to many more years with AACPS; however, I can no longer live in fear of how the board will decide the fate of my family. We are a family of 3, living on my salary since April 2020. My spouse is a type one diabetic. I cannot be physically present at the public hearing tonight because I am by his side for a procedure that is a common complication of diabetes. Then, I will be taking care of him at home, while continuing to provide a happy, stable environment for our child. We have adapted to every curve ball. We have made every adjustment possible. Now, my AACPS family is placing me in the position of choosing between them and my family. If there is one thing I have learned from all of this, we have to work together as a family. Please provide enough time to properly plan for an effective re-opening. As teachers, we know first hand how planning will affect the outcome for our students. Now, it is your turn to plan for everyone in the AACPS family. Let me return to my students to do what I love when we are truly ready. Safety must be our first priority. Thank you for listening.

6. Good afternoon - I just wanted to give my thoughts on the current re-opening plan for K-5 beginning next month, as I have two children currently in elementary school in Severna Park.

I believe returning kids to school should be a top priority of the Board, particularly elementary school students.

However, I believe the current "hybrid" option is not a good one.

I don't believe having young children stuck at a computer, in a confined space, with limited social interaction, is very beneficial.

Their outside or "recess" time also seems to be short, and any interaction with other kids will also be limited. This is not a good thing for kids at this age.

Additionally, with the onset of winter and flu season looming, I don't believe mid-November is the ideal time to return kids to school.

If this route was going to be taken, it should have been implemented at the start of the school year in September, or even earlier than that in mid-August.

At this point, I think the best option for students, teachers, and parents, is keeping things Virtual until a better plan can be implemented for returning kids to school.

The school these kids will potentially be returning to, is not the school any of us had in mind when discussions began about returning kids to school.

I recommend not implementing this hybrid model until a better plan can be put in place.

Thank you - Richard Fitzpatrick

7. I have numerous concerns with the plan to return to schools. The school system has not given clear and enforceable protocols for a safe and sustainable opening. What is included in the cleaning protocols and how do we know the ventilation systems are adequate? I would like to know when the ventilation was last inspected, what type of filter is being used and if the controls can be used correctly to heat/cool every classroom. If students are sent home with symptoms of COVID is a negative test required to return to school? I also have concerns on how students are going to achieve staying six feet apart, especially at the high school level where we switch classes. Does it make sense for students come to school to sit in class with a mask all day and be on their computer just like at home? Teachers are not able to work with groups or one-on-one due to social distancing but we are able to do this virtually. Students are not able to get up and move around or enjoy many of the socialization opportunities usually given in school. This would be risking the safety of everyone in that classroom. By bringing volunteers into the building you are increasing the risk to everyone involved. The input that you received from the elementary parents should show you that we are not ready to return to the buildings. Please reconsider the reopening plan.
Julie Troxler/South River High School/ Parent and Teacher

8. Good day,

As a parent of 3 Aacps students and one who is at high risk of serious harm/death due to covid19 I am particularly sensitive to attempts to return our children to the classroom — and though we have elected to remain virtual for the year, it's unknown if we will get to keep our current teachers (who we adore).

We are very disappointed with this attempt to go back to brick an mortar schools as we head into this third wave of infections plus cold/flu season.

I want to be sure the board is considering the following:

The CDC confirmed the virus is airborne and stays infectious for hours, floating for hours in the air.

Unless eye and skin safe "222nm UV-C" Lamps (google it) are installed in overhead lighting and all ventilation systems have been upgraded with ultra-modern, ultra-expensive UV-C sanitizers (we know they have not) just one asymptomatic/presymptomatic infected person in the building will have his/her contagion sucked up and spread by the Hvac system throughout the whole school just like it would if this person were smoking in the building. We'd all be able to eventually smell it - cigarette smoke is a perfect illustration of how the virus spreads and contaminates everything and everyone indoors.

"Wiping down" the school does nothing for this. Fomites are considered very low on the list of what spreads the coronavirus. It's mostly breathed in as it floats in the air. Wearing masks will also do very little since very few have access to proper masks nor wear them properly throughout the day....

Sincerely,

J. Lawrence

9. Hello,

We are the parents of three children who attend Crofton Woods Elementary (twins first graders and a second grader). We want to communicate that our children desperately NEED to return to school and plead with you to continue the path to return to in person learning on November 16th.

While we understand the difficult situation this puts some people in, we want you to hear our story, too. One of our three children struggles with severe ADHD. While he has an IEP and we have no doubt that the teachers/administrators at his school are doing their best to support him virtually - it is failing. He is regressing in writing and in math. The virtual learning situation also has him experiencing severe anxiety. It is difficult to get him to sit in front of the computer for his lessons, much less pay attention during the lessons. He bursts into tears almost every school day from anything from not understanding the assignment to having technical difficulties. This is extremely painful to watch as parents who saw him excelling when he was in-person in 1st grade - maintaining grade level academics, despite his challenges. We have hired a private reading tutor and occupational therapist, but it simply is not enough to help him either maintain or progress academically in the absence of returning to in-person learning.

We plead with you to stay the course and get the kids back to in-person learning.

V/r,

Lindsay Wright-Winger
Joshua Winger
Crofton, MD 21114

10. Board of Education,

My name is Laura Murphy and I live in the Revell Downs Community, Annapolis, MD. I am in support of the reopening plan and I will be sending my fourth grader back to school through the hybrid model starting November 30th. I also have a daughter in middle school and when the hybrid model becomes available I will send her back to school as well. Both of my daughters have experienced mental health

issues and need the socialization and support provided in an "in school" setting. My husband and I both work full time and it is challenging to provide our children support in the virtual school setting.

Thank you for your time.

11. Dear President Corkadel and distinguished members of the Board,

I am writing to express my concerns regarding the lack of MOU with the teachers' union addressing a safe environment for students and staff to return to the building as well as lack of PPE for students and teachers. Teachers and parents should not be forced to make decisions about safe return to school prior to having a detailed plan for return. We are experiencing a record increase in Covid - 19 cases which must be taken into consideration when asking teachers to return to school at this time. The health of our students and teachers are at stake as well as their families and communities. There has been contradictory information about safety protocols and inconsistent communication with parents and staff regarding changes.

I am the parent of a teacher in the AA school system and am extremely concerned with the health and well being of all families involved. The proposed decision will increase the possible Covid - 19 exposure and spread.

Thank you for your efforts and for taking the time to consider my concerns.

Sincerely,

Sally Stevens

Linthicum Community

12. Board of Education,

As a kindergarten teacher I give 100% of my professional effort everyday (including significant after hours) to my students and their education. I began the year virtually with young children, many who had never been to school and I have been successful! We now have a kindergarten family, they are learning and making academic gains. I differentiate, adjust and make lessons more effective and targeted every day, including for my second language learners. The rapid move to hybrid brings great concerns. Hybrid impacts the ability to teach using developmentally appropriate and best practices. The quality of education and attention is compromised. As an organization, we emphasize the need for trauma sensitivity and the importance of relationships. Class changes needed to adjust for hybrid or virtual choices will have negative impacts on those relationships with students and families. These bonds should be celebrated and protected! I hope these concerns and impacts are considered. A decision to use the superintendent's recommendation to remain virtual through January seems appropriate. Allowing for adjustments to the model and to address health concerns due to current Covid rates. The number of people who will be in our buildings is a grave concern. It has serious implications to safety; ours and our families' (I have elderly parents who need assistance on weekends). Teachers have been dedicated and professional, we should have transparency and appropriate, timely notice of adjustments and expectations.

Thank you,

Josie Emelio
Kindergarten Teacher, AACPS

Resident of Crofton, MD

13. Dr. Arlotto & Mrs. Ellis,

Good evening on what has been a long and hectic week. I wanted to express the feelings of my 7 year old daughter Mae (Mayo Elementary School). Last night, we were informed of our choices by AACPS text message. We carefully read each choice and weighed our options. I spoke to a few friends of mine who are teachers and they shed more light on what the conditions would be like at school if we chose hybrid. We ultimately chose to stay virtual because we believe as many others that hybrid would simply be disruptive. But then we had to weigh the risk of Mae losing her teacher because of our decision. How do you reason with a 7 year old? Mae really, really wants to be in school. Even after we told her what she is facing she wanted to go back. To make a long story short we informed Mae of our decision that we are staying virtual. Mae cried for 15 minutes. We will not subject my kids to the conditions that were voted on and ultimately adopted. Prisoners are given more freedom than this. Plus, the shame that others would cast because our child could ultimately be exposed.

I don't have any proposed changes on how to make the "hybrid" choice any better. I just wanted you to know you broke the heart of a 7 year old girl who is now worried she will lose her teacher and get someone she doesn't know. I wanted to know you are now using this little girl as a political pawn....

Ed Whitney (disappointed father)

14. I asked my 9-year-old and 12 years old to wear their masks for a school day and tried the same experiment for myself. The result was not good and almost impossible without taking some breaks. I do believe it is important to wear masks and we do so whenever we go out however not for 6 or 7 hours.

In addition, you are starting hybrids when traditionally families and friends get together, Halloween, Thanksgiving, and Christmas which gatherings have a greater chance of generating increases of the virus.

I believe waiting until a vaccine is available makes much more sense. Our administrators, staff, and teachers are excellent which will enable us to continue to reach social and academic excellence again.

The value of life and protecting our most valued asset, our children, is in your hands, vote wisely.

Regards,

ray

Raynard M. Fenster, PhD

Millersville, MD 21108

15. Lakita Brooks

Brookfield - Glen Burnie, MD

Re: Hybrid Reopening

As a parent and an AACPS school employee I believe the decision was made in haste to reopen schools at this time. It is important that my opinion be heard because families in my school community may not speak out and I know a majority, if not all of them, agree with me. My two children will not be returning to school at this time! This shoddy timeline has more what if's than answers and lacks details about day to day instruction. There are just too many risk factors in play that do not support reopening schools. It is not safe. These plans clearly show the School Board has no idea of how schools will be run on a day to day basis and therefore can't even begin to tell Parents the reality of what this reopening will look like. The risk to health and life is just too great to reopen the buildings for what would be at the most 12 days of in building learning. Students won't be allowed to interact with each or with staff in a social manner. It's too many unknown factors to proceed with the current reopening plan! To return to classes for only 12 days or less, providing we have no outbreak resulting in emergency closures, is wrong and dangerous. Our community needs to be heard. Do not reopen in November!

16. Dear AACPS Board Members,

Covid-19 is indiscriminate in its spread and leaves devastation in its wake.

I have watched with dismay, and at times with horror, as the Board was tone-deaf to our concerns. This is not, nor should it be, a political argument. It is a plea for safety. People die from this virus. Those who don't lose their lives can have life-long debilitating problems. The stakes are VERY HIGH.

I understand the need to return to schools. We all miss being together.

BUT that should not override the necessity to keep us safe. You are making the decision to put us at increased risk at a time when case rate numbers are increasing in our own county and exploding nationally. I find it unconscionable that my employer would ask me to put myself, my family, and my students at risk.

Now is **not** the time to return to school buildings. The social-emotional impact of a return to buildings will not be a joyous return to normal. It will be unsettling, unfamiliar to our students. Relationships, which we have worked very hard to cultivate and strengthen during these tragic times, will look and feel different, and possibly even disappear as students (and teachers) are re-assigned to new learning models and environments.

This plan is disastrous. Let us continue in our virtual model for **everyone's physical, social, and emotional wellbeing**. It is the responsible and compassionate choice.

Sincerely,

Kathy Wolfstone-Smith

Triple E Teacher, Shady Side ES

North Beach

17. We write in opposition to any plan to reopen high schools in December before the winter holidays. Having children enter the schools, then send them to large family gatherings at Christmas is a recipe for disaster.

We will opt for remote learning for our son for the remainder of the entire school year.

Thank you.

Steve and Diane Holcomb
Gambrills, Md.

18. Dear Board of Education,

When discussing the school reopening plan this coming Wednesday, please create a safe plan:

1. Please provide each teacher with a thermometer to take students' temperature when they come into the classroom.
2. Please consider the classroom size and the number of students that can be there safely at the same time. I teach ESOL in a middle school. The maximum number of students that can be in the room while social distancing is 5-6. However, some of my ESOL classes have 20 students. How will this class be divided into 4 groups?
3. Please provide each class with masks.
4. Please improve the ventilation system. My room has only one air vent. We have no windows. The whole school building is using recycled air.
5. Please come up with a plan when a student tests positive for COVID 19. Will you have each student in that classroom tested? Will you have each teacher who communicated face-to-face with that student tested?
6. Please don't send parent volunteers to the school buildings as it will increase the spread of COVID 19.
7. If you can't provide the students and the teachers with the safety measures above, please reconsider face-to-face school reopening and focus on hiring help for the students who struggle with virtual learning.

Thank you

Natalia Baker
AACPS Teacher
Howard County Resident

19. Hello Board Members!

I request that more than just the 8 schools talked about last week start before 9:30am. Our elementary school is DAVIDSONVILLE which times are 9:30-3:55. There are 2 buses that come to our community, one for the front and one for the back yet both buses also make stops before coming into our community which makes 0 sense (why not just have 1 bus for our community). The bus that my kids ride had a total of 17 stops in the 2019/2020 school year which made our stop the 2nd to last. What does this mean? If you have ever been to Davidsonville, you know that it is a very rural city with a lot of stand alone homes. This means each of the stand alone homes that have students have an individual stop which makes the route even longer. In the 2019/2020 school year, our bus would leave the school

within 10 mins or so of dismissal yet our bus would not get to our stop until at times 4:45 or later (this is a 40 min bus ride when we live only 3 miles from the school. This also means that kids are getting off this bus in the pitch black dark during winter.

School times need to start before 9:30am and there is a bus route problem certainly in Davidsonville.

Thank you,
Jennifer Powell
Riverwood Community in Davidsonville

20. My name is Lindsay Gallagher. I live in Odenton and my 6 year old is in 1st grade at Piney Orchard Elementary. I'm hearing that Covid numbers are going up all over not down. I'm not ready for my son to return to school. I realize it's hard for kids having to stay at home to do the virtual learning. As a parent that had to choose to stay at home and live off of PUA rather than work it's a nightmare and I understand people's frustration. At the same time it's so hard to teach a 6 year old 6 feet away to wear a mask all day and not touch everything. Even reminding him to constantly wash his hands. My father was a firefighter who has a asbestos in his lungs and has serious breathing issues because of it. If he got this Covid virus he wouldn't make it. That being said I have a responsibility to my family to keep him and my mom safe and sending my son to school scares me not just for my child but for my father and my family. I don't think they have this virus under control in anyway and we need to tackle that before sending our kids to school.

21. Hello,

I am writing to strongly urge you to postpone the decision to start hybrid learning for several MAJOR reasons.

- 1.** The metrics that Dr. K and his health team created have had us listed in the yellow for nearly two weeks straight at this point. Dr. K said that we should not open schools when in yellow and only remain open with caution if we had already begun.
- 2.** We are about to embark on a time of year with the greatest amount of close-quarter visits with family and friends (many coming from different cities and states). Thanksgiving and holidays in December account for massive travel and mingling of relatives/friends. It has potential to greatly increase COVID rates.
- 3.** Postponing the decision for hybrid learning from the middle/end of November start dates until at least January provides an opportunity to more adequately plan for hybrid and also to reassess the COVID rates after the holiday season and some typically peak virus weeks. It is particularly concerning to see the numerous states that are increasing in COVID rates (and countries throughout the world increasing). There are not many school days from mid-November to January and the amount of information and preparation time we would receive by delaying would be invaluable!
- 4.** Only around one-third of AACPS families opted for hybrid.
- 5.** Once we begin hybrid grouping, there is no turning back. There has been extensive effort and love put into building relationships with students throughout the year. Once hybrid begins and teachers are reassigned to new groups of students due to teacher openings (from accommodations, leave of

absences, and resignations) that entire process of relationship building and routine will have to start over again....

Thank you for your time,

Matt Schlegel

Severna Park

22. Hello,

I live in Edgewater and am the parent of a first grader at Central Elementary. I continue to have serious concerns about the hybrid reopening of schools. My biggest concern is that our numbers in AA County are rising and fluctuating daily. Dr. K. recommended that schools not open if the number was greater than 10. Although the daily case rate has fluctuated, it has not been below 10 since October 8th and was at 12.2 on October 15th. Health experts have warned that our numbers will continue to rise.

We are also heading into the holiday season, with Thanksgiving just 10 days after the proposed K-2 opening. As much as I'd like to believe people will stay home and away from risky activities, I just don't see it happening and our numbers will continue to rise. We also do not know what flu season will be like this year. This adds a whole new complication.

Please consider pausing these plans for reopening until our numbers are within Dr. K's recommendations. With the holidays and flu season coming, it is the safe thing to do. Our teachers and students are in a good rhythm and putting them back in schools, knowing that they will likely close again, does not make any sense. Please allow our teachers and students to continue working and learning from home and do your part to keep our precious ones safe!

Sincerely,

Amy Speed

23. Name: John Brown

Community Residence: Churchton , MD (Southern Anne Arundel County)

Affiliation: father of high school student

The decision to reopen Schools just before the Thanksgiving and Christmas Holidays will probably not help with the goal to keep COVID cases down in Maryland. Waiting until after year end to reopen Schools as previously communicated seemed like a practical and safer idea. Curious why the sudden change?

Thanks

24. Dear BOE,

I wanted to inform you all of my decision not to return in-person to Corkran MS on November 2nd, but to continue teaching virtually from my home. This decision is based on several factors: (1) my trauma, grieving and cautiousness due to the recent unexpected death of my father in law from COVID-19, the near deaths of my mother in-law and aunts from COVID-19, and my sister in-laws being in infected with

COVID-19, (2) my husband having one of the classified pre-existing conditions, Hypertension, and (3) if I did return to the building, it would force my children to return to their school which has already been closed twice already this quarter due to COVID-19 cases. Moreover, as a mom and wife, my family's wellness comes first. I am not willing to take the risk and could not live with the guilt of either my husband or children becoming infected with and/or dying from COVID-19, because I passed it to them, or they were infected from someone at their school. Lastly, I would be most comfortable to return to school and return my children to school when a vaccine is available and we have warmer (Spring-like) weather, since COVID-19 is said to not spread as easily and more outdoor learning could occur at schools.

