

2020/07/15 3:02:26 PM AST
Grayson Harvey
1016 Burch Ave
Durham

Good Afternoon,

I hope you are all staying as well as possible.

I'm writing to encourage the Board to adopt Plan C: Remote Instruction Only. Plan C does not permit in-person instruction. Instead, all learning would be provided remotely. This presents the lowest health and safety risk at school, but also poses the greatest concern for engaging students in active learning.

Could active learning not be incorporated within creative remote education? Community engagement and outdoor social-distanced experimental education models could serve the goal of active learning. Active learning is certainly important, and at the same time, the health risk posed to students, teachers, and their families if in-person learning occurs will be deadly for many. The Trump administration has commandeered control of coronavirus data from the CDC. Soon, the only data we will have to make safety-informed decisions will be bogus. Education Secretary Betsy DeVos has downplayed the risk of sending kids back to school because it serves the interest of business as usual and corporate profit. How many students and teachers must die before DPS decides to go remote? I hope the answer is zero, but if schools reopen it won't be.

Please adopt Plan C. Listen to long-time teachers and collectives of educators like the the Durham Association of Educators. Prioritizing safety and compassionate, unprecedented support for students and teachers is essential going forward. Why couldn't free and reduced lunch be delivered to qualified children's homes? Why can't we imagine ways forward that actually fit the situation at hand instead of trying to warp past solutions, that worked in an entirely different set of circumstances, to fit the present? DPS must take a future-forward stance and take the action steps to prevent needless death and trauma.

Thank you for your time and hard work.

Kind Regards,
Grayson Harvey

2020/07/15 4:06:09 PM AST
Carolyn Allen
6312 Whitt Rd
Durham NC 27712

I support Plan C until the virus is better controlled. It is not worth the risk to the lives and wellbeing of our students and staff to return to in-person instruction while cases are continuing to climb.

2020/07/15 4:28:05 PM AST

**Amber Tovar
5810 Thistlerock Lane
Durham, NC 27703**

We must base decisions on concrete data. Since March Durham County continues to have the third highest number of Covid 19 cases in the state. Cases are projected to increase this fall and winter. How many deaths are estimated to occur as a direct result of opening schools? What metrics are guiding this decision? A risk assessment is needed. While other districts may choose to begin some in-person instruction, it is not safe for Durham at this time. Schools need money for protective equipment, increased staffing, and full-time nurses. We need to see a drop in cases and an increase in funding.

2020/07/15 4:33:14 PM AST

**Hayley Filegar
824 Berwyn Avenue
Durham NC 27704**

If we're still having virtual board meetings, it certainly isn't time to be talking about re-opening our schools. As a 3rd grade teacher, I would NOT feel safe being in a classroom with students just four weeks from today. We were already underfunded and doing more with less, but this time, it's different. It's a life and death situation. PLEASE switch from plan B to plan C, even with intentions to move into plan B when it's safer. Numbers in Durham are still on the rise. Please put the health and safety of our teachers, staff, students and families above everything else.

2020/07/15 4:35:47 PM AST

**Christine E Alston
236 Haywicke Pl
Wake Forest, NC 27587**

I am the librarian and technology teacher at Y. E. Smith Elementary. My understanding is that the Board is considering Plan C for all grade levels. I am concerned that elementary students will not be successful in a 100% virtual learning environment. I believe these younger students need the structure that school provides, regular meals, the more personalized instruction that comes from observation, and the ability to use manipulatives. Additionally, having our youngest students at school makes it easier for parents (and teachers) to work outside of the home. I am over 50-years-old and realize that I run a higher risk of contracting the COVID virus once I return to the school building, but from my perspective, the benefits outweigh the risks. Certainly,

there must be some way that we can lower classroom numbers enough to serve our youngest students, keeping them safe and staff safe.

2020/07/15 4:37:43 PM AST

**Corey W. Barringer
800 Wind River Pkwy
Morrisville, NC 27560**

If the district decides to move to Plan C, which I think they should because it's the safest option for students and staff, can teachers have the option to teacher remotely from their classrooms? There are many reasons for this: work/home life balance & separation, mental health, resources and internet connectivity, a sense of normalcy, etc.

2020/07/15 4:40:10 PM AST

**Chris Tiffany
408 Formosa
Durham, NC 27707**

... israel was doing more or Less ok UNTIL they opened uo their schools, at which point they had multiple super-sPReader events traced back to schools, so they then had to retreat & Lick their wounds. Wisdom is not Learning from your mistakes; wisdom is Learning from OTHERS' mistakes to avoid making those same, or similar mistakes. Decision-makers rarely suffer the consequences of their mistakes; their employees and other members of the public do, and in this case, it's not just about covideaths among employees, students, & staff, but also their families, neighbors & neighborhoods; families and neighbors & covideaths you won't see, and might not even know about. AND it's not only covideaths, but covidisease; the "d" in covid stands for disease, and this disease is often PReTTY bad, with multiple organ failures before death sufferring including I CAN'T BREATHE, and even those who supposedly "recover" often have multiple organ damage: heart/Lung damage,

kidney damage and
even brain damage
from blood clots...
Learn from Italy,
with the same mutation
found in Durham, North Carolina:
BRAIN DAMAGE . . .
do you REALLY
want to cause
BRAIN damage
because
you open the SCHOOLS
under PPressure from Trump,
during a pandemic in the
worst-hit
country in the entire WORLD?
DON'T DO IT!!!

2020/07/15 4:47:55 PM AST
Rebecca LaMaire
700 Laurel Springs Drive
Durham NC 27713

As a DPS K-5 teacher I am very concerned about returning to school buildings in August for in person learning as planned with Plan B. I strongly urge the board and DPS leadership to switch to Plan C now so we can spend this valuable time planning for the best possible execution of online learning for our students. I know there are truly no good options here and online learning is unappealing but it's the safest option we have.

2020/07/15 5:01:14 PM AST
Jon Tyus
1015 Southwest Dr
Durham NC 27713

I am disappointed that the state of North Carolina has decided to allow local school systems to choose to have in-person instruction in the fall. I am writing to encourage DPS to please select Option C (all online) until conditions improve in our state and in our district. At the moment, no one can assure myself and other DPS employees that we will not contract coronavirus in doing our jobs. In fact, we are more likely to contract it given the circumstances. Schools are meant to be safe spaces for all involved, not environments where we must all live in fear of who has touched which item, and how recently something was sanitized. I'm aware that this decision is difficult for the board, and that many people may feel ok about sending their child to school (they may even need to send their children to school so that they may work themselves)

however, we are literally risking the lives of children and the adults who help them. Anyone, even one person, who contracts the virus on DPS property is an unnecessary casualty. Thankfully, we have the time and the brilliant minds available to figure out how to students that can not learn virtually, parents who need childcare, and students who need a safe place outside of their homes. And I know without a doubt that every educator will work to their fullest potential to ensure that students are still getting the best instruction possible. We want to be with our students, but only when it's safe. We shut down schools in March when the number of cases dwarfs that of the last 2 months. I implore the school board to wait until we have either enough state and federal funding to follow CDC guidelines, or a vaccine is available. In comparing schools to hospitals and other essential workers, we are missing the key component that education can still happen at home. Teachers are some of the most versatile and creative people, and we WILL make sure that students are learning. However, we can not do our jobs if we are afraid. I have had numerous conversations with educators recently and not one has expressed even moderate joy about returning in-person, nevermind actual enthusiasm. For the first time in my 12 years as a educator I'm nervous about my life in the classroom, and I am not the only one. It is clear to me and to many others that if we return in-person some students and employees will get sick and unfortunately, some will die. That is a risk that we don't have to take. Please vote for Option C. Thank you.

2020/07/15 5:08:02 PM AST

Lauren Casteen

422 Boswell St

Durham, NC 27703

I am a social studies teacher at Northern High, a member of the DPS Foundation's Teacher Leadership Academy, and a DAE member who attended the Town Hall with Dr. Mubenga and other district officials yesterday. It sounded as though district officials were open to considering online-only education for the fall, but that there were problems around equity and child nutrition that needed to be addressed. I would argue that the ratio of benefits-to-obstacles for Plan C (online only) is better than for Plan B (hybrid model), based on the questions and concerns shared during the Town Hall. Educators are an intelligent bunch. Rather than scrambling to do multiple things (online, in-person, hybrid) poorly, choose ONE thing (online) and let us help you problem-solve to do it WELL! Are you concerned about child nutrition? Let our school nutrition professionals work with high school culinary arts programs and/or Durham Tech culinary arts students to prepare meals; let our bus drivers help deliver them. You'll create learning opportunities for our students and keep our classified staff employed. Concerned about students who need help with their schoolwork? Let high school students in Future Teacher clubs and National Honor Society earn service-hours by being paired with students at other schools in their feeder pattern who need assistance. Option C is the best option to keep our students and teachers safe. We have already had a DPS student die from CoVID-19. During the Town Hall, a teacher asked whether the district would be providing mental health support when students and teachers in the district die, and Dr. Mubenga's immediate response was

"Well, we don't even want to think about that." You need to think about it. It's already happening.