Thank you all for time, understanding, and diligence during this extreme adversity in our country. I apologize for any additional stress that my decision may cause my department and Corkran MS. Please be safe and be well!

With Deep Concern and Sincerity,

Princess Dickens

Resident of Gwynn Oak, MD

Corkran MS Physical Education/Health Teacher

25. Equality versus Equity”

I have seen this phrase recently in our teacher Professional Development sessions. I believe it applies to the issue of requiring ALL Unit I teachers to return to their school buildings on November 9. I see no need for me (a high school teacher) to be required to teach from the school when a timeline for the return of my students hasn't even been set. For lower elementary grades, I understand the timeline as it gives those teachers a chance to figure out how to make instruction work in their new setting. But requiring teachers to figure things out at school when we are just now getting into a rhythm/flow at home does not make sense to me if I don't even know when my students are slated to return to school. I have heard it rumored that having ALL Unit I teachers return at the same time is an “equity issue” – if one set of teachers go back then we should all go back. I encourage Dr. Arlotto to consider that mandate from the “equality versus equity” standpoint. Teachers can still do their job (like they have been doing) from home and probably do it better if they don't have to transition to a new setting until it is needed. I realize that “a picture is worth 1000 words” and that will put me over the limit, but I hope that you include the image below.



Scott Rundle

Broadneck High School Math

Hunter's Pointe neighborhood

26. Good evening,

My name is Madeleine Wood and I am a French teacher at Lindale Middle School. I love my school, my colleagues, and my students; I miss them so much and it is sad to hear their stress during eLearning. I am writing to dictate my personal and professional feelings about the return to school.

Life as we know it has altered, some claim, for years to come. I am of the impression things will eventually return to normal, but right now is not the time. Opening schools, even in a hybrid situation, is the direct antithesis to what is recommended by health officials. While there are people advising the superintendent and other higher officials, their goal is to make school work, to force it into place, while hoping they did their best to uphold the health recommendations they previously put forth.

Until we have a vaccine in place that is safe and accessible to ALL, we should not consider reopening schools. There is a public health crisis in America. Forcing things back to normal as fast as we can does not change the fact there is an airborne virus killing hundreds of thousands of Americans.

Hopefully, the teachers and staff of the school buildings are heard equally compared to the students and their families. Recently it has been feeling like my view and life as a teacher is less important.

Best,

Madeleine Wood

French Teacher

Lindale Middle School

27. Board of Education:

Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to provide my testimony.

I have a student enrolled at Richard Henry Lee Elementary. My biggest concern for kids returning to the building, even if it's two days a week, what measures will be taken to ensure that the children are safe while in the building? From what I understand, the children will not be allowed to interact with one another and will be required to just sit in their seats. I don't know how accurate this information is; but I do know that it will be extremely difficult for my kids who are identified ADHD to be seated all day. I

don't think this will be an effective way for them to be in school. One of my kids receive IEP services, and although the school is trying their best to provide the services required, my student is simply not learning or benefitting from the services. I'm fearful that either they will not progress because of their limitations, or the school will retain them in the same grade because they simply cannot learn in this eLearning environment. Sitting at a screen for four hours a day is simply not an effective way of teaching a child with ADHD.

I am a single parent and work daily from home. I am having an extremely difficult time try to manage my workload and schooling for my kids.

Thank you,

Ronda A. Ward

28. Dear members of the Board of Education in Anne Arundel County,

I have lived in Anne Arundel County for almost 17 years and a teacher for almost 20. I have worked in both private and public schools and am proud to tell people that I work for AACPS. I love my job.

I believe the hybrid plan that AACPs has approved is not good enough for our students. As a parent, I will not be sending my own children into AACPS until the plan is changed. As a teacher, I can not imagine how I am going to teach my virtual and in person students at the same time. I have received my 5 cloth masks from my school, but after teaching in 1 for a 45-minute class period, I had to change it out for another because it was too wet to breath in. I have not seen any specific information about how my classroom will be disinfected by the custodial staff. I have a classroom with small windows that open, but most of my fellow teachers throughout the county do not. We need PPE, clear protocols for cleaning and better ventilation for all schools.

AACPS needs to do better for its students. The original plan was to be virtual until the end of January, stay with that plan. Fix this hybrid plan. Covid numbers are on the rise in this county, please do not send me to work someplace that could kill me. There is no need for teachers to work from our schools staring November 2. We are all doing amazing things each and every day safely from our own homes.

Thank you for your time,

Lydia A Bevilacqua

Parent, Teacher, TAAAC member and resident of AACO

Rupert Manor/The Timers, Arnold, MD

29. Good evening,

To be mentally exhausted as a person is an understatement. To describe what has been done to our children is nearly impossible. The politically driven power hunger people in AACo have destroyed us. The school system needs to protect our children and provide the education they deserve. I have 3 teenagers in the system and you have utterly failed. Virtual school is horrible. Its destroying kids. They are learning nothing. Suicide, depression, mental illness, are all real and in the rise. All of these things are more dangerous to kids than Covid.

I beg you as a life long citizen of AAcO, a parent, a very involved person in the community, and an educated person in healthcare to please stop this madness. All kids should be back as normal 5 days a week. Its working other places. Don't allow this political mess to hurt our children. The teachers union needs to be shut down. Teachers refusing to work, retire. The rest of us are all at work.

Please follow real science. Real facts. Please worry about the health and future of the kids. The hidden, disgusting innuendos of the tea3 union don't matter. Take back the control for YOUR citizens.

I pray you all do the RIGHT thing.

Michelle Sobolewski

Anne Arundel County Severn MD

No group affiliation

Concerned disgusted and sad parent and citizen

30. My name is Britta Ward.

I am a 20 year resident of Anne Arundel County living in Severna Park and also a Kindergarten teacher in the county.

The rising case numbers in our county do not support reopening at this time. Less than 1/3 of all parents chose this for their children. The many questions that continue to arise should make it clear to all board members that the plan is not just messy, but incomplete. There are too many questions that still need clear answers before we can proceed. A plan that relies on volunteers and adds more people into our cohorts does the exact opposite of what we should be focused on-the health and safety of the staff and students in AACPS.

Our county's original plan was to wait to reopen in January, which is what the large counties surrounding us are doing. The current plan was rushed through. There have been too many changes. This hurts not only the people who are expected to work in the schools, but also the relationship and trust county residents have with board members.

It is time to pause this plan and focus on finding solutions. It is not safe to open now according to the health department metrics. Focus on getting answers and problem solving and allowing us to reopen safely in January.

31. Reba Miller

Meade Cluster--Community Activist/Educator/Parent

Communities, Educators and Families require consistency and stability from their elected and public school officials. We particularly need our public school leaders to remember that Educators have always led the way when this country has faced a national crisis. This is that time. We need for our BOE to allow our schools to remain virtual until the end of the 1st semester as declared at the beginning of the school year. We need for parents to sharpen their parenting skills. Educators are NOT "glorified babysitters". We are professionals that prepare EVERY skilled professional for their future. Educators like parents should be afforded the same choice as parents without consequence and justification, the right to

remain virtual or hybrid. As an Educator, I certainly see the pros and cons of a hybrid learning environment as detailed in my last email to the board. However, the fact remains until we conquer COVID-19 or equitably make ALL of our schools safe schools; we should in this instance; do as we do in all safety-related issues; err on the side of safety for all. I would also like to leave you with a quote below about the very possible outcome of hybrid learning.

"It's important to note that if your kids start the school year in a hybrid learning model, there's a good chance that they could be switched to distance learning if there's a COVID outbreak in their school or even in their larger community. "Schools with hybrid learning in place may have to shut their doors again in a few weeks due to spikes or outbreaks in COVID....

32. Hello, my name is Catherine Hershfeld and I am a senior at Broadneck High School. I understand that one goal of the county as of now is to reopen in person schools in mid-December. I am strongly opposed to this, as I believe it is a major violation of my rights as a student to a safe learning environment. I do not want to risk my health and safety, as well as my family's, to return to a classroom, when online learning is an option that has already proven to work. As shown by the metrics on our state's coronavirus webpage ([coronavirus.Maryland.gov](https://www.coronavirus.Maryland.gov)), our number of hospitalizations has been steadily increasing since some schools reopened in September. The United States is still plagued by the virus, and opening schools would be a breeding ground for this virus. I would not feel comfortable returning to school, even though I only have 3 classes as I am a senior, and I am positive that many of my peers feel the same. Although online learning is not ideal, it is the safest and most responsible choice. Additionally, reopening schools before the holidays would make the possibility of students bringing the virus home to their family and grandparents much higher, and as we all know, the elderly are much more susceptible to having worse symptoms than adolescents and adults.

Thank you,

Catherine Hershfeld, Broadneck High School

33. Megan Matthews

Gambrills, Maryland

The planned return to school is rushed and will be harmful to the physical and mental health of students, teachers, and families. This plan has changed each time it is spoken about during meetings. The amount of in person learning will have more disruptions to learning than benefits. Switching from online to in person will cause technology and personnel issues which will take time away from learning. Schools do not have the appropriate equipment and personnel to fully implement the plan proposed. Volunteers, who are essentially unvetted medically, will be exposing our children and teachers to this virus. This after it was stated no updates will be made to ventilation systems. Some students will not have computers and be left without the ability to fully participate. Students will potentially get new teachers and split from current classmates causing renewed socialization skills and learning. Teachers have adapted well to virtual learning. You are adding more work for them to manage both in person and virtual. This will cause some students to be left without proper instruction. Students need consistency during the pandemic to preserve the current progress made. The plan to return is incomplete and constantly changing. I urge the board to reevaluate this plan and consider not going back in person until the beginning of the new year or later once adequate supplies are acquired and better safety measures are in place.

34. **Schools should open when it can be done in a developmentally appropriate way.** This plan does not do that, so please reconsider the hybrid opening.

It is impossible to equitably teach in-person and online simultaneously, and I fear all students will suffer. **Kindergarteners must be able to see the teacher's expressions, and the teacher must be able to see their expressions.** How will this be possible with the T-zone setup?

Some say the hybrid plan presents families with **choice**. However, the best choice for many is no longer available: to keep our teachers and principals and to keep the virtual environment with a teacher whose attention is not divided. **Virtual schooling has been successful for many students, and any changes should maintain that success while addressing the needs of those students who are struggling.**

Who will this hybrid plan help?

1. **The kids having trouble sitting still and focusing on virtual school are the same kids who will struggle sitting in a 6x6' square with a mask on for most of a school day.** (That is most kindergarteners).
2. Reopening schools could help me logistically as a working parent --- but only if I could trust that it would not close again, leaving me suddenly without any childcare options again. (In other words, what we really need as working parents is certainty.)
3. This plan does not focus on the students who need the most help right now.

Thank you for your time.

Amanda Streib

Resident of Crofton

Parent of Crofton Elementary School kindergartener

35. I was very proud of the decision the BOE and AACPS made to go virtual for the first semester of the school year! I have friends in other states who weren't as lucky to have members of the BOE and school district that cared about the safety of students, staff, and families. What has changed?

Teachers shouldn't have to risk their own health or the health of their families when there is an alternative. Virtual learning comes with difficulties, but **all are safe and healthy**. We need to have compassion, patience, and grace during this Global Pandemic. I have colleagues who are teaching classes as well as assisting their own children in multiple grade levels with their virtual learning. This isn't easy for anyone, but **all are safe and healthy**.

We need clear and enforceable protocols for a safe and sustainable opening. We need cleaning protocols and adequate PPE and disinfecting products to be provided. Until an established protocol, supported by science, and until all necessary protective equipment is provided to confidently be successful, virtual learning is our best option.

Instead of the "messy" idea of starting in November, the BOE and AACPS should be using this time to plan for a safe start in February! This should be a public health issue, not a politically motivated issue. The safety of our students, teachers, and families must be the focus!

Respectfully,

Stacy Spruferra

AACPS Special Education Teacher

TAAAC Member

Glen Burnie

36. My grandson (5yrs old) has many physical and developmental challenges. He is unable to engage socially, is non-verbal, is unable to focus on a screen, and is unable to sit still. Online school is not a workable option for him. He won't wear glasses or his hearing aid. He can't sit still for longer than 2 minutes. He has many challenges as a result of treatment for bilateral retinal blastoma, a type of eye cancer diagnosed when he was 5 months old. The cancer has left him visually, auditory and physically challenged.

He requires in person school. I'm told that he must wear a mask if he is to come to in person classes. He is not able to wear a mask because he removes anything touching his head. The school refuses to allow him to attend. This child is being left behind.

Maryland law requires AA county to provide school for all of its children. What options or arrangements are available for our special needs child with significant developmental challenges? None, at this time. Not a priority. A small percentage of students so not a concern at this.

The office of school superintendent has been unsupported for our situation. The office takes a message. They don't provide a solution for my child.

Needing education for ALL of our children,

Cathy Johnson
Severn, Md

37. Good Evening,

My name is Gloria Winters. I have the privilege of teaching 3rd Grade at FHHES. I have been employed by the district since August 18, 2016. I am a tenure teaching seeking National Board Certification. I believe every child should be taught by a National Board Certified teacher so that they can be inspired to compete on the National Level.

I have applied for Reasonable Accommodations for COVAID.

I just want to comment on my desire to teach my students "face to face" to see them learn. To laugh with them and embrace them. Contrary to popular opinion teachers are NOT taking it easy. Actually "Virtual" Teaching is very difficult. To have a child logged into my classroom and I am in their house is not ideal.

However I "need" to teach in person more than I need AIR. I want to be reunited with my students. My Dr. has given several reasons why I am a high risk as outlined by the CDC and on the 11 page "DISTRICT " outline of severe risks and most likely severe.

I do want to come back, but I believe this is NOT the time.

Anytime the country is logging in 85,000 cases a day and we are planning to send in Pre-K- Grade 2 FIRST. I don't get it. Yes special needs needs to be reunited with their teachers, but still how do you juggle who is more vulnerable, or who should go FIRST. Covid is NOT a respecter of person....

Sincerely,

Gloria Winters

Frank Hebron-Harman ES

38. President Corkadel and distinguished members of the Board:

I want to share my concerns regarding plans for opening schools during this pandemic. There is a snowball effect that will occur by opening schools right now, from a rise in cases, emotional distress, and a huge financial hardship.

I'm an art teacher, dedicated 19 years to the AACPS system, and absolutely love what I do. I am eager to teach my students in person again; teaching and my students are a part of what defines me.

The plan presented is not sustainable for teachers and students alike. Teachers cannot effectively teach in person and virtually while practicing the precautions which must be in place to keep everyone safe. The visuals shared by the board for how in person learning will occur are inaccurate and impossible. Although in person teaching cannot be replaced, neither can anyone's life. My students will not benefit if I am burnt out, stressed out, or dead from this virus.

I live in a different county and my children are continuing with virtual learning. Who will look after my elementary school aged children? I don't make enough money to send 3 children to daycare, much less a place I trust due to our own underlying health concerns.

These concerns add to the mental distress teachers will endure while teaching students who are nervous about their own families. I hope you consider delaying the opening of schools until we have solid plans with frontline workers included in the process. It's an insult to have people who don't teach in classrooms make decisions for people working in classrooms.

I thank you for your time and for your hard work. I am confident you will make the right choice for our children and the teachers who love them.

Linthicum community

Shannon Steele

Lindale Middle School

Art Teacher

Treasure Hunter

39. Paul Westcott, Annapolis (Arnold Elementary) -- The CDC says students and teachers are safe for in-person or hybrid learning if there are 20 new COVID cases out of 100,000, the Maryland Department of Health is even more stringent setting a mark of 15 new cases out of 100,000. Anne Arundel County has never exceeded either number. According to Dr. David Rubin, a pediatrician and infectious disease expert at the University of Pennsylvania, "Weighed against the substantial harms to children and

parents from keeping schools closed, elementary schools should at least offer in-person learning". Dr. Brook Nichols from the Boston University School of Public Health says, "The more and more data that I see, the more comfortable I am that children are not, in fact, driving transmission, especially in school settings." Why are we ignoring medical experts in epidemiology, science and data? Young children like my first grader are suffering through a lost year of their education and according to numerous doctors and scientists, "substantial harm" is being done to our kids. Our county and school leaders continually have ignored scientists and doctors whose expertise is infectious diseases at the expense of our children. Like so many parents we're now considering alternatives of private schools, pods, or even moving due to a failure to plan and choosing to ignore experts.

40. I am a proud Shady Side Elementary school 1st grade teacher. I have been an AACPS educator for 10 years. I am writing to express my concerns about the rising COVID-19 case rate with educators being asked to return on November 9th and students on November 16th.

COVID-19 is still a concern within our community. The numbers are rising daily and have been above the number given by Dr. K as safe to open. I am urging you to please reconsider your reopening dates. Given the start of holiday season and holiday travel, I am concerned that our numbers will only continue to rise and it will no longer be safe.

In addition to reconsidering the start date, I also feel a needs based assessment should be given. A needs based assessment will allow us to see how many students truly need to be back in the building and we can provide for them when it is safe to do so. The proposed hybrid plan (more accurately, a hyflex plan) is going to severely increase teacher workload. Without the appropriate technology and training, it will be nearly impossible for teachers to provide for in person and virtual students at the same time. The T-zone set up does look nice in photos, but it will not allow for true student/teacher interaction. Teachers are working harder than they ever have before. The burnout that will be caused by this plan will be ultimately harmful to teachers and therefore students.