2020/07/15 5:25:12 PM AST

**Dana Reynolds
29 Edgebrook Cir
Durham, NC 27703**

As a educator and parent with DPS, I feel plan B is risky as many of our students have been at home and there is not sufficient data to see if there will be a breakout of COVID. My son's daycare has already had a COVID case in Durham as well as we have already lost a student to COVID within this school system. I feel plan C is a better choice for the 1st quarter and possibly 2nd quarter to keep staff and students safe since our numbers are still increasing and parts of our communities remain closed. That says something to me that is not safe because we are not even at 50% with all other places in our community being open. If movie theaters, bowling alleys, pools, gyms, Edison Johnson are not open, how can we consider this safe? There are articles and news reports in other places citing kids with COVID. Florida had 3,400 in the Sun Sentinal with children getting COVID; 10 of which had severe illness. This was in the middle of June. Please reconsider Plan B and move to Plan C at least until we can ensure safety. Some families have a educator, student, and a frontline worker. We increase their chances of getting this virus and not making it. We owe it to our staff, our at risk families, students, and community members to wait to enter, to slow the spread, and to remain safe.

2020/07/15 5:32:44 PM AST

**Sonja Thalheimer
1209 N Duke St.
Durham**

As a public school teacher, I am so scared about what the fall will entail for our schools. We need to take action now to cautiously and purposefully consider in what manners we can return to schooling in the fall such that all members of our school communities - teachers, students, and staff - will be able to thrive. Right now, school employees (especially elementary & middle school employees) are being asked to return to in-person instruction, as COVID-19 rates continue to rise, without appropriate precautions to ensure the health and safety of our school communities. We know that COVID-19 disproportionately affects BIPOC communities and to return to school now without adequate funding, procedures, and planning would be neither safe nor equitable. I advocate for choosing Plan C for the fall semester and re-assessing for spring/winter after that. Of course I deeply want to be at school, with our students and with my colleagues this fall, of course I don't think virtual learning is nearly as effective as in-person learning; however, I even more so believe that we need to prioritize the safety and health of our students, educators, and all members of our school communities. To return to in-person school now does not seem safe at all. Let's take the lead from other districts across the country, such as LA public schools, who have already decided to plan for virtual learning for the fall. Let's

put our energy into creative ways to support students' and family's social-emotional and academic needs this fall, all while prioritizing safety and health. Let's also advocate for expanded Medicaid and increased minimum wages to ensure that all of our families are able to have their health and financial needs met, in this difficult time and always. Thanks y'all.

2020/07/15 5:33:19 PM AST
Holly Woodard
3814 Hamlin Rd
Durham, NC 27704

Greetings Board and thank you for your thoughts as well as taking the time to weigh in on school workers' wishes. As a K-5 teacher for language learners for almost 20 years now, I never thought I'd say this, because more than anything I want to be in the classroom with my students. Unfortunately, due to the current spike in COVID cases and the disproportionate risk my students would be placed in, I feel as though they would best be served in the safety of their own homes. Moreover, what concerns me most is, how we will ensure that all students receive devices and internet access? Let's stop debating whether we want to risk the health of our students, their families, and school workers, and let's start to hone in on getting resources where they need to be for the first few months of this 2020-2021 school year. Once we ensure equity in access to online courses, then we can take the first few months to see how hybrid learning could look. But in my opinion, we need to put the safety of all, first. Thank you!

2020/07/15 5:33:35 PM AST
Bobbie Feraco
122 Turkey Oak Dr
Durham, NC 27704

Thank you Dr. Mubenga, DPS Administration and DPS BOE for all of your hard work in planning a safe start to our school year. Thank you Dr. Mubenga and DPS Admin for taking time to listen to us educators during the DAE town hall meeting on Wednesday. I felt heard and I also heard your concerns on the lack of funding that is needed to keep all persons safe while learning in person. I also heard you say that it is not safe for students and staff to return with the way COVID-19 cases are rising in Durham. I also heard you mention the very real concern of students needing access to food. I ask that you please consider starting our school year on plan C. I ask that you have faith in DPS staff to step up to the challenge of quality online education and our ability to help make sure the students we love so much are fed and cared for. Thank you for your time and consideration!