Alane Connolly
Shady Side Elementary teacher/Crofton resident

41. Greetings to you and thank you for being willing to hear our concerns.

As a middle school teacher in this county I have mixed feelings about returning to a building with children present only to have to sit at my desk while they sit at theirs and interact with them the same way I am doing from home now. It's not better teaching practice, it's glorified babysitting. Due to health and safety restrictions, I will not be able to give the ones in the classroom any different instruction than I already do while they are in the safety and comfort of their home. At home, my office/classroom is already set up, I'm able to use 3 monitors and have everything I need at my fingertips. My students and I have a good relationship and we're making your hard-won virtual learning work. Biggest bonus? We're safe with no possibility of cross contaminating. Yes, I want to be back in the building with my students, but not until you can guarantee all our relative safety so that we can function as a school should function -with theater, sports, community building activities, moving class to class, etc. Why risk the possibility of outbreaks if you don't have to yet? Stay with your original stance to remain virtual through at least the first semester. Give yourself time to observe and plan for a safer comeback. Thank you.

Linda Swann

7th grade

Language Arts

Lindale Middle

42. President Corkadel and distinguished members of the Board:

I'm writing to show my concern for return of educators and students for the return to in classroom teaching.

I would like to know that in any decision to return teachers and students to classroom that you as board members personally certify that it is safe and free from Covid19 virus. This certification should include that HVAC systems are designed to filter Covid19 virus, protective equipment is available, and all CDC standards for public school attendance are meet, and testing//contact tracking procedures are in place.

Also I would ask that you and all school administrators be required and certify that they there own eligible children attend the school or school system that they work.

Lastly, that virtual learning capability continue to be in place for continuity of education in the event that reopening is not possible or must be halted.

Thank You

Christopher Stevens

Md parent of AA county teacher and Grandparent of AA county teacher's children.

Ellicott City

43. Dear Dr. Arlotto and Members of the Board,

I write to urge you once again to slow down on the push to re-open. The current hybrid plan needs work to protect the health of our students and staff. We need the following items addressed to better protect the health and safety of students and staff:

- Clear and enforceable protocols for a safe and sustainable opening- AKA a written agreement or MOU on safety measures
- Clear and enforceable cleaning protocols
- Testing of ventilation in every classroom
- A plan that does not double teacher workload by having them teach in person and online students simultaneously
- Meaningful and regular collaboration through consultation with teachers to keep our schools safe— seats on a committee or workgroup do not necessarily equate to meaningful collaboration

Our COVID numbers are trending in the wrong direction. The holidays and flu season are imminent. What sense does it make to rush to return students to school for a handful of days before Thanksgiving, then another handful of days before the winter break? What sense does it make to break apart carefully built classroom communities for a handful of days of in person instruction for students whose families chose the hybrid option? Why are we putting students and families of color, who are already disproportionately affected by COVID, at risk by sending them into buildings with a half-baked plan that the Superintendent himself doesn't support? It just doesn't make any sense.

It's not too late to do the right thing. Slow down. Let's get this right. Lives are actually at stake.

Thank you,

Robin Beers

Teacher at Marley Middle School

Annapolis Resident

Product of AACPS schools

44. I am a teacher at High Point Elementary School. I think the consideration of hybrid learning at this time is ill-advised. The virus numbers are increasing daily. I also feel that my life, the lives of my colleagues and our families are just as important as the middle and high school teachers. Why should we have to go into the building and not them? We all want the students to get back into the building when it is safe to do so; not only safe for them, but for the teachers as well. The expectation that elementary students (especially the younger students) will sit at their desks, with face masks on, keeping the required social distancing while still learning on a computer, is not at all realistic. I think we need to continue teaching virtually from home until after the first of the year or until we see a substantial decrease in the number of people becoming affected. As of today, it is reported that there is no end in sight.

Thank you,

Michele Heiser

Pasadena, MD 21122

45. President Corkadel and distinguished members of the Board,

Thank you for your time and dedication to the AACPS community. I'm writing to express my concerns and questions about the current reopening plan.

The positivity rate is slowly and steadily climbing. I'm concerned returning to hybrid **at this time** will increase the spread of Covid-19. **Students, families, and employee's safety must come first.**

Please consider keeping the same start and end time for all students. Many students and teachers could stay together, and family's schedules will be consistent. Families chose to stay home or opting to drive their children to school. Please collect and analyze this data before moving forward with bus schedules.

Please allow staff who do not have in-person students to continue to work from their currently location.

What happens if there is inadequate coverage for hybrid teachers during lunch and planning?

Thank you again. I appreciate your support.

Carrah White

Edgewater, MD

Wilelinor Community Resident

Mayo Elementary

2nd Grade Teacher

46. Members of the Board:

I'm a second grade teacher, from Annapolis. I love my students and my school. I have been teaching in Anne Arundel County for over 15 years. I have a number of concerns about the current hybrid plan.

My building is over 100 years old. If the heating unit is on high, we are unable to hear each other speak. We must keep it on low in order to communicate. This will impede air circulation. Many rooms in our school have this same problem.

In addition, myself and many other teachers have outdated school-issued laptops that cannot share an educational video. They require more processing power than the laptop can provide. The office of OIT is aware of this issue and cannot provide me with fix. My delivery of lessons will be hampered by this lack of technology.

How will I charge Chromebooks? Students regularly run out of battery power during the day and must move to a spot near an outlet in their home. They cannot do this in the class. The battery life of a Chromebook is not very long as the processing demands of a Google Meet drain a battery quickly.

While I wish I was back with my students in the classroom, I remain steadfast in my belief that to rush forward is irresponsible. Until safe levels in our county have been maintained, we will not be able to return and teach as normal.

Sincerely,

Mary Peabody

47. My wife and I have 4 children in Shipley's Choice Elementary.

I appreciate and recognize the hard work all have put into virtual learning. There has been a great improvement over the Spring. I couldn't be more in favor of the current plan, a CHOICE of hybrid or 100% virtual, but realize things are changing rapidly. I would request the following should the board change their minds or make adjustments in the future:

1. Please set clear and measurable standards with guidance as to where the data is coming from. For example, we will restart 2 weeks after the positivity rate is below x% for y days as measured by the Maryland Department of Health. Obviously just a simple example, but clear measurable standards.
2. I am flat out disgusted with the leadership of the teacher's union. I listened to the County Executive Zoom meeting and was ashamed the best question the president of the teacher's union could ask was when they measure 6 feet is it desk corner to desk corner or student to student. The leadership of the union is falling short. Please press the union for concrete, ascertainable demands, but continue to move forward. Do not accept we want to be heard as an answer.
3. Re: parents complaining about the possibility of switching teachers. I don't see the big deal, but certainly think the damage to a student, switching teachers is infinitely less than the damage being done to low opportunity students in the virtual environment.

Michael Lippenholz

48. I am a long-term substitute teacher at the secondary education level, mostly in math. I did this virtually for the final months of the 2019/2020 school year, and I am on my second long-term position for this school year with a third still to come.

The students really need to be back in the buildings. I am currently teaching at a school with a very high number of students with IEPs and other improvement plans. Only about half show up on any given virtual day. It is hard to help the slower learners in the virtual situation and just as difficult to keep the better students challenged. Many appear to have just given up. Differentiated instruction only goes so far.

The students are not in an at-risk demographic. Though I am older and might technically be at-risk, my health is excellent and I have no concerns about returning to the classroom. The Board needs to continue to press forward with returning to brick and mortar classrooms. This may take education on the part of parents so that they will send their children back, and pressure on the teachers' union to get teachers to return. Private schools are back in session - public schools should be as well.

Dr. Alan S. Colegrove, P.E., Ph.D.

Lake Shore, MD (part of Pasadena area)

49. Dear BOE,

My name is Chris. I live in Millersville, MD. I firmly believe that human rights are non-negotiable. Reopening schools without any regard to the lives that will be lost is a violation of human rights. Keep the schools closed. It is not safe. Stop ignoring the scientific facts that prove that kids are prime spreaders of the virus. Did you know that a thermometer will not help determine if a kid has corona?

If you have an ounce of a soul, you will close the schools. Human rights are non-negotiable.

V/R,

Chris Kim, a concerned civilian.

50. Hello Board Members,

I appreciate the opportunity to share my concerns. I feel like we have not prepared properly for the return of staff members to the let alone the students.

The PPE is not in place, Covid-19 is on the rise in our state and county. You have not included us adequately in the decision process to open the schools in a safe and academically sound manner.

I would like to request the following:

- *Delay teach return until January after the flu and second wave of Covid-19 passes.

- * Bring the students back for the 2nd Semester shortly after the teachers

This way we will have enough time to plan for a safe return. It doesn't have to be messy, the return only becomes messy because we haven't figured out the logistics properly. Our lives matter, our students lives matter. Let's get it right the 1st time. Rushing will only lead to out breaks and us having to shut down again.

Thanks for allowing us to have a say in what will affect us more than you. I am praying for us all.

Truly

Sherry Amedofu

Severn, MD

51. Hi AACPS Board Members,

My name is Anthony Bryant and I live in Glen Burnie. I am a parent of a 7th grader and a PreK student. I have concerns about the reopening plan. My first concern is that we are sending kids back to school in flu/cold season and COVID cases are rising. There is no temperature or health check before entering school buildings. There are going to be kids sent to school who are sick. How will we know if they have COVID or not? My second concern is that students are being asked to change routines and teachers, (in some cases) right before the holidays. By the time they get used to the new routines the holiday break will begin. My third concern is that the teachers were not included in the planning of the reopening plan and they found out at the same time as parents. My fourth concern is that no one is able to tell me what a school day for my PreK student will look like. The reopening plan outlines a school day for K-5 but does not mention PreK. My fifth concern is that students are expected to take all supplies and Chromebooks to school everyday. There are going to be days that supplies / equipment is left at school or accidentally dropped and broken. I think it would be wise to delay the reopening until January where we can get more input from teachers and parents.

Thank You,

Anthony Bryant

52. There is a concerted effort by polarizing groups that has turned reopening into an "us vs. them" situation. There is name calling and pointing out allies and enemies. There is finger pointing at board members who disagree with their side. This type of behavior is doing nothing to help our students. Reopening is being made POLITICAL. There is constant bargaining with the teachers' union. There are rallies and car parades to support staying at home or reopening. Meanwhile, AACPS has devised a hybrid and safety plan that has been approved by our state department of education. This hybrid plan is not new and is used by private schools in this county and districts across the country. We must stop this divisive rhetoric and work together to implement this plan so that our students can return to the classroom. If we do not, half of our student population- our secondary students- will never even have the CHOICE to return.

Again, the politics behind reopening needs to stop. We must find middle ground and reopen our schools simply when the metrics dictate according to state and local officials. Enough talking, protesting, rallies, car parades, town halls, and virtual speakers. We need to simply give the choice to reopen when metrics dictate and listen to science. You are failing our students by making this political. When the politics behind reopening stops, we will finally be able to serve our students with the choice to return to school.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Fine
Crofton Cluster

Mother to two secondary students who are not thriving during virtual learning, former public school educator, current private music

53. I am Laurene Collins, Pre-K TA at Overlook Elementary in the North County Cluster.

I applied for an accommodation to remain virtual because of my age, my husband's age, and his very real immune system deficiencies. I can NOT become sick and/or bring the Covid virus home to him. I prefer to be "live" with our students, but safety MUST be my first concern.

The Board of Education can not tell me how they are going to keep me safe. The masks they gave me won't do it - they are not PPE. The hand sanitizer stations won't do it (and who fills them?). Who will "deep clean" EVERY room, bathroom, hall and office every Wednesday at my school? The few people on our maintenance team? What is " deep cleaning?"

Who will check our air filtration regularly, the same crews who are stretched thin in a regular year? Don't suggest we open windows - we have none.

How will everyone be screened every day? Will we have a nurse every day, not an assistant?

We ask questions, but in the matter of safety, the response is...silence.

It's interesting that this meeting is virtual - for safety, but schools are expected to reopen with so many questions about staff and student safety still answered with...silence.

You will make a decision that could change my life forever - or end it. I urge you to keep schools virtual until you have a solid safety plan, not silence.

54. I'm sending this email to express my concern about reentering the building (Old Germantown) on Nov. 9. The building already had air conditioning issues before COVID-19 and we know that it's not safe with an air borne disease. Its an old system and are there any way we as staff and Administrators will be guaranteed that the filters will be changed monthly. Also some of the staff there are located in small offices with limited circulation, including our administration, how will this be addressed. Let me speak about accommodations. When will we be expected to hear from the BOE.
Thank You for any input to these questions

Pearl Wolfe

55. Good day ladies and gentlemen,

Although I am excited that the kids will at least be able to go back to school two days a week, please keep in mind that there are many teachers and aides who can not go back in right now. Some employees need to stay working virtual due to having their own children at home right now because they have no other family members or friends in the area who can watch them. Some staff can only go back in two days a week again due to having their own children at home right now. So those employees need to be able to work virtual from home the other three days a week.

Some employees have their own health issues or they live with a family member who is high risk. Therefore, those employees need to continue to work virtual at home. Some families like my own, have a special needs child that is in non-public school in another county two days a week. Those kids are doing well and really could benefit from going to school more days a week. They need their routine and

need to get back to where they were academically this past March. Many children have regressed which is a very sad thing.

Also, keep in mind that not every one has family that lives near by. All of our family members live in other states.

I hope you will consider each and every scenario to keep the teachers and aides you already have working as much as they can whether it is virtual or hybrid...

Kendra Liverman

Edgewater, MD

56. How appropriately ironic that we are coming up on Halloween, a day marking the beginning celebrations of remembering those we have lost, which has since become a time we are "distracted for our children to lose out on" because of candy and costumes? What about the souls we have lost? What about the souls we could lose?

The Board has a failure of imagination, and not the kind with unicorn princesses and vegan vampires, but the kind that involves problem solving inevitable flaws in any situation--for this issue, any proposed mode of teaching. This is a microcosm of failed national leadership, where delayed decisions, impromptu decisions, and the foreseeable is made unforeseen by ignorance and agenda. The Board looks like a dog chasing cars on a highway, waiting for the semi it doesn't even realize will greet it.

What I mean: instead of taking the steps of developing a long-term plan way back in early summer, committing to that plan early, and then solving the ensuing equity problems that could be foreseen by anyone with just one brain cell of inferential skills (they taught these skills in college, yes?), they approved a new skeleton plan, knowing it was flawed, more flawed than the current in place plan. Who does that?

Incompetent folks or folks with political agendas they let seep into their social responsibilities as Board members. The experts (the real ones, like Fauci, like Johns Hopkins entire epidemiology department) have said since April that we were going to be in for a brutal winter, especially if we have not contained the virus....

Christopher Ankney

Cape Saint Claire/ Annapolis

57. Teresa Abbott, Gambrills, Teacher

Let's return to school when it's safe. We need air purification systems/new HVAC systems, testing for children and teachers. I've kept myself safe following CDC guidelines. AACPS needs to follow them also. If students aren't in classrooms, teachers should have the option of teaching virtually from home per CDC recommendations. I've established excellent relationships with my students, in my space at home connecting with them virtually. There isn't a safe protocol for me to be in a building exposed to others when students aren't there when they are learning with my teaching virtually from home. I have limited my exposure to people outside my family and don't understand why I should risk my health/safety when it's not necessary. Young children may not get the virus as seriously as adults but they do spread the virus and make adults sick. I do not wish to get sick because we are not following CDC/health guidelines.

Children will not have circle time on the carpet. My carpet was removed with desks put into place. I will need to teach in person as I teach virtually which means I will continue to teach virtually. Children in the

classroom will be confined to their space in order to decrease the risk of exposure. At home they freely move around. I can't understand how being back when you are very young is better when the teacher can't get close to you and help you or comfort you when you are upset.

58. President Corkadel and distinguished members of the board:

I am writing to express my concerns, as a teacher, about the hybrid model. I am a second-year teacher in AACPS with 6 years total experience in education. I currently teach a resilient class of 4th graders. I became a teacher because of my passion for education and building trusting relationships with my students to help them grow as learners. I look forward to future classroom conditions being favorable for in person learning as I want nothing more than to resume my teaching of my students in person safely in our school building.

I am aware of the many health concerns that come with sending students back to the building in the middle of a global pandemic and I thank you for reaching out to health officials to make the safest plan possible. Since I am not a health professional, I would like to speak on my concerns from a teacher's perspective about the hybrid model. I am very concerned about having to teach online as well as in person and the possibility of losing some of my current students. As a professional educator, I am quite aware of the importance of routine and relationship building, both of which will be taken from me in this Hybrid Model. I have also used my own money and time to set up multiple forms of technology in my home to make virtual learning work for all my students. Please see the photo attached. I have received NO information about being given a second monitor, laptop cart or stand, external webcam, etc. to make hybrid happen....

Sincerely,

Kristina Hedges

4th Grade Teacher

Monarch Global Academy

Laurel, MD

AACPS

59. Hello my name is Jennifer Giordano, resident of Windgate in Annapolis, Md. I tried to register to speak at the board meeting tomorrow night but the slots were already full. I would like to submit this email as my written testimony in regards to the reopening of our schools. I have a six-year-old asthmatic son who attends West Annapolis elementary school. Our family like many others in Anne Arundel County have suffered incredible loss due to COVID-19. Both my parents were hospitalized the end of July. My mother, thank God got better. My father however passed away from the virus September 2. 36 days on a ventilator suffering every complication and system failure you hear about in the news. I am at a loss for why the board is pushing to reopen our schools while the number of affected people continue to rise. Many parents are forced to pick the hybrid learning model only because we want to maintain our child's teacher and classmates. This plan offers no continuity of learning and disrupts a system that seems to be going pretty well for our kids online. How do you honestly propose that a teacher masked teach half of her first graders online while instructing the other half in person. This is an impossible task not to mention the two hour gap in the middle of the day where they are not allowed to interact with each other take their mask off and be babysat by a volunteer who isn't even held to the same guidelines and regulations as school employees. This plan simply does not work!...

60. We are writing ***in full support*** of the reopening plan approved by the Board of Education.

With a child in elementary school and another in middle, we have seen the toll that online instruction has taken on our children.

We are so excited we were given the opportunity to choose hybrid learning for our elementary school student and eagerly await the day we can do so for our middle school student. We believe the plan as put forth offers a comprehensive outline of safety protocols that is satisfactory.

We do have a question about physical education classes... why are they not being offered in person, outside on school grounds? Many private schools in the county are doing this. We feel this is a safe way to offer PE. Please consider.

I understand that some are upset about the reopening plan, but the beauty of this plan is that it provides options to those who are uncomfortable returning in person. All we ever wanted was a chance to make a choice for what is best for our children. Thank you so much to the board for approving this. Our student is so excited to go back.

Sincerely,

Nicole Morella and Jim Langenbach

Arnold

61. Dear Board Members,

Please do not delay the current plans to return students to the classroom in a hybrid learning model. The data on COVID-19 does not support these extended closures. In Anne Arundel County, 52 percent of the people who have died from COVID have been over the age of 80 yet they comprise only 4% of the total cases. Our focus should be on protecting that population from contracting the virus and keeping kids out of school does not support that goal.

A recent article published by NPR reviewed data in districts where schools have reopened and found that school re-opening is not resulting in super spread events.

(<https://www.npr.org/2020/10/21/925794511/were-the-risks-of-reopening-schools-exaggerated>)

Using the case rate as a lone deciding metric for re-opening is not effective because that number is prone to wide swings from day to day. The positivity rate in Anne Arundel County has remained below 5% since June. Treatment protocols are improving. We cannot stay shut down indefinitely.

The other impacts of this shut down need to be considered and not brushed aside as insignificant. The mental health impact on students is huge. I am a parent to two high school aged students who are struggling to stay positive, motivated and engaged during remote learning. They are understandably frustrated by the expectation that they learn 100% of the material in 50% of the instructional time. Good grades are not enough to determine whether students are thriving. In case there is any doubt, high school students are not thriving. They are wilting on the vine....

Sincerely,

Kathleen Gentile

Crofton, MD

62. The smartest way to proceed is to stay virtual and reevaluate in January. First, cases are rising prompting Dorchester County to stop their reopening plan. Secondly, I hear from my children about "relationship building" they have done in classes. Now you want to separate teachers from their students when they spent almost two months building relationships. Next, you're trusting parents to check their own kids. How many times have parents sent their children to school on Tylenol saying "you'll be fine"? Now the consequences of such decisions could be fatal to a student, staff member or their family member with pre-existing conditions. Speaking of students, are the amount of students who signed up for hybrid worth the time and expense to open? Also, what about the crossing guards? How are they supposed to keep a group of students social distanced at the crosswalks? Most guards are elderly and more vulnerable to Covid. Last, why send the children to school to do what they're doing now? Besides what is going to happen when a student refuses to wear their mask properly or stay in their 6 square foot space? Just keep everyone safe at home. If this board truly cares about its communities and staff they will stop with this nonsensical reopening plan. Better to error on the side of caution than to have something devastating happen to someone in the school community. But you probably won't listen since this opinion doesn't come from Severna Park or Broadneck.

Jon Foote

Glen Burnie

Parent of 2 in Glen Burnie system

63. Name: Alene Corcoran

Student: Jeraiah Corcoran

School: Central Middle School, STEM Magnet Program

The effects of school shutdowns is not fair to our children. Whereas I am required to go to work three days a week, giving me face to face interaction and accountability for my work, my son has neither of these things.

While I'm at work, my 11 year old has to navigate his education on his own, while simultaneously supervising and caring for our overactive dog. As a new middle schooler, this has proved to be an enormous challenge, and my *always honor roll student* is currently failing two classes - not because of lack of desire, but simply because he is lost and no one is helping him navigate.

I have emailed teachers - one has not responded to me, while another responded a week and a half later. I am not taking away from the teachers who are doing a great job, but there is a *detrimental lack of communication and support*.

We are a one-parent family, and I have no support. As if juggling life was not enough already, the added responsibility of virtual learning has caused tremendous hardships on my family and my employer. My son is becoming more bashful and reserved every month this continues, and I fear for his mental and social development.

In addition to the cognitive and emotional toll this quarantine is taking on our kids, studies have shown that schools are not super spreaders, after all (<https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2020/10/schools-arent-superspreaders/616669/>).

I am begging you to open schools.

64. Thank you for this opportunity to express my concerns about the reopening plan for AACPS. I am a kindergarten teaching assistant, and I am concerned about the return to school for both myself and my colleagues as well as the students we support. Will I be moving into all the classrooms I service? Will I be expected to substitute in other grade levels? Will I be cleaning, both the classroom supplies as well as bathroom accidents, vomit, buttoning pants, helping with coats, milk and food spills? The list continues for our youngest learners who need more assistance in daily routines. Will I be covering lunch duties and monitoring recess in multiple grade levels? I am frequently called upon to assist in various areas of support throughout my building. I am concerned that will affect the safety measures of the multiple areas I will be working in.

We are a school, a wonderful school, full of passionate educators who go above and beyond, but still have a low volunteer base to assist us for field trips and attending school-sponsored events. It does not seem feasible that the reality is that we will not have the assistance required to support our students and staff safely with the appropriate coverage. I'm sure my school is not alone in this concern.

I have so many more concerns as both an employee and as a mother. Please consider revising the plan to return to school until appropriate safety measures are adequately prepared for, considerations of what you are asking of your employees, and until it is safe for schools to reopen.

Karen Kivi

Severn, MD

Glen Burnie Park Elementary

65. Board Members,

My classroom and many others are quite a bit smaller than those depicted in the demonstration. We cannot accommodate the 6 foot zone for all students. Even if my room was the size of the one depicted, which it is not, a teacher teaching in the "T-Zone" will not be able to see if a child at home is raising his/her hand? Overcoming the limitations of Google Meet and creating a respectful class that has learned to mute/unmute by reading pauses in the teachers cadence and facial expressions will be eliminated as the teacher will need to speak in a different manner while wearing a mask. In addition, the students will be unable to read facial expressions. I am continuously switching between shared screen and not sharing to ensure I see all the students. Quieter students can have their meet video square moved below the 16 shown while sharing a screen. This would cause more problems if I am to walk around the room to see and help in person students and still maintain eyes on students in meet. It takes constant adjustment by a teacher to see students in the meet. This is one of many problems with your plan. Please reconsider your decision.

Candace Brown,

Teacher-Eastport Elementary

66. I would like my statement to clearly reflect that I DO NOT support the current proposed hybrid model.

Our daughter, who is our oldest child, is a kindergarten student. On the surface, it would appear that this is one of our first experiences with the public school system, but in actuality our direct family has a combined 246 years of public education service in the state of Maryland. Yes, you read that correctly. Two hundred and forty-six years.

As a parent, I am very concerned with the BOE's decisions regarding our child's education that are being pushed through, with, as it appears, no regard for her physical safety or her emotional well being. Our COVID positivity rate in Maryland, and throughout the country, is continuing to rise.

I completely agree with the commentary written by Ms. Kristen Caminiti that was recently run in The Capital newspaper. These decisions are reckless, and are endangering thousands of lives of our precious students, teachers and community members.

A needs based assessment, which has previously been mentioned by Mr. Drake Smith, is the way to go! Let's get the kids who have special needs and those who are desperately struggling with virtual learning back into the classroom first, and go from there.

In summary, I oppose the current hybrid model and I AM IN FULL SUPPORT OF REMAINING VIRTUAL through the end of the semester, and possibly beyond that, based on science and the most current health metrics!

Carrie Williams

Mayo, Maryland

67. Dear Board Members,

I am very happy that there is now a potential option to send my Kindergartener physically in to the school for the hybrid plan. It is not even two months into the school year and he is already crying to me on a daily basis that he does not want to be in front of a computer all day long and I don't blame him. This is NOT the way to learn. While I am happy there is now a hybrid option, I am shocked at the details. They will have to take in their chromebooks to sit at their desk all day and still be learning virtually? Doesn't that defeat the whole point? Give the teachers the option to return to the classroom and pair them with the kids whose parents are choosing the hybrid option. Give those teachers an incentive. I don't understand how you expect teachers to teach virtually and in person at the same time? Why bother? My son needs to be in school where he can flourish and learn. They should be able to interact with their classmates and teacher while wearing a mask. My son currently goes to daycare all day where he wears a mask just fine so that is not a reason not to send the children back. He has also been in daycare since the pandemic started and plays just fine with his friends and teachers and there have been zero cases of COVID. Open up the schools or give me some of my tax dollars back so I can send my son to private school where they are not having any issues.

Renee Harris

Mother of a Kindergarten student

Solley Elementary

68. President Corkadel and distinguished members of the board:

I am a veteran teacher of more than 35 years, 14 with AACPS. I am concerned about the rising COVID rates all around us from which Anne Arundel County cannot hide and the safety concerns about sending teachers back into the buildings. Many of us have underlying conditions that would be devastating to our lives should we get COVID and even live through it (it would leave crippling side effects). AACPS has not provided us with a MOU on safety, nor have they provided more than simple masks. The ventilation systems in many our schools are antiquated and cannot provide for clean filtration of germs and particles. Although students may not get sick, they may be super spreaders who are asymptomatic. It is too dangerous to send anyone back at his point. Please do not disrupt the lives of students and teachers by beginning a hybrid plan at this point in the pandemic.

Sincerely,

Cheryl Howard

ESOL Instructor

Brock Bridge Elementary

69. Elizabeth A Heeney, NBCT

Art Teacher, Arundel High School

I believe there is a significant oversight made by the Board in the decision to return High School Teachers to the classroom to teach while students stay online from home. Creative Art Teachers of the Visual Arts, Music, Culinary and Technology, have invested heavily in both time and financial resources to bring our home studios up to a standard that enables us to deliver high quality online creative instruction to our students. We did this, not because we thought we would be reimbursed for the time or money, but we learned through the Spring Shutdown that our students deserve the best instruction we could deliver for optimal engagement under the circumstances. To close the gap, we purchased webcams, multiple monitors, convertible desks, tables and chairs and microphone equipment to support live demonstrations that fosters interaction with students and simulates in-person instruction. Our students look forward to our classes, and attendance is high. I am not alone in this overview, just ask us. Why bring us back into the classroom while students are at home and leave us hanging without the supports we have created for ourselves? Our classrooms are not set up to teach virtually! The laptop and a 13 inch monitor is not enough. At the very least, The Board should allow middle and secondary teachers the professional CHOICE to teach from home studios if they feel their instruction would be superior then to return to their classroom while students stay at home.

(Columbia, MD)

70. Monday morning our principal proceeded to outline the reopening plan complete with pictures of a hybrid classroom and its restrictions (T zone, TN zone). Immediately school staff bombarded him with good questions. Being the people that are most familiar with the needs of a classroom/school setting they logically would recognize the important missing ingredients to this plan. Unfortunately our principal, who is a very compassionate leader, was not able provide the answers to these questions. Most disturbing, for him I'm sure, was the information that some teachers may move grades or even schools. Good teaching requires relationship building with their students and now that may be taken away? Also, teachers have and still are working very hard to make the current model of virtual learning

work. Can't we let them reap the benefits of their hard work or at least breathe a little before jumping into another process? More importantly, the way this plan originally rolled out as a "sneak attack" showed complete disrespect for AACPS employees. I do believe kids need to get back into the classroom, but this hybrid plan is not conducive to 5 year olds (my classrooms). They have more opportunities for movement at home than they will in this hybrid environment.

Dorothy Smythe

Quarterfield Elementary

SAAAC

71. My name is Suzanne Jones, I have taught Kindergarten at Mayo Elementary for 18 years. I know the realities of what happens on a daily basis in our buildings. I'm concerned because the transparency and communication to us, the ones actually working with these students, has not been very clear.

I'm concerned because I know what "cleaning our buildings" looks like and I know we don't always get a clean room each night or are provided ample cleaning products. I'm concerned about "high touch" areas being cleaned enough throughout the day. I wonder what accident and vomiting in the classroom protocols are for 5 year olds.

I am worried about our virtual learners being left behind because that T Model doesn't work with most of the laptops we were given. I have tried this at home, they cannot hear me after a certain distance. I worry about bandwidth and lagging on our meets with everyone being in the building. I have to use my personal device often because my school issued laptop is old and cannot handle most of what I'm asking it to do. I wonder how the daily schedule actually looks, I haven't heard anyone walk through a day, realistically.

I am worried for the health and safety of our TA's and volunteers intermingling amongst larger groups. I wonder who is enforcing mask wearing for both adults and children because currently in many buildings, it is not being enforced.

I do not feel that sending our students back with these unanswered questions about safety and learning is appropriate at this time....

-Suzanne Jones, Mayo Elementary Teacher, Arnold Resident and AACPS alumni

72. Hello,

My name is Gretchen Moran and I live in Crownsville, Maryland. I am the grandparent of a Kindergarten student in the county and a part time virtual learning teacher at an independent school in Annapolis. I am writing to urge you to keep schools virtual until at least the originally planned date in January. Covid cases across the country are spiking and are going up in our county as well. Opening schools affects everyone in the community not just students, teachers and school staff. At this time when cases are on the rise and families will be gathering and travelling it seems foolhardy to open schools right now. This is not a matter of being afraid, this is about science and mitigation and making reasoned decisions. Unfortunately the leadership in our country has led some to believe that this pandemic is not something to be very concerned about. We must be concerned. A hybrid program means that for those young families who have grandparents and other older people helping with their children they will no longer be able to do so safely due to the possibility of transmission. Every young person in school has older

more vulnerable people in their lives, some the sole caretakers. Please do not act hastily and stay virtual for a while longer.

Sincerely,

Gretchen Moran

73. Thank you for this opportunity to provide comments. I pray you all are reading these and listening to the live testimonies.

As a teacher, parent and lifelong resident of Anne Arundel county, I have to speak on this hybrid plan.

There are many concerns.

The loss of relationships that will be huge! Teachers and students have worked so hard to build relationships and understand each other. It will be very difficult for our youngest learners to lose that security in they have with their teachers.

The classrooms are so empty and unwelcoming in the hybrid model. Students will not be given materials to use. They must only touch the items they bring from home. They will stay in their 6x6 square for the majority of the day and use their chromebooks for the majority of their work. Materials will not be passed out.

The ability to sanitize materials during the school day is unrealistic. Mrs Ellis spoke of private school teachers sanitizing materials between play. Are you aware that teachers are NOT allowed to use disinfectants in the classrooms? It is strictly not allowed. Even if they were allowed, who will purchased those products? To think the custodial staff can thoroughly clean during the day is also unrealistic.

I ask, please reconsider this hybrid option. It is the goal that students and teachers return, but why push them into an unsafe situation where the academic gap will be enlarged?

Thank you
Kassie Haney
Parent
Teacher
Pasadena, Md

74. Good evening -

Thank you for taking the time to read this email and listen to my testimony.

My name is Laura Cunningham and I am a special education teacher with the Community Based Services Program based out of Point Pleasant Resource Center in Glen Burnie.

This is my fifth year working for Anne Arundel County Public Schools and I am proud to be affiliated with this organization.

I really feel that the administration that runs this school system does its best to support the students, their families, and the staff. I know that is why the board wants to reopen schools as quickly as possible.

However, I personally feel that it is not a wise decision currently. The COVID-19 numbers are trending in the wrong direction. There are myriad concerns about the ability to provide healthy environments for the school staff and the students. There are also concerns about staffing and the ability to meet the student's needs. Finally, as a former classroom educator, I feel that asking a teacher to balance an in-person class with a virtual class at the same time is difficult and does not provide what either the in-person or virtual students need.

I ask you to please kindly reconsider your decision and go back to the original plan of providing all virtual education through the end of the second quarter. Then things can be evaluated again such as the COVID-19 numbers.

Thank you very much for reading my testimony.

Sincerely,

Laura Cunningham

75. To the Board of Education of AACPS,

I thank you for all your tireless hours spent on the planning and replanning, scratching plans and starting over plans during this pandemic that made us a virtual school with asynchronous learning and some Chromebook distribution in the Spring, then made us a virtual school with synchronous learning and included the distribution of chromebooks to every student in the county who wanted one in the Fall, and now is trying to make us a hybrid school for students who wish to attend virtually through this semester, or who wish to attend virtually through the entire school year or who wish to attend a hybrid starting in late November with younger grades. This planning is difficult work that is being done amidst state mandates and metrics that are moving targets.

But, although this work is difficult, it has been done by other public school districts other states. Public school districts have and are continuing to head back to school as hybrid models. My relatives' children in their Pennsylvania public school district are now moving from the 2 day hybrid model (Mon, Tues in person for half of the school, Wed virtual for all and Thurs, Fri in person for the other half of the school) to a 4 day hybrid model, having just Wed virtual for all. They have played high school sports and games. The students have been given "walls" to place around each desk they sit at throughout the day and they wear masks all day. On the days half the school is at home, they are virtual and the in person half watches the projected virtual classroom along with the virtual students....

Deirdre Ralph

West Annapolis

76. To the Members of the Board,

We are a group of Kindergarten teachers who feel turned upside down by some of the decisions you have made for us and the students in this county. While we all agree that returning to school is very important, how we do so is equally important. The teachers in this county have spent weeks establishing strong relationships with each other and building bonds with this year's group of parents and students. When we think back to meeting our parents during our initial conference and starting the established trust that we need to have our children be successful in class and to have our little ones

log onto our first virtual class session; we realize that was the beginning of building a community that has continued to grow. At the October conference, we spent a large amount of time trying to relieve the parent's fears of having their children, who have formed a bond with us, suddenly being changed to a new teacher simply because they want to think about the safety of their children by continuing virtual learning. To add to this scenario, we now find out that if we become virtual teachers, we could possibly lose our spots at the schools where we are or possibly be moved to another grade level.

For those of you who make the decisions for the reopening of school, please know that the plans you have in motion are making people's lives more stressful in an already stressful situation. As we move forward with these changes, the number of people infected with the virus is continuing to grow at such a rate that there is a strong possibility that all schools in Maryland may be forced to return to all virtual learning....