2020/07/15 5:47:15 PM AST
Katherine Reboredk
2408 Vesson Ave Apt 3
Durham NC 27707

Plan C please

2020/07/15 5:47:47 PM AST

**Xavier Adams
26102 Rose Garden Lane
Durham, NC, 27707**

The decision to allow schools to meet in person presents a significant threat to the safety of the people whom school systems claim to care the most about - the students and their families. It is unreasonable to assume that in-person instruction is safer at this moment due to the way in which individuals can be asymptomatic and still be contagious. Therefore, the screening protocols that DPS has in place would not be full proof. There is also a need to consider that in person classes will generate anxiety for students that might impede learning that ultimately could be less substantial than navigating online learning. And, there is a need to consider the false/non-existent choice that certain parents will have in choosing to send their students back to school due to not being able to have someone watch their child - even if they would prefer their student to stay at home.

2020/07/15 6:11:30 PM AST

**Lorena Lopez
3011 Redwood Rd
27704**

I believe for the safety of all, classes should be online, this is a difficult time and hard decision to take but we all are in this together so let's do what is the best for all. Safety first!

2020/07/15 6:26:09 PM AST

**John Becker
3209 Winston Rd
Durham, NC 27704**

I implore the Board to shift to Plan C. I teach high school in Durham, but my wife, a media specialist, will be exposed to hundreds of students and staff per week. Plan B means that we will self quarantine for the duration of the school year, unable to see our loved ones. We value the lives of her students and of ourselves. Thank you.

2020/07/15 6:27:16 PM AST

**Teresa Parkinson
4913 Seterra Bend
Durham**

As a fifth grade teacher I have many concerns with Plan B. I have read that students need to be with their peers and be at school for their social /emotional well being. I totally agree. However, how can wearing a mask, not being able to walked near a friend, not being able to hug, not being able to help a friend with an assignment, not being able to whisper inside jokes while sitting next to one another on the floor be anything except emotionally traumatizing? Making students sit in a classroom in an atmosphere akin to end of grade tests all day everyday can not have a positive impact on a child's emotional well being. Please consider Plan C for the first quarter. I will be able to see all my students' beautiful mask free faces and become familiar with their facial expressions and they will be able to do the same with me over Zoom. Let's start this school year seeing smiles. Thank you.

2020/07/15 6:40:57 PM AST
Judith Roman Martinez
800 Laurel Springs Dr Durham NC
27713

DPS needs to choice Plan C for a better safety of our students and staff.

2020/07/15 6:41:59 PM AST
Beverly Evans
123 John Doe
Durham NC 27704

As an employee of DPS I'm concerned for the kids as well as myself and my coworkers. I feel we should provide remote learning for a couple of months until we see the numbers go down for the Coronavirus.

2020/07/15 6:42:58 PM AST
Kristen E Wagner
2401 N. Duke St.
Durham

First I want to thank Dr. Mubenga for joining the DAE today for a listening session.

It means so much that he was willing to hear our concerns about the safety of our students and staff.

While he was listening to us, we were listening too. We could hear his concern for those same students and staff. We could hear that he doesn't have funding to ensure our safety. We could hear that one of his worries is the well-being of our students who need food provided. This is a concern of ours too!

Let's move forward with Plan C. Together we can tackle the important logistical concerns of keeping our students fed while keeping both the student and staff safer at home.

2020/07/15 6:48:10 PM AST

**Chelsea Earles
1709 Glendale Ave.
Durham, NC 27701**

Please find out from DPS employees whether they are up for risking their lives to teach or work in the schools in person. If there are not enough people to run our schools in person you should go back to online only. We can't force them to do this work without the resources to keep them safe. No one signed up for that. The sooner we sort this out the sooner we can get on with helping plan how to meet the needs of families of essential workers who don't have anyone who can be home with their students. It doesn't make sense to prioritize the desires of some families to be in-person (even though they have other options) over the lives of school employees, students and everyone they come in contact with. Let's meet the actual needs of employees and families instead of trying to pretend this pandemic is not happening.

2020/07/15 7:08:51 PM AST

**Sunny Hiraldo
5554 Spindlewood Court
Durham, NC 27703**

As the President of DPS IAs; I have heard from many IAs who feel like it is being said now during this COVID that we are essential to the transition period. But, during regular school year we are not essential in the eyes of the District. We feel like the District and the Board is not listening to what we deserve and need as IAs. Respectfully, put your actions where your words are and give a decent raise to our AWESOME IAs. We love this District just as much as teachers and others and we just want to be appreciated.

2020/07/15 7:16:52 PM AST

**Jessica Silvia
50306 Governors Drive
Chapel Hill, NC 27517**

I am concerned about the safe operation of middle schools. I've seen a lot of plans in place for if a student/staff member tests positive for COVID in an elementary setting, but middle school is a lot different. How can you guarantee the safety of students and staff in a constantly rotating community such as a middle school? If a teacher is exposed and has to quarantine, that is 1/4 of a team of core teachers that will be out. This is not even taking into account elective teachers, hallway transitions, homeroom/remediate classes/etc.

2020/07/15 7:46:01 PM AST

**Rachel Sulin
5706 Roslyn Road
Durham, NC, 27712**

DAE said it best with their bottom line. "Staff must not be forced to choose between their health and their job." I love being an instructional assistant. Plan B puts me in a position where I have to choose between my job or my safety. Despite the best intentions for safety, I don't believe we can truly make it safe. Our one day a week nurse is not adequate. Our custodial staff who were already overworked and underpaid are now crucial and risking their lives. Our building's ventilation concerns me. Then there are stories such as the three teachers in Arizona who followed all the safety measures and it wasn't enough. <https://www.cnn.com/2020/07/12/us/arizona-teachers-coronavirus/index.html> I believe our community can come together and figure out how to make sure students' basic needs such as food are met without the majority of us putting our lives at risk in person. Thank you for consideration and all of your efforts during these extremely challenging times.

2020/07/15 8:02:51 PM AST

**Holly B Fishback
3322 Park Overlook Drive
Durham**

As a teacher and a parent in DPS, I have extreme concerns about schools returning in person at this point in time. Earlier, I was hopeful that numbers of cases would be going down and that we were moving in the right direction. Since this is not the case, I do not want to return to the physical building in less than 4 weeks.

I believe that teachers are being asked to make a sacrifice that we should not have to make - our health, and possibly, our lives. I know that students need to be learning and it would be fabulous if we could teach in person. I teach at Club Blvd and like many other schools, we only have tables, not desks. I do not see how children can effectively learn if they are having to sit on the floor (without carpets) and without collaboration, or small group instruction. If I have to stay 6 feet away, how can I help my 9 year olds? I hear people saying that kids want to be back in school; they do, but they want what was, not what will be (masks, no sharing spaces, no movement from that one classroom, etc). I do not think this will be beneficial to their mental health at all.

I wonder who will purchase all of the supplies we need to be sure rooms are clean and who will be responsible for the cleaning? When children use the bathroom, who will be cleaning it before another child comes in? If I get sick, will everyone I teach have to quarantine for 14 days?

Every child in the country is at risk of 'falling behind'. At this point in the pandemic, this cannot be the reason we return to the classroom. I know I am worried about the students who need to be in a safe space, and who need meals and guidance. My health and safety, and those of my coworkers, should not be jeopardized in order to provide these things to our students!

I should not be considering leaving my profession of 23 years just to keep my family, and myself safe.

2020/07/15 8:13:11 PM AST
Patrick Murphy
128 Canadian Ct
Durham

I am the father of a rising 2nd grader at Creekside and husband of a teacher. I know there is an organized effort to stop DPS from reopening, but I, like most DPS parents, know it is critical to reopen elementary schools for families that need them. Much has been made about the risk to teachers, but this ignores the risk that will just be redistributed to other caretakers and to our children if DPS remains closed. Elementary schools can be run similar to preschools, which have remained open throughout the pandemic with very little risk. Explain to me why our 2 year old can be in school, but our 7 year old can't?

Back in March, I observed that reopening was going to take courage. I hope that you can summon the courage to reopen schools for people who need them.