Sincerely,
Dawn Hudgins
Kathy Sauble
Lisa Greenbauer
Lori Fish
Melanie Georgopolis
Sarah Sinnott
Alicia Winarski

77. To the Board of Education:

I have been a teacher for 26 years, the majority of those years in a Kindergarten classroom. I was hoping to be back in the classroom this school year because I know the best way to teach and help my students is for in person teaching. However, it was not safe to return to the classroom. I had no choice but to embrace online teaching and according to my families (after conferences) they have embraced virtual learning as well. The majority of my families have chose to remain virtual because their child is thriving virtually and they do not want to disrupt their routine at this time.

With that being said, when AACPS announced that we would return to the classroom following the Hybrid Model, I was excited! I know that there are students who need to see me and work with me one on one. However, when the model was presented, I felt defeated. The model that is being presented for teachers to teach children is not appropriate. Again, I have taught children under the age of 7 for 26 years. When I watched the board meeting last week and saw how they presented the hybrid model, I could not believe they thought this would work. It may work for older students, but what happens when one of my 5 year old students has a bathroom accident? Or has a meltdown? Becomes sick and cannot make it to the bathroom? What happens when my students with special needs decides to leave the classroom?...

Thank you for your consideration,

Michelle LeGrand

Kindergarten Teacher

Piney Orchard Elementary

78. Teachers are working VERY hard and many extra hours to make virtual learning work - and it IS working - so our community can stay safe. ASK US how we can make virtual learning better: more synchronous time with students, more time to plan and prepare engaging, collaborative lessons, more

time to provide meaningful feedback to student work. Same amount of student flex time. Less time on everything else.

There are too many unanswered questions with hybrid learning, but if you want help figuring it out (or identifying the aforementioned unanswered questions,) ASK US! Figuring it out will take much more time than we currently have with the schedule you have promulgated, and building the plane while we're flying it will only endanger the health and lives of our entire community.

Thank you.

Jen McLeran

Edgewater Resident

Crofton High School Teacher

TAAAC Member and Building Rep

79. To the Board of Education,

My name is Allison Brewer and I teach General Music and Chorus at Mayo Elementary. I write to urge you to consider my perspective on reopening and the hybrid virtual learning environment. As a member of TAAAC, I am asking you to negotiate and sign a comprehensive MOU for a safe reopening plan. Teachers want to return to the buildings, but only when it is safe and when it is smart for our students. As a music teacher, virtual learning is challenging, but with everyone at home students can play their instruments, sing, and move freely in their space. In a hybrid model, students won't be able to sing or play instruments, or move freely to the music while wearing masks. I would rather my musicians participate from their homes than return to school with little to no "real music". Be honest with the public and explain their perception of "going back to school" is incorrect. Please advocate for teachers who want health and safety as the top priority so they can fully teach their subject. Put yourself in a teacher's role and then weigh the risk/reward. After walking in my shoes, I know you will make the right decision to sign a MOU with TAAAC, continue virtual learning from home, and support the safety of our entire county.

Sincerely,

Allison Brewer

Mayo Elementary Music Teacher

Resident of Crofton, MD

80. President Corkadel and Members of the Board:

I teach English and drama at Annapolis High School. I am also a former candidate for the AACPS Board of Education. Over my 8 years at AHS, I have spent countless hours beyond my contract in order to better my community.

When the Board voted to hastily begin bringing students and teachers back without a clear plan or an MOU, it was clear how little we are valued both as people and professionals. These senseless plans reveal that the Board believes we have no valuable perspective on our own jobs. At the secondary level,

we are asked to return to our school buildings with no idea about when students will return or how it will work. I stand with my elementary and special educator colleagues regarding the nonsensical plans that have been developed for them, and sadly I expect nothing better for my own students.

Then, when we come together in an attempt to be heard, we are dismissed as “organized” - as if those who accuse us of “organizing” did not employ similar tactics to get themselves elected. All of you emailed, called, and talked to your networks to get where you are.

To those who say “but some didn’t have the advantage of organizing” - that’s true. We want to help those families too. We teach kids collaboration every day - in fact, we’re evaluated on our capacity to teach that skill. What amazing things could we do if you held yourselves to the same standard to which you hold us?

Erin Lorenz

Annapolis High School

81. President Corkadel and members of the Board:

I am writing to express my concerns that parents were asked to make a choice between virtual and hybrid, with details changing after its release. Will children be allowed out of their space around their desks? Will they get to have cooperative play time, or will they be restricted to parallel play like their much younger peers? Will they be given a chance to play with classroom toys designed to challenge their sense of wonder? Who will take care of them during the break in the middle of the day? Who will comfort a crying child? What about the children at home but participating online?

When will parents and teachers know the rules for reentry and the answers to their questions so they can plan? Or will they continue to change without notice?

I have taught in the county since 1993, as both a Special Educator and a Kindergarten Teacher. I have a Masters in Early Childhood Special Education. I know young kids and how they learn, move, laugh, cry, and act out. This plan does not allow them to learn in the way they need to without increasing the health risks for everyone. I also know parents. This plan does not allow them the chance to make informed decisions for the health and welfare of their children. No one wins with this plan.

Thank you for considering my concerns.

Sincerely,
Susan Wallace

Kindergarten Teacher, Piney Orchard Elementary School

Chapel Grove, Odenton

82. Schools should not be re-opening at this point. As of 10/26/20 the current case rate for Anne Arundel County is 11.9, which is higher than the recommended rate for schools to re-open. Cases have

been rising steadily for the past month, if anything, schools should be doubling down and staying virtual. Before schools re-open, there should be testing of the air quality of all schools and classrooms to ensure proper ventilation, there should be required weekly testing of anyone entering schools and a required negative test before entering the building, daily temperature checks and all the rooms should be thoroughly cleaned not only daily, but during the day. Frankly, schools should not re-opened until everyone is vaccinated against the virus, especially the prospect of this possibly being a twin pandemic with an expected bad flu season. If the plan goes forward, you are going to have students and teachers in one room for 6 hours and you expect children to stay within their space and to keep a mask on all day everyday and the only time to take the mask off is when they eat lunch. Plus they will be learning virtually with just a change of venue (home to school), but without any support since teachers must stay 6 feet away. You are setting everyone up for failure, this is plan is far worse for students. There is no continuity especially with the prospect of shut downs at any time. Put the safety of families first, stay virtual.

Kimberly Foote

Parent and wife of teacher

Glen Burnie High Feeder System

83. Dear AACPS BOE,

I write to you today as a parent of a 4th grader at Oak Hill Elementary (Severna Park Cluster). Let me begin by saying that although *we have selected the "hybrid" option*, and I am in favor of re-opening the schools safely and equitably, **I am not in favor of the current reopening "plan"**.

Current county **health metrics** do not support opening schools in November. Furthermore, patterns of increased case rates following holidays both here in AACo and across the country argue that in-person school should not even be considered until mid-January, to account for potential infection surge associated with Thanksgiving and the December holidays.

Additionally, the **current "plan" does not meet the needs of the students who are struggling the most**. Children with special learning needs should be prioritized to be brought back into the schools first. The schools should **identify those students who would most benefit from consistent in-school instruction** and provide that to these students on a full-time in-school basis, while remaining students continue in a virtual capacity until all students are able to come back into the schools full-time.

My child needs to be in school. Since the school closure we have had to implement private psychotherapy and tutoring services to stay afloat. *Kids needs to be in school, but only if school is a safe place, where kids can learn and thrive*. Reconsider.

Julie B. Newman, PhD, ABPP-CN

Severna Park, MD 21146

84. Dear Honorable Members of the Board of Education of Anne Arundel County Public Schools and Dr. Arlotto:

I previously viewed your meeting in which you unveiled the reopening plan for our school district. I was struck by the great tumult that our elementary school students are about to endure. I am parent to two children: a toddler and a second-grader. Having selected our option under the reopening plan, we now face enumerable questions and tremendous concern as our child could end up having three teachers

throughout this year: the current teacher, a teacher for mid-November through January, and yet another for February through the end of the year. Education is built on many factors, but the factors of trust and mental health have been missing from discussions. My child has bonded with his teacher and this relationship has been a bright spot moving learning forward. The teacher has clearly spent tremendous time working to learn about her students and meet each one's needs in as individualized a way as possible. To take that away from the students will be tremendously detrimental. Further, my child has bonded with the class as a whole. We now see our COVID-19 cases rising and yet still it appears the Board will persist in reopening even as other counties maintain or return to virtual learning for the year. I implore you to reconsider your plans of a broad reopening and think of the student's overall needs.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth A. Marcus-Wenger

Broadneck High School Feeder System

85. Dear President Corkadel, Dr. Arlotto, and members of the Board of Education,

I am writing to express my concerns regarding the school hybrid reopening plans. I am very concerned about the rising Covid 19 case rate. When the plan was adopted, the case rate was in the acceptable range according to Dr. Kalyanaraman. But in the last few weeks, it has steadily risen above the metrics for a safe reopening and shows no signs of going back down. In fact, the whole country has been told by all of our leading health experts that Covid rates will only increase as we move into winter. Now is the time to stop the current reopening plan, and work on making a new more complete plan for when it is safe to return.

My second main concern is with the lack of an MOU around safety between the school district and TAAAC. It was previously stated in a board meeting that Zoom town halls that were held with Dr. Kalyanaraman should be enough to assuage teachers' concerns with safety. However, town hall question and answer sessions are not the same thing as a clearly negotiated MOU around safety protocols. We desperately need one. There is already inconsistency between school buildings just because many safety situations have simply not been explicitly addressed.

I have been a teacher for nineteen years, fourteen of them in Anne Arundel County Schools. I love my students and look forward to a safe return to our school buildings.

Sincerely,

Charlotte Murray, Odenton MD

86. I wanted to speak in person. I wanted you to see me in a mask, as I spoke and signed. I wanted you to listen and look. I am a teacher of the deaf/hard of hearing. I am here to speak for those who cannot speak for themselves. I am here for students developing and learning language.

I work in a classroom with a deaf colleague. We need to wear masks. Masks protect us. Any mask will take away my communication. It will distort my words. It will take away my expressions. 6 feet is not an appropriate distance for connection, learning or communication. Our students require mouth movement paired with listening. Our students have the right to expect clear communication.

Schools are not equipped for appropriate learning at this time. A 6 by 6 foot square for school is not appropriate. Expecting independent skills well beyond ages 3, 4, 5 is not developmental. Hybrid is not real school.

Equity is providing specific needs for individuals. This plan is not equitable. Your "All means all" is not equitable. Teaching from home/learning from home means no masks. We can modulate the sound and the lighting. Please allow us to stay home and teach from home until we no longer need masks.

COVID-19 is here. It is in control, on its own timeline. We need to slow down school opening for teachers and students.

Thank you for listening with your ears, eyes and heart. All students require clear sound and clear visuals.

Linda Allen-Bell
Teacher of the Deaf/HH
Nationally Board Certified

Millersville, MD

87. As the mother of two AACPS elementary students and as a loyal AACPS Kindergarten teacher (13 years), please stop this inappropriate reopening plan. I can't begin to explain how much stress is being felt and time is being spent by parents and teachers to try to come to grips with what is expected. This plan not only is unsafe with Covid numbers increasing (AA County hasn't been below 10 for case rate since October 8th), but it is also extremely developmentally inappropriate for children to learn under these circumstances. Staying virtual will help keep everyone safe and allow teachers to continue building relationships with students.

Concerns around ventilation in our buildings is still real. Please take the time to check ALL buildings and not rely on building personnel to validate systems. They are not ventilation experts! There are many buildings without windows!

Thank you,
Lindy Stansbury
Severna Park

88. President Corkadel and members of the Board,

I am writing to express my concerns regarding the lack of communication of a clear, defined plan to return safely to hybrid instruction. Teachers are concerned about the lack of details outlined in the hybrid model. As the individuals who will be on the frontlines working to keep our students safe and thriving in a welcoming environment, we are very concerned about the lack of information provided on how to implement this plan.

Dr. Arlotto mentioned several times that some of the decisions regarding implementation of the hybrid model would be made at the school level. However, when we ask our principals for details on how we will enact the plan, they know as little as we do. For this model to be effective, we need time: time for the county to disseminate information to the schools, time for schools to adapt the plan to the needs of the building and students with collaboration from teachers, and time for teachers to adapt their curriculum to best serve the needs of in-person and virtual students. Our original timeline of

returning to hybrid instruction in January would give us time to fully develop a hybrid model that will truly provide the best opportunities for all stakeholders, including families that were required to decide their child's educational future with limited information in a very limited timeframe.

Sincerely,
Sarah Kellett
AACPS teacher - Jessup Elementary
Carroll County resident

89. Previously, I sent an email to a former principal about my tables not being disinfected. I was met with a not very professional note in the morning along with unclean desks that I had to continue to clean myself.

More recently: a student vomited. I called it in. A custodian arrived. The aftermath was less than clean. I was left to sanitize the remaining chunks myself.

I work with mainly 5 year olds. We teach hygiene lessons in our curriculum. I do not expect students to perfectly follow safety protocol if they are still instinctually picking their noses under masks (hopefully willingly wearing one). I have noted 4 different children picking noses during eLearning. They just do it.

A text received 10/27/2020 (via my google voice number) from the parent of an ELL and selective mute. (I provide this detail because he is thriving with eLearning. He participates frequently. I worked hard to build relationships.)

"Good morning Ms. Keys. At put house there is someone with Covid so ***** wake up this morning not feeling well at all. I called the health department and they gave me a testing center near me. We are heading to there now. I wanted to aware you in case we don't come back early ***** will be missing this afternoon virtual session."

I live with a type-1 diabetic husband and 2 young children, one with special needs. My elderly parents are watching my children so we do not have to risk exposure at daycare. My children have been out of daycare since March 2020.

Sherry Keys

Walnut Ridge Community

Teacher in AACPS

90. Dear Board Members,

I am writing to express my concerns about the rising COVID-19 case rate with educators being asked to return to school buildings on Nov. 9. We must have a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the teachers' union addressing a safe environment for all. We still do not have clear metrics regarding full faculties being in our school buildings.

Dr. Arlotto's refusal to verify HVAC Systems and Ms. Corkadel's statement that some information was provided during Zoom Town Halls is unacceptable. A Zoom Town Hall is not official documentation from my employer. What Air filtration capabilities are in place?

Requiring parents and teachers to make decisions prior to a detailed final plan being shared with stakeholders is causing extreme stress, dissatisfaction, and worry from teachers, parents and students.

There has been inconsistent communication with parents and staff regarding changes to the plan.

Lastly, there is a lack of assessment of student needs to determine which students truly need in-person instruction.

As Mr. Smith said, online school just being hard is not a reason to go in person. There has to be great need. Struggle is normal with learning and it is normal for children to struggle through frustrations in school. Parents are witnessing more of the struggle than they saw before and it may concern them. They may not realize just how normal it is and how developmentally appropriate it is for children to feel frustration. We teach growth mindset for this reason!

Sincerely, Lauren Elfring, Elementary Art Teacher

91. Greetings President Corkadel and distinguished members of the Board,

I'm a 4th year teacher in Anne Arundel county with 4 years of total experience in education. I became a teacher because of my passion for learning. I look forward to conditions being favorable for in person learning. I want nothing more than to resume my teaching of students in person safely in our school building.

With Covid-19 still a concern in our community I have concerns about hybrid learning. Expecting teachers to instruct two classes simultaneously is an undue burden. It doubles the workload and decreases educational quality. It's not sustainable for the mental or physical health of teachers. It opens the door for liability. Teachers won't reliably be able to monitor the safety of both virtual and in person students. If teachers are in the middle of the room with a chrome book off to the side, as the board suggested, they won't clearly or consistently see if virtual students are engaging in unsafe activities. This is a major safety concern especially with our youngest learners who need constant supervision. Please wait until January. Take more time to refine this plan with input from all relevant stakeholders including the teachers and the union. We love our children but the mental and physical health of both students and teachers is too high a price to pay. Please reconsider. We are worth the wait.

Thank you for hearing my concern and for your service to the board,
Gabrielle Ryan
Pasadena, MD

92. Board members of Anne Arundel County Public Schools,

I am the father of 3 children in the school system. 2 of them go to Hebron Harman, and 1 goes to McArthur middle school.

I am writing this email because as one of many concerned parents I need to let you know where I stand in the school's reopening.

I had made the decision with my children to go hybrid with their classes. Our kids really want to keep the teachers they currently have. They were not happy when they heard that they would lose their teachers if they were to stay doing virtual school.

As a parent of 3 children, I do not feel comfortable sending them back to school while the pandemic is still happening. The number of cases have gone up again and the beginning of the cold weather is now here. Which means lower immune system.

Unfortunately we really don't have a choice if we want the kids to keep their current teachers.

We are going to give hybrid a shot, but we are not making a commitment to stick with it as I had mentioned we do not feel safe going back at this time.

Thank you for your time.

Bruce Meneses

Harman's Community

93. Dear AACPS BOE,

This isn't my first letter written to the board. I'm beginning to feel that my voice doesn't matter. As one resident, parent, teacher of Anne Arundel County, I feel powerless. It seems that some of you on the board won't even have a desire to read what I have to say. I teach my students to have a growth mindset, so I'm hoping that you are willing to also be willing to realize when a mistake has been made and be willing to change your mind.

In case you do, please reconsider the plan that has been approved. Your perceptions of what you think will happen when we open is inaccurate. In the last meeting, a board member asked if the microphone on the laptop would adequately pick up the teacher instruction as she walked through the room. I can tell you from experience with this laptop that it will NOT. If I move more than a foot to the side of the computer to write on my white board during instruction, the sound becomes distorted.

I encourage the board to follow the original path to return that was presented in August. By reopening to the neediest students, difficulties can be resolved on a small scale to be prepared for all students in February.