2020/07/15 8:28:13 PM AST
Johanna Wilson
8 Clubstone Ct
Durham, NC 27713

I think we need to get our children back into the school system as quickly as possible. Look at local data to drive decisions, rather than the loudest voices calling for a particular outcome. If you decide to do online only, please plan that out for a specific duration after which you can re-evaluate based on current data. Please do not resign our children to a full year of online learning. It will be so detrimental to so many children.

2020/07/15 8:29:27 PM AST
Muriel Castillo
4922 Old Page Rd.
27703

I don't think it is safe to go back to school in person. At least during the fall, we should work/study online.

Too many things to take into account: buses, checking temperature, sick leaves, cleaning / disinfecting supplies,...

There is no vaccine yet. It is not fair to kids, especially in elementary, parents and staff.

2020/07/15 8:31:02 PM AST

**Sarah Anderson
51 Enesco Circle
Durham, NC 27703**

It's not safe to re-open schools right now. Let's push the federal and state governments to expand testing and reduce the spread of Covid. Let's partner with outside entities to make sure parents have access to safe childcare. We can't ask teachers to die to come back to work.

2020/07/15 8:45:54 PM AST

**Hannah Guggemos
114 East Maynard Ave. Durham, N.C
Durham**

The health and safety of our community is at risk if schools are open for in-person instruction. Teachers are being forced to choose between their health and safety and their job. Getting teachers to sign a high-risk form is not the same as teachers having a choice to do what they feel is safe for themselves and their family. The logistics of keeping children between the ages of 5 and 14 socially distanced and wearing masks at all times is unrealistic. The students will not be able to abide by these strict health guidelines and what are the health ramifications when they don't? What are the social and emotional effects on the children when they must keep their peers at arms length? What are the social and emotional affect when students fear for their life because a peer or teacher may be carrying COVID-19? Teachers were able to switch to remote learning in days after schools closing on March 13th. Teachers are resilient and creative when teaching students and this time is no different. With the use of Canvas and other district resources, teachers can successfully and safely teach students from their homes. August 17th is 33 days from when I am writing this. We do not have a vaccine and the numbers are increasing everyday. Come August 17th, the numbers will be even more than what they are today. Please trust in Durham Public School's teachers to continue to support, guide and teach the students of Durham from the safety of their home. The lives of the students, staff, teachers and community are on the line.

2020/07/15 8:47:38 PM AST

**Chris Wagner
2401 North Duke St.
Durham 27704**

I don't think it is safe to send students and teachers into buildings we don't know how we are going to afford to manage with all the safety items we need in place. I have been teaching for

24 years and love it so much but I don't want to choose between what I love and keeping myself or my family safe. We are so much more prepared for online learning now and when things normalize we can be ready to do in person education but we are not there right now, numbers and science don't lie.

2020/07/15 8:59:59 PM AST

**Scott Lujan
305 Whitney Ln
Durham**

Thank you for taking my comment. I am a father of two DPS students and a scientist. I have two concerns. First, in general, in the absence of a vaccine, the only way to beat a novel contagion is to reduce transmission. Putting more people, i.e. students and staff, in close proximity will inevitably increase transmission, to the detriment of the Durham community as a whole and at a possible loss of lives. Second, specifically, I fear for the safety of our beloved teachers and school staff and for susceptible family members that they will come in contact with, like my 73 year old mother-in-law who lives in our home. Please consider Plan C. Thank you again for your time and service.

2020/07/15 9:02:21 PM AST

**Kathy Lynn
20 w bridlewood trail
Durham NC 27713**

I hope that we can safely prioritize an in-person option for, at the very least k-5 students. There are parents who have never had the ability to stop working or to work from home. They have stocked our groceries, delivered our packages, and saved our lives. There are many children that have been in alternative care situations since March. Let's think outside the box and spend whatever it takes to keep teachers and staff safe and educate all children, not just those who can manage online instruction. I have actually heard parents say that they hope the district goes to all virtual instruction because then they won't feel like their child is missing out. I've heard others say that in-person wouldn't be good anyway, totally dismissing the fact that many parents who have no choice. DPS is better than these comments and I am confident we can find a solution that the rest of the state can follow.