Jennifer Basinger

Waugh Chapel PTA VP and AACPS special education teacher Odenton

94. President Corkadel and distinguished members of the Board:

I am writing to express my concerns about the lack of teacher voice and choice in the AACPS reopening plan. I am in my sixth year of teaching at Germantown Elementary, with 12 years of teaching experience. I want nothing more than to return to a normal classroom with my students. While that is not an option, I cannot stress enough the importance of relying on those of us who best know the realities of teaching.

Every educator I have spoken with has common concerns. We are heartbroken about being separated from our students who choose a different model. We are overwhelmed by the idea of teaching virtually and in person simultaneously. We are confused by the logistics, or lack thereof. We are worried that the hybrid model will hinder, rather than help, student achievement for many. And we are frustrated about feeling unheard.

I also have concerns about the options provided for employees. Due to childcare and family health issues, I strongly considered applying for an accommodation. However, I love my GES community. The thought of staying virtual and not being guaranteed my position is heart-wrenching, but so is the alternative: Taking my two-year-old away from her grandparents to put her in a center with a mask on all day.

I urge you to continue targeting high-needs groups for hybrid instruction and to elicit more teacher input before moving forward with a plan for the entire population.

Thank you for your service and your consideration through these challenging times.

Sincerely,
Lindsay Moore
4th Grade Teacher
Germantown Elementary School
(Annapolis Resident)

95. President Corkadel and distinguished members of the Board:

I am writing to express my concerns about the Lack of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the teachers' union addressing a safe environment for all and the need for Availability of PPE for staff.

I've been a school counselor for AACPS for 8.5 years. I have worked with ESOL students helping them learn to be successful in our American system by overcoming the many obstacles they face such as trauma exposure and culture shock.

This pandemic has turned all our worlds upside down, putting us in positions we never imagined we'd be in. During any other time, yes in person learning is the best way to learn. However, we are not in normal times and I believe with my entire being that the physical safety of all school and community stakeholders is the most important thing we need to focus on.

This pandemic will not be permanent. However, ANY Life Lost is Permanent and we should not be okay losing anyone in Anne Arundel County. No life is more important than another.

I'm the primary caregiver for my father who is 71years old, has dementia, hypertension and diabetes. He is a very high risk for COIVD and It is imperative for his life that he not be exposed to this incurable and untreatable disease. I must keep myself as safe as possible while caring for him.

If we are to return safely to our buildings and teach in a hybrid model there Must be an MOU for everyone to follow and all adults Must be physically attired with proper PPE.

Thank you for hearing my concern and for your service to the Board.

Taina Compagnet
Glen Burnie Maryland

96. My testimony to the Board:

As a father of three children in the AACPS system, I am seeing the limitations of remote learning and I am very eager for my kids to return to school. However, I also see a large disconnect between the safety measures that have been recommended by infectious disease experts, and the measures announced by the county school system so far.

By now I would have expected these measures to be announced, with implementation underway:

(1) improved ventilation systems for better airflow and air filtration in all classrooms

- (2) continuous distribution of medical-grade masks to all teachers and staff along with training on proper use
- (3) minimum standards for student masks and strict policies for *proper* mask wearing
- (4) provisions to hold classes outdoors when possible
- (5) in-school rapid antigen tests for anyone with COVID-19 symptoms to allow for quick isolation, and
- (6) sharing of positive test counts by school, published daily.

All of these have clearly been recommended by infectious disease experts, and AACPS should implement all of them before proposing a reopening of our schools. The safety of our children and teachers deserves nothing less.

Thank you,

Todd Moyer

Pine Grove Village, Pasadena, MD

97. Good Evening Members of the Board,

I teach at Old Mill High School, which is a converted open-concept building (one of many in the county). As a result, my classroom has partial walls, and, even with all doors closed, freely exchanges air with seven other classrooms on the same mini-hallway. This is not ideal since aerosol transmission is such a major concern with the SARS-CoV-2 virus. If I were to report to my building to teach online on November 9, even without students, I would be doing so with a face mask and face shield on 100% of the time, as my room would freely be exchanging air with 7 other classrooms. I suspect that I would not be the only teacher taking such precautions. This is surely not ideal for my students. In addition, I would potentially be exposing myself to the virus when it was not necessary to do so.

Moreover, if High School students return to hybrid learning, 12 students in my classroom would essentially be breathing the same air as 84 total students in the 7 nearby classrooms even with all doors closed. Such a situation would seem to run against almost all public health guidance about the virus. Each school faces its own unique challenges, and our schools need more time to develop a more thorough reopening plan. I urge you to consider pushing the reopening back.

Regards,

Christian Bonn

Mathematics Teacher at Old Mill High School

98. President Corkadel and distinguished members of the Board:

I am writing as a concerned parent and teacher. In AACPS reopening meetings and talks, it seems that the well-being of a section of the AACPS student population has been overlooked: middle school and high school children of AACPS teachers.

I would like to thank the Board of Education for recommending that teachers be allowed to work from home until shortly before their students return to school in person. I am appealing to you to advocate for all children like mine who do not require traditional child care services but who do benefit greatly from in-person parental support and encouragement.

Requiring middle school and high school teachers to return to their schools to teach virtually will not result in any improvement to the instructional environment, but it will result in significant new challenges for the AACPS students that they must leave behind at home.

I fully support AACPS' effort to provide the best possible learning conditions for every student. For my own 3 AACPS children, this means staying home safely with the support of their mother, for as long as possible.

Please advocate to protect the well-being and mental health of all AACPS students, including children of AACPS teachers. Please advocate so our families are not separated any earlier than necessary. Please advocate so no child is left behind for long days when his/her mother/father could be there with them rather than being isolated teaching virtually from an empty classroom.

Thank you very much for your concern and service to our schools.

Sincerely,

Anne Mahler

AACPS Parent and Teacher

Coxby's Estates

99. Robin Cobb

Riva, Md

I teach Drownproofing to Anne Arundel County Public School 5th graders.

- My job will continue to be virtual for the time being. For 30 years I have situated myself so I could commute by bicycle to work. Not only do I teach DP at the pool I also am a County employee who works at the pool in the afternoons. I work 2 miles from my house, It is an 8 minute ride. I ride home to fix dinner and then head back to the pool to work for the county. When teachers are sent back I have been told I will have to drive to Arlington Echo to teach virtually. This at the least a 20 minute commute by car. This is a total of 40 minutes out of my day. I'm adding 24 minutes to my commute and \$30 every 4 days to gas. My income has decreased during the pandemic and now you are asking me to spend more time and money commuting to do a job virtually. I also will not have time to get home to cook dinner for my family. There is an empty HS 8 minutes from my house, The BOE is 8 minutes from my house by bike. I was not able to apply for an accommodation that was listed. Equal is not Equitable in the policy that is being adopted by the board for returning to work.

Thank you,

Robin Cobb

100. Dear Members of the Board,

As a teacher of 11 years, I understand the many benefits of in-person discussion. The context of teaching virtually for the past 8 weeks has certainly made this clear. While virtual teaching and learning is certainly a challenge, my students and I have begun to hit our stride within the realities of this new normal. Virtual teaching and learning is not perfect, but I do believe right now that is doing more good than harm for our students. The same can not be said of the adopted "hybrid" plan.

While “messy” is the word that Dr. Arlotto keeps using in relation to the “hybrid” plan, I would go even further and say that the “hybrid” plan will ultimately do more harm than good. The inherent flaws of this model will increase teacher workload exponentially for those teaching in-person and virtual students simultaneously while also increasing the risk to COVID-19 to those in buildings throughout the week at a time that will be the most dangerous in the midst of this entire global pandemic.

With the case rate in Anne Arundel County spiking over the last few days, I would ask that you strongly consider making a motion to delay the start of this “hybrid” plan until the end of the first semester. This will give the much-needed time to fix the many flaws of this plan through collaboration of ALL stakeholder groups while at the same time keeping ALL students and staff safe.

Sincerely,

Ross Chakrian

Physical Education Teacher

Oakwood Elementary School

101. Board of Ed,

I work at a special education center and here is a small part of my concern.

Many of our students have severely compromised immune system's, many of our students are not vaccinated, many of our students do not see a doctor, many of our students cannot and will not wear masks, many of our students cannot speak therefore cannot advocate for their own health, many of our students cannot assist in their own personal care needs and require physical supports for using the restroom washing hands and eating. We have already been informed, although we already knew it, it is impossible to follow CDC recommended guidelines and still perform our job. You are demanding that we sacrifice our own safety and the safety of those we live with without any consideration for what that actually means to the human beings that you are using as pawns in a clearly political game. I will not allow my family to become collateral damage simply so you can appease the few, overly vocal constituents that are tired of the responsibilities of raising their own children. The schools have always been the solution regardless of what the problem was. This way of thinking must stop! The schools are here to provide education, not to rebuild our weakened economy in the onslaught of a pandemic. Our numbers are continuing to rise and if you insist on pushing forward with your hybrid plan, lives will be lost in those lives will be on your heads.

Katrina D'Angelo

Ruth Parker Eason

Residing out of county

102. Nicole Young, Art Teacher, Crofton Meadows Elementary School, Edgewater Resident If the Board wanted a reopening plan that benefits our county, they would have started with needs based assessments. They would have asked staff and families thoughtful questions, instead of forcing us to quickly choose between limited options while misleading the public about the responses. If AACPS developed a quality plan, they would be able to answer safety questions immediately and adequately. Answers would not vary from board member to board member, information would not change daily, and employees would receive timely updates from their employer. If AACPS wanted to develop a plan with our most needy students in mind, they would be in consistent communication with those families. The Board did not do this. Instead, they dismissed concerns of staff and families, ignored calls for better

communication, and cherry picked their way through public comments to create a narrative that fits their agenda. They continue to try to force through a plan current metrics do not support. They do not care how many contradictory statements they have to make or how many times they need to pass the buck to see their plan through. If AACPS cared about equity, they would not be forcing staff to choose between their health and their income. If they cared about equity, they would not be forcing families to choose between their child's health and the relationships they've created with their schools. AACPS did not create a reopening plan - they made a plan to create chaos throughout the county.

103. Please reconsider implementing the hybrid option this November.

While our case rates are increasing, we cannot put more people in contact with each other. Our community benefits when the risk of contracting Covid-19 is minimized. AACPS employees should perform their jobs from home when possible.

Many safety concerns remain regarding hybrid reopening. Yet-unaddressed issues include staggered start times; expectations for social distancing (information in the plan differs from that provided by board members); and ventilation to mitigate airborne transmission. Safety is non-negotiable; please delay proceeding until concerns are addressed.

The proposed plan will heighten equity issues. Hybrid teachers will have higher workloads and demands on their attention, resulting in lower quality education for some, and perhaps most (if students who chose full virtual are placed in hybrid classes).

You must target support to families who are struggling rather than pursuing a wide scale opening at this time. This lowers person-to-person contact while providing much-needed support to families.

Administrators could prioritize resources to ensure the safety of this smaller in-person group. Creative solutions like in-person support sessions, home visits, and/or guided homeschooling could be pursued.

I appreciate the enormity of the task Dr. Arlotto was given and agree the team created the best possible plan for hybrid opening at this time. However, it is not the best way forward. For the reasons presented above, postpone hybrid opening until our health metrics and school resources support a safe, equitable, and effective program.

Emily Van Essen

Anne Arundel County Resident

AACPS Teacher

104. To AA Co Board of Education,

I would like to request that you reconsider the decision to move the Anne Arundel schools to a hybrid system.

As many medical experts have warned, we are coming into a very dangerous time for the virus. Infection rates are up all over the country and are forecast to go even higher. Flu season is coming making detecting which virus is causing symptoms difficult.

And sending children back to school in less than two months? Why not January especially with all of the school off time coming up? And why should such a complicated and difficult task be so rushed? The safety of all should be first.

Having children go back for two days in a week, sit there the whole time with masks on and not be able to get close to their friends will not only be very difficult to maintain especially in younger grades but also, I feel, will cause more harm than good. And students, especially younger ones will be sitting there

with their Chrome books and if they have problems, the teachers, who have to maintain the 6 foot distance, cannot easily help them whereas at home their parents or siblings could come to their assistance.

And as to the President of the Board's juvenile reaction to the vote passing, I do not think that she had the best interests of the students, teachers and administrators in mind, just her own personal agenda.

Susan Venter
Riva Trace

105. Good morning!

My name is Rebecca Anderson and I live in downtown Annapolis. I am an AACPS kindergarten teacher at Odenton Elementary. I am asking the Board of Education members to wait until we have a safe, well-thought out plan for reopening. The plan as it stands now is rushed and full of miscommunication, misinformation, and unexpected changes in direction. I know that reopening schools looks good on paper. I know that it sounds easy to reopen schools with masks and social distancing. Can we face the logistical challenges effectively? Only 30% of families responded that they will be returning to school in person. Are we, as a county - families, students, and teachers - ready to reopen at this time? Are we ready to do it safely and communicate our plan effectively with our community?

Thank you,

Rebecca Anderson

106. Good Morning President Corkadel and distinguished members of the Board,

I am very wary of this hybrid plan- both its details and implementation. Above all else, I am concerned about the rising COVID-19 case rate (with educators being asked to return to school buildings on Nov. 9 and students Nov. 16th).

I am a 7th year teacher in AACPS, looking forward to conditions being favorable for in-person learning, as I want nothing more than to resume my teaching of students in-person safely in our school building. However, it is not safe to do so currently. We know this fall, flu season, and winter, the pandemic will get worse before it gets better.

As someone who has lost a beloved family member to COVID-19, the contradictory information around safety protocols worries me greatly. This hybrid plan aims to bring all student groups back to the building, with a lack of assessment of student needs to determine which students truly need in-person instruction. Many of the surrounding counties are planning to reopen slowly, on strictly a needs basis, starting with special education and ELL groups.

Due to growing COVID-19 numbers and conflicting information surrounding this plan, I do not see an equitable and safe way forward at this time. We need clear standards for a safe environment for learning and teaching. Our community's safety is paramount.

Thank you for the time you spend committed to the very same school system I work for.

Sincerely,

Angela Snyder

Hanover, MD - Meade Cluster

107. Good Morning,

I unfortunately wasn't able to get one of the 100 speaking spots tonight: they filled up in 3 minutes! Clearly people are desperate to be heard. To have our car caravan with hundreds of people supporting safe schools dismissed as being "coordinated" undermines the very nature of grassroots organizing. This is how democracy works!

Educators and families are uniting not to keep schools shut. Instead, we want a thoughtful opening based on science. Families are pushing for a needs assessment, determining which students actually need to be in school buildings: some have internet connectivity issues, some have special education needs, and others are beginning English language learners. Defaulting students to a virtual option when they didn't choose it shows that the current plan isn't considering what is best for each individual student. Meanwhile, educators are pushing for a negotiated MOU. Not only is this legally required but it ensures that we'll have enforceable safety protocols. That is good not only for educators but also for students which is good for the whole community, keeping us all safe.

Finally, I teach in the Meade cluster. Case rates are on the rise, and there is a disproportionate effect of COVID-19 on communities of color. Consider not only the average case rate but how that case rate is spread throughout AACPS. Right now, the Meade cluster has a higher case rate than other areas. A hasty reopening without enforceable safety protocols will only cause COVID-19 to spread, further endangering our most vulnerable communities.

Sincerely,

Kristina Korona

Meade High teacher

Baltimore, Maryland

108. President Corkadel and distinguished members of the board,

I am a special education teacher with 6 years of teaching experience, all in AACPS. I cannot express how excited I am to return to the school buildings with my students; however, the plan put forth is not safe, nor does it meet the academic and social/emotional needs of our students. Among many, my greatest concerns are:

- Forcing families to make a binding decision prior to having a plan finalized. The deadline was October 19th, but the board met on October 21st and received a presentation with extensive updates to the hybrid plan.
- There are no clear standards for a safe environment for teaching and learning. Constant changes to protocol and expectations for teachers and students.
- How many parent volunteers have been obtained? Are there enough to ensure planning for ALL teachers at ALL elementary schools?
- Academic experience will be less robust for students as teachers need to plan for both virtual and in person instruction. When will training be provided for teachers?

Let's focus on maintaining a quality academic experience for students by continuing with virtual learning for all students. Let's take the time from now until January to develop a more robust and appropriate plan for hybrid that truly addresses the needs of our neediest students that are left neglected in this hybrid plan.

Thank you for hearing the concerns that I bring to you on behalf of myself and my students and thank you for your service to the board.

Sincerely,

Faith Walter

AACPS Special Educator

Resident of Odenton, MD

109. Given the fact that only 29% of students opted to return to the hybrid format I am sure that the majority of comments you will be hearing and receiving are negative. However I encourage you to continue to move forward and get our schools open! When Dr Arlotto originally presented his hybrid plan he stated that while it is messy, it is the absolute best plan that he and his team could come up with. If this is the best plan then we need to move forward with it. This means that there is no better plan coming out in January! While I firmly believe that this hybrid plan falls far short if it's truly the best we have then let's give it a chance. I do not question or fault anybody who chooses to remain virtual. This is why we have a choice, but if schools do not re-open then people who want to return to school are not being given a choice. This virus is here to stay. There is no magic answer coming in January. Contact tracing in other districts across the nation have shown that school spread is not happening especially in these younger grades. European countries have locked down again but have kept schools open! We need to make schools opening our number one priority. Please open schools. Give our kids a chance. They are missing out on an essential part of being a kid.

-Cheryl Wolf (mother of 3 Folger students)

110. To Whom It May Concern:

I'm very worried about the re-opening of our schools. Yes I want to go back as soon as possible. but I want it to be safe for everyone. Our numbers are raising everyday including the 0-9 age group.

Although these children may not have severe conditions. no one knows if they in fact can pass it on to someone who is in the danger zone of getting the virus. Also there are a lot of un answered questions that the Board cannot answer at this time. Until someone can answer all of the questions being asked with assuring answers or something chances with the virus I cannot see schools re-opening safely.