2020/07/15 9:05:19 PM AST

**Kayla clyma
Turmeric ln
Durham, NC, 27713**

Please chose to start school on plan C. For the sake of your staff, students, families, and community. It is clear that we do not have the funds, staff or vaccine necessary to open while

numbers continue to climb. Please look to Florida and other states that have opened too early and have endangered their citizens. We the community members of Durham have the creativity and the drive to solve any problem that arises with implementing plan C, but we do not have the funds or the medicine to implement plan B. We will not be able to go back in time and save lost lives, please be proactive and protect the lives of Durham Community! Use total virtual learning in the Fall.

2020/07/15 10:02:26 PM AST

**Courtney Kovalick
2624 Pickett Rd
Durham, NC 27705**

I understand the concerns of teachers but in a household of two essential healthcare employees and a rising kindergartener we desperately need an in person school option for our son. Not only so that we can keep our jobs, but so he has a structured environment for learning during this very critical time in development

2020/07/15 10:19:08 PM AST

**Kenya Dumas
507 Pebblestone Drive
Durham NC 27703**

Does Ignite include Specials like P.E., Art, Music for Elementary students, specifically 3rd graders?

2020/07/15 10:33:23 PM AST

**Meredith Murphy
128 Canadian Ct
Durham, NC 27713**

I am a veteran high school teacher (albeit at the North Carolina School of Science and Mathematics) as well as a parent of a rising 2nd grader who attends a DPS school. I know that you are hearing many voices, those of teachers and parents, who are fearful of the consequences of opening schools for face-to-face instruction. But I want to make sure you are aware of other voices, including mine, that are strongly in support of the Plan B that DPS previously articulated. As someone who has been very involved in the research and preparations being done at my own educational institution, I believe that effective social distancing is possible and that face-to-face instruction for those students who choose it is worth fighting for.

My other child is attending a Durham preschool and has been since the NC Phase 2 reopening, all without incident. Daycares and preschools have proven that group settings are safe, for staff

and students, when public health protocols are carefully followed. That is what makes DPS' Plan B the right move. I also appreciate the nuanced understanding of child development this plan suggests--that younger students suffer more social development setbacks without face-to-face interaction and that high school students are more mature and better equipped to manage remote learning. The benefits of my youngest child's return to preschool have been exponential for my family. She is happier and healthier because she can interact with other children her age and our family dynamics have improved because of her attendance at preschool. At the same time, I have seen my older child's socialization and education disrupted in astounding ways. She is safe and supported at home with us. We have reliable access to technology and internet connectivity. One of her parents is a teacher. And yet she desperately needs to return to the routine, social setting, and professional scaffolding that her school provides.

I know that teachers are scared. I know that we don't know how this will work because we have never done this before. But if I am allowed to do so, I will be back in my classroom come August and I hope that my child will be too. FDR was right when he said, "The only thing we have to fear is fear itself." DPS made the right choice to offer students the choice to enroll in the Ignite program but DPS shouldn't take away families' to attend school in-person because of fear of the unknown. Public health officials have given us a path to safely re-open schools. Strong leaders need to help the public, including students, parents, and staff, to trust that guidance and maintain the flexibility our community needs in these times of uncertainty.

2020/07/15 11:25:25 PM AST

**Holly Woodard
3814 Hamlin Rd
Durham, NC 27704**

Greetings Board and thank you for your thoughts as well as taking the time to weigh in on school workers' wishes. As a K-5 teacher for language learners for almost 20 years now, I never thought I'd say this, because more than anything I want to be in the classroom with my students. Unfortunately, due to the current spike in COVID cases and the disproportionate risk my students would be placed in, I feel as though they would best be served in the safety of their own homes. Moreover, what concerns me most is, how we will ensure that all students receive devices and internet access? Let's stop debating whether we want to risk the health of our students, their families, and school workers, and let's start to hone in on getting resources where they need to be for the first few months of this 2020-2021 school year. Once we ensure equity in access to online courses, then we can take the first few months to see how hybrid learning could look. But in my opinion, we need to put the safety of all, first. Thank you!

2020/07/16 1:01:46 AM AST

**Daniel Keegan
1002 Berkeley St
Durham, NC, 27705**

As an educator and parent of DPS elementary students I must advocate for myself and my students. It is overwhelmingly clear that in our current state of affairs with regards to Coronavirus that continuing online learning for all students is the best option at this time. DPS has always prioritized as #1 the safety of its students and staff. Although it is far from ideal - online learning is the best way forward in this moment. The logistical, legal, and managerial challenges of any other plan other than continued online learning will in the long term only serve to exacerbate an already difficult time for our community. Continued online learning for all students is far from a perfect solution but it is the best option with all things considered for our now.