I hope that you as a Board will reconsider the re-opening of our schools until January. In January we can look at the numbers and see where we are with this virus and make a decision on whether or not to open schools then.

Thank You:

Sandra Brady

Kindergarten Teacher Assistant

Tyler Heights Elementary School

111. Dear Board Members,

It is time to open the schools for the sake of our children.

I am the parent of two students who currently attend AACPS and three graduates of the system. I am writing to you as a concerned father and urging you to move to an in-school model for the remainder of the 2020-21 school year as quickly as possible because our students NEED to be in school, for an effective education and emotional health. They are not getting it in the virtual system currently in place

When the corona virus first broke out we knew little about its ability to spread, its lethality, and treatments. We now know so much more about the virus than in those early, dark days. We have facts about who is most vulnerable, how to combat the spread of the virus, improved treatments, and death rates and hospitalization rates are going down and, it would appear that several vaccines should be available soon.

The science is clear: children 17 and under are far less vulnerable to contract the virus and transmit the virus, i.e. they do not pose a major threat to each other, nor to the adults who would teach them, and the teachers don't pose a substantive threat to the children. For those students and instructors who are more vulnerable, they should have the option to continue the virtual learning.

It is time to open the schools for the sake of our children.

Thank you.

Mark Flores

Annapolis, MD

112. There is no doubt kids belong in school. **I do not believe now is the time to return to our buildings.**

I am a retired teacher from Illinois and the federal government. I continue to work as a special education teacher with AACPS because I want to serve. I work at Annapolis Middle School and I love what we are doing for families in the 100% virtual environment.

Teachers are learning more about virtual learning every day and we are making adjustments and improving our delivery with experience and training.

We need consistency in our work environment to focus on teaching and learning. Going back to school hinges on no one getting Covid. Once we have returned to our buildings, if someone does test positive, schools will spend time on the non-educational requirements of contact tracing, notifying families, sending kids home and adjusting our work location.

Will school personnel be assigned the duty of contact tracing and notifying families? Will you add personnel for this purpose or will you take personnel from educational pursuits to fulfill this requirement?

Our 100% virtual environment allows us the time and consistency to teach and build relationships. Stay the course. It is safe and keeps all employees focused on students. **I completely object to giving up any school personnel to monitor and respond to Covid results if we return to the buildings.**

Maria Dee-Buchwald

Annapolis Middle School

113. Would it be possible for the board to physically show us HOW we are supposed to teach and manage students. A video would be most helpful.

Some kind of physical classroom that the board would model teaching in would be helpful. It might reveal real live situations such as the need for charging stations, students need to sharpen pencils or get tissues, or if a students get sick (throw up)in the classroom.

Annette Amos

Media Assistant

Hebron Harman Elementary School

Southgate Elementary School

114. Dear Board of Education,

There are currently rumblings around the community that the plan will be completely scrapped for reopening. I am very disheartened by this thought process and the rumors that are going around. For the last 2 months I have sat next to my son while he has done the virtual learning. This has complicated the work that I have to do to earn an income and makes the days very long and stressful. My husband is a First Responder and has had to work every day during this pandemic; leaving me to be in charge of the schoolwork. What I have experienced as a former teacher observing this is disturbing. It's not my son's teacher's fault, but what is available for teachers.

Elementary school is the most important foundation for children as they start their educational journey. My son is falling more and more behind what the old 1st grade standards used to be because he is not being offered the same education. It is now costing my husband and I extra money and time to find a tutor for him to work with on the areas that have not been covered and where he struggles. As a Maryland Citizen/taxpayer we are supposed to be provided an adequate education. On the whole the entire Public education system of the state of Maryland is hurting students as they are not providing an adequate education compared to other states and school systems. In the end, the long term effects of this are going to be felt for a whole generation of children because they are all falling so far behind....

Respectfully,

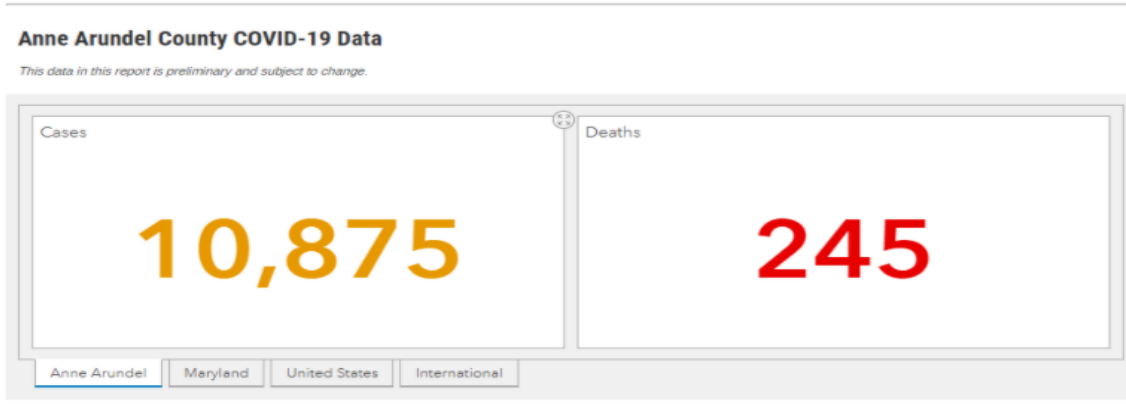
Elizabeth Tobe
Annapolis

115. I am a 5th grade teacher in the county. As most of us have expressed, we do want to get back into the classroom. We miss the interactions of our students and the relationships that we can build in person. I think most teachers are concerned about how to do it safely. I am particularly concerned with air quality in the school. I work in a portable classroom at my school. When the portables were placed outside our school two years ago a county inspector came around with my principal to make sure the classrooms were ready for students. Three of the portables had air conditioners that were poorly functioning, and in fact one of my co-workers had to move portables because there was mold in the floor and parents were complaining. In my portable the inspector came in with a CO2 monitor and the alarm went off. Both my principal and I were shocked and worried that we had an issue. The inspector said that was very common in portables and that the CO2 buildup was caused by so many students being in the room. Usually if a CO2 monitor alarms, we evacuate our homes, so how is this a safe place for our students and teachers? If this is common in portable classrooms, what is the solution? We are heading into winter, we can't leave our windows and doors open for very long, not to mention the concern for safety with doors open and being outside.

Angela Adams
Crofton

116. Jennifer Ballard – Arnold
NCHS Teacher, mom to senior at BHS, wife to AP at BMS

October 12th COVID Results



<https://aahealth.org/covid19data/> cases by day in AACO

October 28th Results

Case Maps and Data

Last updated: October 27, 2020

[Anne Arundel County Public Health Measures for Recovery, Key COVID-19 Indicators and Insights](#) and [COVID Act Now](#)

Anne Arundel County COVID-19 Data

This data in this report is preliminary and subject to change.



In roughly 2 weeks, 997 positive cases and 15 deaths have occurred. I do not believe we should return to school. How will we ensure that students and employees attending school will not be exposed to the virus? The questions below keep me up at night. I need competent, thorough answers to show we are valued and protected by AACPS.

1. Will someone be monitoring the cleaning of schools daily to ensure it is being done properly keeping in mind that at many schools there are issues with regular cleaning of spaces?
2. Will someone be monitoring the wearing of masks on buses?
3. Have the issues of mask wearing for students with health and disabilities been adequately addressed?
4. Can we send home students who do not comply with mask wearing in a safe and timely manner?
5. What will we do to ensure the safety of people who come in contact with younger students who can be carriers of the virus but show no signs of it?
6. How is sending students back to school to sit 6 feet apart, using their chrome book while the teacher is using his/her chrome book at a desk instructing those in the class and simultaneously those at home providing an educational practice that is better and safer than what we are currently doing?
7. What is truly the underlying reason for reopening schools?

117. The antidote to fear is not avoidance, it is courage. This is not a quote from someone. We, as parents, innately know this. Our children may not yet know this axiom, but we can show them that it is the truth. Let those of us willing to press forward with initial plans of hybrid learning do so, so that others may learn from us and build on our experience. Let the smallest step forward be the spark of courage. Give it a chance, because we will not know how it will work for our county unless we first try.

I fear that we'll look back in five years and say "we should have started the process sooner - we were too bogged down in the minutiae and nuance and we forgot what was important - our children have

suffered irreparably because we waited too long". We cannot afford to live in our fears. We must show courage because this is for which the moment calls. More than leadership, more than deliberation, more than responsibility, this moment calls for a little courage to move from a state of deep angst to an oasis of wellbeing. The only thing to fear is fear itself. The only thing to fight fear is courage. My hope is that you let those that want to express courage, do so.

Michael Shires
Parent of Belvedere Elementary Kindergartener

118. Hello,
Thank you for allowing me to voice my concerns about making teachers return to school to teach virtually and potentially hybrid. I am a Media Assistant at BHS, my 25th year. I am 61 in January and my husband is 65 in January who is currently in remission for stage IV melanoma. We are both very vulnerable.

I have been splitting my work hours to do hands on work in the library and subbing and working from home. Currently, there are only about 20 people working in the building and I am the only one working in the huge library. I feel cautiously safe working part of the week in school but have concerns sharing the bathrooms, etc. When the staff is made to return to work in school full time, I will not feel safe and even more so when students return. Since I started back to school, I have received 2 letters from Department of Health, that when I was in the building on September 1 and October 6, someone who was in the school tested positive. I fear when all the staff return and some with their own school age children and share the same bathrooms and work areas that these numbers will increase significantly with the rise of numbers of COVID CASES in our state and flu season on the edge. I feel strongly that this is not the time to bring staff and students back into the building.

Dr. Arlotto said that hybrid return is messy and disorganized and told the BOE to vote no....

Respectfully,

Laurie A. Lester
Broadneck High School
Library Media Assistant

119. Ann Larian, Employee of AACPS, Speech-language pathologist, George Cromwell Elem, reside in Annapolis.

I am deeply concerned about the health and safety of our students, staff and their families and the equity quality of education that will be provided with the current Hybrid plan. We must have:

- Proper PPE for everyone including clear facemasks for staff and students, face shields, cleaner and disinfectant.
- Clear and enforceable protocols for a safe and sustainable reopening made available to staff and families.
- Safe work spaces with proper ventilation and a quiet enough environment to provide virtual and in person instruction without background noise.

- On site COVID-19 testing with a clear protocol for testing. The current data across our country is showing increased number of cases and hospitalizations caused by asymptomatic carriers of the virus. This means that testing is the only way to identify if our students and staff are carriers of the disease and prevent a widespread community outbreak.
- Clear and immediate communication with staff and parents if there is a case of COVID-19 identified in the building.
- Students should remain in their same classes with their same teachers in the same school building.
- The simultaneous teaching model needs to be adjusted to provide the in-person students with more interaction and assistance from teachers. The teachers also need to be provided with relief staff for meetings, lunch break, bathroom breaks and planning periods.
- Special educators and other service providers like myself need a plan which clearly outlines our role in the Hybrid environment and accounts for safety and confidentiality of our students with IEPs and 504s....

120. I ask you to delay the reopening of schools until January with a cautious eye on the health metrics as you move toward that reopening date. Since the decision by the Board on 10/8/2020 to reopen in a hybrid mode beginning 11/16/2020, the case rate/100,000 in AA County has climbed from 9.64 on 10/8 to 11.9 on 10/28. The case rate has never been below 10 since 10/8/2020. Dr. K, our health advisor, strongly stated schools can remain open, if already opened, if the case rate increases above 10-15 (the yellow zone) and safety measures are in place **but schools should not start reopening if we are in the yellow zone or above a case rate of 10/100,000**. The Board of Education has relied on Dr. K's expertise in the past to make decisions and should continue to do so.

The current data does not support reopening our schools in November. Safety of our students, parents, grandparents and school employees should be at the forefront and be the priority. While these times have been difficult for families and students, using the next 6 months to remain diligent in our approach can curb not only cases but deaths from this disease. The disease knows no boundaries on who it effects and how it effects them. Please vote today to follow the science and the guidance of public health leaders and delay reopening of our schools in a hybrid manner until at least January.

Linda Murray, DNP, CRNP-Ped

Briarwood

121. Hello,

I am a 3rd grade teacher in AACPS. I have had many of my students' parents express to me that they feel their child would be devastated to be moved to another teacher's class ... so much so that they were willing to decide virtual or hybrid solely based on whichever option would likely result in me remaining their child's teacher. I have built close relationships with my 3rd graders over the past two months. While live in class during our Google Meet sessions many of my students have expressed their fears of going back to school and not having me as their teacher anymore. It is heartbreaking having to tell my students and their parents that I don't know what will happen. I wish I had the answers. Ripping students away from their teachers will have a devastating impact socially, emotionally and academically on students. Their families and teachers will also be negatively impacted. If anything our students need stability right now, not more chaos. Understandably students are mentally struggling right now as is, I believe breaking these student-teacher relationships will be devastating for our kids. Please think of the

safety and well being of our students and the staff working in the building. Covid is spreading, first semester virtual is our safest option right now.

Thank you,
Stephanie Phipps

122. As a parent of the Northeast feeder and employee of the North County feeder, I am concerned of the consequences to our students and communities in changing the agreed virtual learning for the 1st semester.

In a world of uncertainty we must treasure consistency, established relationships and routines. As a parent and educator I have made sure to provide consistency, routines and established relationships with the members of my communities. Together we must protect our mental and physical health. The majority of my students are striving virtually; we have established a community of support and learning virtually. Uncertainty brings stress and anxiety to all, so let's stay on the agreed path for the 1st semester.

As an educator for 20 plus years I understand the importance of relationships. It's amazing to see how virtually my colleagues and I have established relationships with our students, so please do not disrupt the bond that has been made with teachers, students and families. Established relationships equals learning; separating students and teachers from each other will disrupt the one constant we have at this point.

The goal is to be safe in a positive learning environment. First we have to find a solution to large class sizes. I have 8 classes with a total of 207 students; the largest class has 32 students. How are we going to implement all of the CDC guidelines when we return to the classrooms?

From home we have established safe and productive virtual classrooms. Many parents and educators have established a system that is working and keeping our families safe, so at this point let's keep working virtually until we have answers and solutions....

Anne Perez

123. Just some thoughts on reopening schools during COVID19

We as educators love our students and wish to be here for them for a very long time. Reentering schools has proven to be risky all over the country.

In NY the governor is closing 9 schools due to Covid (**CBS News Oct 8**). "The governor said without testing data for those schools, he can't be sure they're safe." "We don't have data on all of the schools in these hot spot clusters. That troubles me," he said Monday. "Better safe than sorry. I would not send my child to a school in a hot spot cluster that has not been tested, where I did not have proof that the infection rate was low in that school. I would not send my child."

The numbers in many jurisdictions are rising rapidly causing schools to close again.

With Fall and Winter upon us CDC and WHO are telling us this is just the beginning of a drastic spike.

Have we even considered the bus situation? The drivers cannot hope to keep them following social distancing guidelines AND drive the bus safely.

I have attached an article that is very scary for rising school infections. Just look at Texas and Missouri. Will that be us in a few short days? A 15-year-old student in Massachusetts is collecting data that maybe adults should be considering. <https://www.msn.com/en-us/news/us/this-15-year-old-maintains-a-website-that-tracks-coronavirus-cases-in-schools/ar-BB1akesX?li=BBnb7Kz>

Please reconsider opening schools before a vaccine can be found that is effective.

Allison Pruitt

Teaching Asst

Marley Middle School

124. Dear President Corkadel, AACPS BOE, and Dr. Arlotto

My name is Jake Landgraf and I'm a tech with AACPS. Yesterday I received a potential exposure notification for George Cromwell Elementary. I'm certain the person who tested positive was working closely with us at ***multiple schools*** last week, Monday -Wednesday, including North County HS, Belle Grove Elementary, Park Elementary, George Cromwell, and Ferndale Early Childhood. The date of exposure on the notification was the 22nd, however myself and the other techs who received this notification weren't working there on that day, we were there on the 21st. So here's a multipoint list of how incredibly mishandled the COVID-19 response has been:

1. The exposure notification date was incorrect
2. The exposure notification locations was incomplete

Afterwards, we were notified by our manager that there isn't enough work to pay us for 7.5 hours if we telework, meaning we had to apply for FFRCA. That's all well and good, except:

1. If we cannot perform our functions from home, then ***why weren't the techs allocated hazard pay when we were in schools earlier this year. This is a clear double standard and is wholly unacceptable***

The fun does not stop there, however. I called the AAC Health department yesterday to explain my situation, per the notification from HR. They got me in contact with a nurse this morning, who advised me to quarantine. When I asked for proof so that I may cover myself in the event I need to provide documentation, I was told they couldn't give me any, and that HR should know from the guidelines....

Regards,

Jake Landgraf

Technology Support Technician

Belle Grove and Park ES

125. Good morning,

I have two students participating of virtual learning. A 13 year old in eight grade and a four year old in Pre-K. Although, safety is first, I agree of a hybrid method of learning at this point due to some issues experiences from virtual learning. The benefits of at least a hybrid method, will improve my kids learning. Specially, my pre-K student. But also my 13 year old, due to lack of connections, she is isolated in front of the computer now she doesn't want to get out of her bedroom, even after class.

My four year old doesn't like it. At first, was really hard to get her to listen, now she is getting use to, but most time she is unwilling to participate. I know this will change with the hybrid method. Thank you for your effort. I am concern of contamination of this disease, but I think that the benefits are more than the risk. I, as parent can support and contribute to my children school if they need volunteers, I will be willing to help.

Thanks

Luciann Bracero Ruiz

Aracelis Ruiz Pre-K Mrs. Wolf Jessup ES

Gabriela Sanchez 8th Grade, Mrs. Klais

126. Greetings,

I would first like to thank my child's teachers and service providers for doing a wonderful job thus far with virtual learning. The lessons are engaging and my child is enjoying his experience. That being said, I am very disappointed with the board's decision to push the timeline for hybrid learning up and the lack of consideration and planning made for students who have additional learning needs.

Several students who receive special education supports and services are not being served by this hybrid plan. How is a speech therapist expected to provide articulation support and modeling with a mask on? How will a physical therapist provide services differently than he/she already is virtually if they can't really move in the classroom? If an occupational therapist can't provide hand over hand assistance, what is the benefit of "in person" therapy? Moving forward, we need to come up with a better plan for our students with additional education needs beyond "if your kid can't handle it they should just stay home", as some have suggested. We need to be more adaptive and creative, as other districts have done. With cases currently on the rise, I don't suggest a mask exemption for kids with sensory aversions, however this is something some districts have done and might be needed for next fall, since many experts say we will still be dealing with COVID through the end of 2021. I strongly suggest the board to examine how other districts are serving their students with special needs and take note. It is not enough to simply say "keep them virtual" because that excuses the district from meeting these students' needs....

With gratitude

Jenna Mondora

Parent and resident of Crownsville

127. President Corkadel and distinguished members of the Board,

I am writing to express my concerns about:

- the rising COVID-19 case rate with educators being asked to return to school buildings on Nov. 9
- the lack of opportunity for true community input and collaboration around instructional models and safety protocols

I am a 2nd year ELA teacher in Anne Arundel County. I became an educator because I am passionate about teaching students to become independent thinkers and engage with the world around them. I miss being with my students and look forward to the day when we can safely resume in-person instruction.

However, the rising case rate in Anne Arundel County should negate a return to the buildings, not only for hybrid, but for educators teaching from the building. Last week, an educator in my school teaching remotely from the building tested positive for COVID-19. If teachers are mandated to return to the buildings, we are subjected to an increased risk of exposure even without students present. The potential risk to students when they return would be even higher.

Moreover, the voices of the educators and the community have largely been ignored. Collaboration and input from educators around hybrid instruction and assurances of safety protocol are necessary. We all want our students to remain healthy and learn in a safe environment, which means that virtual learning is the best option for the time being.

Thank you for your time in reading my concerns, and for your continued commitment to serving AACPS.

Sincerely,

Molly McGettrick

7th Grade Teacher at Brooklyn Park Middle

Resident of the Revell Downs Community in Annapolis

128. In case I don't get picked to ask the board questions, here are a few pertinent questions I think are important regarding opening schools: You cannot base a few schools opening on your determination to open every school. Every community is different and the community that these schools are in have different needs. Right now, many parents as well as teachers are already in a routine doing virtual. I think it's unfair for you to stop the process, give parents and teachers a limited amount of time to decide to come back hybrid or not when you don't have things in place so both teacher and parent can feel comfortable.

1. You need a nurse in every school, they are trained for emergencies such as what we are facing now.
2. Staff as well as students need temperatures taken every day.
3. Schools need to be disinfected everyday not just on Wednesdays
4. COVID is rising in Maryland, we are in the yellow zone right now.
5. There are too many unanswered questions, you cannot fix things as you go along, not when it comes to children. There is no Plan A or Plan B.

6. This county is still in phase two, how can you open schools if we are still in phase two?

Please explain why the board decided to use the ADA to determine if staff can be exempt from working in the schools. Many people don't fit under the ADA guidelines but still have preexisting conditions....

Patricia Mayfield

Media Assistant

Freetown/Point Pleasant Elementary

129. Gina Nonnenmacher

Severn, MD

SAAAAC Member

The main reason people consider it okay to return to schools is because COVID-19 is an invisible disease. To those of us whom already suffer from invisible diseases, we are used to this attitude. If COVID-19 were a flesh-eating disease that deformed people, everyone in the world would be making sure they followed every protocol, and most would not venture past their front door. But because COVID-19 is an INVISIBLE disease, it's seemingly fine for some that although it causes pain and suffering, it only disables/kills mostly strangers who suffer somewhere out of sight. So, it's not that bad...and we NEED our kids to learn what it's like to put chemicals in a test tube because that can't wait a year. Really?

I find it ironic that shootings are considered horribly tragic if a couple students or teachers are killed, but if the same number die via COVID-19, eh...not so bad. I don't see how this is not going to end in massive lawsuits against the school system.

Simply put, students CANNOT be expected to always follow protocols. They simply won't. I just witnessed this as an SAT hall monitor. After finishing the test, it took several promptings to get two older high school students to stand six feet apart as they walked out of the building. Enough time, for one of them to become infected by the other and take it home to others.

People will die unless protocols are 100% guaranteed.

130. Dear Board,

Thank you for reviewing feedback from families, educators, and staff. I wish we had the opportunity prior to your vote but appreciate the forum to share feedback now. As a Kindergarten parent, I hope that you will reconsider the road ahead. This year has been hard for all of us and we personally lost a loved one.

Kids are exceptionally resilient, especially when they have a community banding around them. What my son's teachers have accomplished in the virtual domain over 2 months is impressive. Kids have formed bonds, made friends, and created an ecosystem that they rely on within their class. The changes resulting from hybrid learning will be destabilizing and will extend the time needed to build new bonds, connections, and trust.

I am certain that the amazing educators at AACPS will continue offering exceptional, caring support of our kids. But at what cost? Where is a coherent and centralized plan that helps them to navigate these new learning environments? There is insufficient time to plan this and there are very limited days left for in-person learning before January.

Please don't rush into decisions that ask so much of our educators and students. Thoughtful planning takes time and merits inputs from diverse perspectives. Rely on the experts and educators in classrooms across the county.

This is certainly a matter of health and safety, but also security and trust. Please don't erode the trust of our youngest students – they are counting on all of us.

Thank you,

Lindsey Groark

Tracey's Elementary Parent

131. To whom this may concern,

I am writing to you among a sea of voices to implore you to change the decision to send children, teachers, administrators and staff back into the classrooms. Period.

I realize that learning from home is filled with many challenges across a spectrum of considerations. However, there is always ONE guidepost that I make all life decisions. And I ask that you reconsider your decision through this spectrum.

Is there a chance that my decision will bring harm (or death) to one person?

How many lives of teachers/staff and their family members are you willing to put at risk of death?

Teachers and administrators I know are pained by the lack of connection to their learning community. But I also know they will experience serious impact to their lives or their family members lives if they become ill and have to endure lifelong chronic ailments or DEATH due to COVID-19.

Teachers, and I'm sure the entire community, are simply tired of all that we've endured in the past decade leading up to 2020.

- Tired of school shootings.
- Tired of social injustices.
- Tired of underfunded education.
- Tired of having to buy their own school supplies.
- Tired of increased class sizes.
- Tired of low pay.
- Tired of decreasing classroom conditions in under-served areas.

And now...WE are tired of a pandemic that wreaked havoc in how we teach and how children learn.

But you have a choice today.

Will you help or harm us?

Jennifer Granger

Severna Park, MD

132. To Whom it May Concern:

I am writing to give input regarding concerns regarding the re-opening process for Anne Arundel County Public Schools. One of my major concerns is that a provider for students receiving speech/language therapy services we will be required to go into the classroom setting, even though some of the services have been designated to be pull-out. It is a concern that I have heard many express. While we all feel that the safety of our students is paramount, we also need to consider the health and well-being of the dedicated educators in our buildings. Often, SLPs and other special area faculty members service more than one school and often our groups contain students from several classrooms. This will make scheduling even more complex. Not only that, but we will be traveling so much more than others through the school buildings. At the onset of this school year, we worked diligently to establish virtual schedules and now we will have to start from square one. Groupings will be much more challenging, and more health issues may arise because of the extensive physical movement of special area personnel. This should be considered. Thank you.

Patrice H. Taylor

**Speech/Language Pathologist
Crofton Meadows Elementary School**

133. Dear BOE,

I am a citizen, mom of three students, a middle school librarian, and wife of a teacher with added health risks. We live in Odenton.

With COVID cases rising in our nation and our county and with the haste to roll out our hybrid model, I am concerned about sending teachers and students back to school buildings without better planning. The current plan has flaws that deserve more time and brainstorming. Remaining virtual allows us to make it through flu season and colder weather, and to then decide if it is safe to return to buildings. It provides more time to put better safety measures in place, write an MOU with teachers, and to train teachers to support students who will be virtual and in-person simultaneously. The hybrid plan interferes with the hard work that teachers and students have done to form relationships. Dissolving the current groupings of students and teachers may take a mental health toll on both groups.

When only 29% of parents of our elementary parents elect to send their child for the hybrid model and 30% of staff request accommodations, you have indicators of little confidence in this plan. I urge you to take more time, create the MOU, and address these issues and others with more detail. Build trust and allow us to be "better together" rather than divided and unprepared.

Thank you for hearing public testimony and for your service on the board.

Christina Zimmerman

Middle School Library Media Specialist (M-W)

Monarch Global Academy, A Public Contract School

Laurel, MD

134. Dear Board of Education Members,

I am perplexed that the BOE continues to move forward with a plan to reopen schools when the metrics for reopening have not been met for 17 days straight. According to the AACPS website, Anne Arundel County has had a case rate above 10 since October 9th. In a virtual meeting with County Executive Pittman, Board Members Ellis and Hummer and the TAAAC President Russel Leone, an officer with the Anne Arundel County Health Department stated that he would not recommend opening schools when the metrics are 10 or above. This statistic alone should be causing you to pause in the reopening process.

Further, Covid Act Now, a multidisciplinary partnership between Harvard University, Stanford Medicine and Georgetown University states, “a healthy classroom environment includes enhanced outdoor air ventilation and upgraded filtration” as a necessity. Dr. Arlotto has already said that he is unable to meet this necessity for a safe learning environment. Consider that we are bringing students, teachers, and community volunteers into enclosed spaces without the ability to address this safety measure at all. People will get sick. Some of those people may die.

As teachers, we have chosen as our profession to put the safety and well-being of students and their families first. I am asking the Board of Education to do the same. Forcing normalcy will not end the pandemic. First and foremost, your job is to protect the health and lives of our staff, our students and our families.

Sincerely,

Rebecca McGee

Arnold, MD

AACPS Pre-K Teacher

135. To Dr. Arlotto and the AACPS Board of Education:

Good morning. I am a graduate of AACPS, an AAACPS parent, and an AACPS teacher. I am concerned both about the hybrid plan for students and the idea of having teachers return to buildings next month. Cases are unfortunately on the rise across the country including in our local jurisdiction. The CDC just came out last week widening the definition of what “close-contact” means, stating that rather than one sustained 15-minute block of time, close contact can also mean adding up your minutes of contact with an infected person to total 15 minutes over the course of 24-hours. Surely teachers and students could have this kind of experience, especially during lunch breaks or other purposeful or accidental un-masked moments which will result in rising cases in the elementary schools. If restaurants are one of the places people most frequently contract the virus as we see in contact-tracing reports, how would having multiple students eating in a classroom be any safer than that?

While I recognize the immediacy for elementary teachers to return to buildings given the hybrid plans if that moves forward, I have concerns about middle and high school teachers unnecessarily returning to their buildings. Throughout this crisis, federal, state, and local leaders have encouraged people to work from home when possible to minimize exposure to the virus. It is not necessary for middle and high school staff to be in a building to do their jobs effectively right now. In fact, returning to the building could actually decrease the quality of work....

Sincerely,

Hunter W. Hammond, NBCT

Annapolis High School, Class of '96

Teacher, Old Mill High School

Germantown Elementary Parent

136. I'm writing with serious concern about the bus transportation plans for hybrid learning. What is the point of a 12 student cohort if my son is forced to sit on a school bus for 15 minutes with 25 other kids from all over the school building? And how on earth is it fair or right that I must sign an acknowledgement of risk form for him to be allowed onto his only way of getting to and from school? He's 7 years old. . If I have to acknowledge the risk, then you should be acknowledging that you are knowingly creating an unsafe situation for these kids (and their bus driver).

He has a laundry list of items you are asking him to carry to school each day (supplies, math kit, lunch, water bottle, books and small toys for breaks, yoga mat...) including a Chromebook you value at over \$1000 that I am responsible for. For a small child in not-the-safest-neighborhood, that doesn't seem like a smart scenario for him to have to walk over a mile to and from school alone. But I can't in good conscience sign away his health to put him on a school bus, either. I'm being placed in a horrible situation as a parent.

Please take another look at how to make hybrid work that doesn't force parents to sign-away their child's health. If it's necessary to sign that document, it shouldn't be happening.

Jordyn Roemer

Parent in Brooklyn Park, MD

137. While there are many things that I am concerned about with reopening, I will limit my comments to two areas: Safety and Relationships.

First let me state that I am not against schools reopening. There are many children who need schools to be open for a variety of issues. I understand that. However, the current plans are not truly geared toward reopening schools for those children, which is very problematic.

When it comes to safety, Dr. K has clearly laid out metrics to be used when considering this. We have been above 10 cases per 100K for most of October. We are out of range when it comes to reopening schools. I am fine with having a plan in place, but we must listen to science and reopen when it is safe to do so. Currently, it is unsafe to reopen. We must put some real parameters around the reopening date. How long must we be within the 5-10 cases per 100K range before we can reopen? 7, 10, 14 days? Please consider setting these guidelines, as well as coming up with a go/no go date.

When it comes to relationships, we must consider how the current plans will impact them, especially for the youngest learners. My youngest is in K. Prior to starting school in September, she had been out of daycare since mid-March due to Covid. She hadn't had a teacher connection the whole time. Yet in just a month, she has become attached to her teacher. She talks about her all the time....

Diane Milleville

Piney Orchard

138. Dear President Corkadel and Board members,

My name is Holly Kleiderlein and I am the school counselor for grades 1, 3, and 5 at Oak Hill Elementary School.

In my professional opinion, by voting to move forward with a reopening plan prior to the original January timeline, the Board members have created the unstable and inconsistent learning environment upon which anxiety thrives. The Mental Health Task Force findings of increasing public/private partnerships and increasing professional development around mental health topics will in NO way help determine who, what, where, when, or how students will learn and teachers will teach face-to-face, virtually, and in combination of those two formats. You are actively exacerbating a strained and stressful environment. Please stop and try again.

Sincerely,

Holly J. Kleiderlein, NBCT

School Counselor, Oak Hill ES

139. My heart is heavy with concern about my children, their educators, and the future of education in Anne Arundel County. I am disappointed and have lost trust in the Board of Education that was designed to represent all of our students. A decision was initially made to remain 100% virtual for the entire first semester. That decision should be upheld in order to maintain integrity and to identify and develop solutions to issues that will negatively impact health and safety as well as quality learning. I am NOT opposed to schools reopening and students returning. I AM, however, opposed to rushing to throw together a halfway plan that fails to address major issues. While viewing last week's BOE meeting, there were too many responses that included "we don't know yet...we realize this is a major issue but we have not figured out a solution to that yet." Our children are not "first responders" and thus should not be "sent into burning buildings," especially without well thought out and organized procedures. The biggest error I saw in the video of the Hybrid plan was adults acting out students with adult maturities. The reality is our students are NOT adults, they are children. The video did not account for disruptive behavior, physical injuries that happen daily in elementary school, calm down corners (which are highly utilized and would require sanitation after each use). I am also saddened by the lack of compassion shown to our teachers. They are responsible for executing plans they have not been allowed to create or critique....

Venice Alexander

Seven Oaks - Meade Cluster

140. Like nearly everyone else in the county, I want my two AACPS students back in the classroom learning. When AACPS announced that the first semester was going to be all virtual, I hoped that the first semester would be used wisely to craft a plan that allowed us to return to the classrooms safely. Those hopes were dashed in mid-October when the board ignored the advice of the superintendent and set off on an ill-advised crusade to open earlier. At this point, countless number of hours have been wasted in pursuit of a first semester opening that isn't going to happen, based on the completely predictable rise in COVID-19 case rate.

This asinine "Ready, Fire, Aim" mentality on the part of the board forced parents into a rapid decision on the rest of the school year before basic questions could be answered. Last week's board meeting went a long way towards answering questions, but it is a sad state of affairs that parents feel obligated to watch

a board meeting until 2:00 in the morning to get answers on how hybrid instruction is going to work, and an even sadder state of affairs that this happened AFTER the decision deadline.

I strongly urge the board to dial back the speed and use this time wisely to formulate a plan that eliminates the remaining critical flaws, such as unsafely exposing our children to outside volunteers, so that we can open as safely as possible as soon as the health situation allows.

Ryan Stavely
Odenton

141. Reopening for elementary is just insane, at least in my personal opinion. Don't appreciate putting our little ones at risk. Not only with Covid cases rising, but the plan itself. Why bother reopening if the kids would still be virtual in the classroom and not receive assistance if needed. As a parent of a kindergartner, they can't maneuver the site by themselves and need help. I don't like the 2 hour quiet time like they are prisoners in a cell. I prefer my child to be in a safe environment with the needed assistance.

On another note the wifi's passed out are blocking the main link she needs to access, contacted the school board last week and was told the school secretary would contact me to exchange it. Have not heard another word about this. Meanwhile she is falling behind in I-Ready as the device your school board gave out is blocking class link. Its been exactly one week.

I hope we can get this resolved with everyone's health and needs in mind.

Leilani Juarez

Brooklyn Park

142. Dear BOE,

My name is Ernest Waddell, it is important to know that i am a 15 year employee of AACPS, Black male, 68 years young and a unit 4 member. I am in decent shape and health with the exception of some diabetic concerns. "I want to live", going out on a "hum-bug" is not something that i want to do!

Decisions are being made without full participation of staff across all boards and we deserve better! Without equality it is not possible to move forward!

The hardworking and passionate employee's of AACPS are being ignored in the interests of poorly informed "decision maker's". One just needs to follow local and national news to figure it out.

Your initial plan should remain in place, follow the science and improve technology. Improve working conditions and communications to all.

In conclusion, until a vaccine is presented large scale events like schools are going to be a "crap-throw" with the losers dying.

Right now not enough is being done to make schools safe and secure. A seat at the table and a voice would be a great start and jointly figure some things out.

Thank You,

Ernest Waddell

Odenton, MD