2020/07/16 3:38:56 AM AST

Dr. Dee Anderson

Treyburn

27712

Reducing the spread of COVID-19 should be the primary focus. Safe and healthy students are able to learn. However, sick students will not only have to battle an illness but will not be able to learn as effectively. Staff members who are safe and healthy can support the needs of students, but the same cannot be said for sick staff members.

The governor has given local school districts the option to decide what is best for their district. This allows DPS to make decisions based on science and relevant data. The ball is now in your court.

While the decision may be hard, the rationale behind the decision should only be what is best for student and staff health. When dealing with a pandemic, the focus of every entity in society should be reducing the spread. Please consider the ramifications of your decisions to student and staff health. Failure to put the health and wellbeing of students and staff as the foremost and primary deciding factor is reckless and misguided.

Learn from the experiences of similar organizations. Look at colleges and universities, right here in our own state, unable to control the spread of COVID-19 within their athletic teams and as a result suspended sports. Yet DPS has not announced a suspension in sports. Certainly DPS doesn't have the resources these universities do. Look to other institutions in which large numbers of people have gathered together, even in a very controlled environment. The US military, TSA, and prisons/jails have been unable to control the spread of COVID-19. Certainly DPS isn't as controlled of an environment as the aforementioned.

With the increase in cases in our area, the significant impact to the Latinx community, and the vulnerability of DPS staff the decision to conduct remote learning and cancel all sports and extra curricular activities should be a given.

The community remains hopeful DPS will show true leadership in these difficult times. The community remains hopeful DPS will take proactive precautionary measures as opposed to reactionary measures. Unfortunately, with this pandemic a reactionary measure will likely be the result of outbreaks on a campus or even the death of a student or staff member. Can you live with yourself knowing your decision may lead to the death of a student or staff member?

Please be smart and make the right decision based on science and data, nothing else!

2020/07/16 5:33:51 AM AST

Dr. Dee Anderson

Treyburn

27712

Do you not see the irony of conducting a remote school board meeting to discuss bringing students and staff back for face to face instruction in just about a month? If DPS doesn't feel confident they can keep the board of education and administrators safe, why do you feel confident you can keep students and staff safe?

Don't ask more of the staff than you are willing to do yourselves.

If face to face instruction resumes, teachers will be inside of an enclosed space with students who may or may not properly wear their masks, may need to be redirected or provided with personal instruction which may not allow for appropriate social distancing, or who may be sick but their parents lied because they wanted the child in school anyway. Is that truly a safe working environment? If you honestly believe that is a safe working environment, why aren't you willing to have in person board meetings?

Board members and administrators are adults. As adults you should be able to properly wear a mask and engage in social distancing. So why are you still conducting remote meetings? Is it because you realize there is an inherent risk of gathering people together and you want to protect yourselves? It is good to see you respect the science around how this virus is spread, but don't limit it to just protecting yourselves. Hopefully you'll have the same compassion for students and staff members as you do for your own well being. Afterall, you were elected to do what's best for them. Now do just that!

2020/07/16 10:13:08 AM AST

Rhonda Faircloth

5815 Solitude Way

Durham NC 27713

I am an Administrator and a parent of two DPS students. As a parent, I'm thrilled that I have a robust option to protect my children during this time. Ignite Academy looks awesome! I'm a single mom, but luckily, I have my mother who is able to stay with us to support my children's learning through this time. The online option makes me very happy. I have a good feeling that my children will be safe while continuing their education. I'm also pleased that their teachers will have the option to work at Ignite - keeping them and their families safe as well.

However, it seems that there is no option for me as an administrator to remain safe. If I am required to report on site, all our precautions and quarantining that we did through the Spring, as well as our efforts to continue through Ignite, will be for naught – as my children and my mother will be exposed to everything I am exposed to during the day.

What part of the plan exists to keep us - school leaders safe? As far as I can see, the opportunity to teach in Ignite academy is only available to teachers. I've worked in DPS for 16 years to get the position I have, and it grieves me to think that I may have to step down, but I would happily return to teaching duty if it means that I will be able to keep myself and my family from becoming sick. I love my job, but I'm not willing to die for it. Is that the only choice available?

I've been so impressed with the leadership you all have shown during this time, and I have done everything I can to be a positive leader in support of the District plans during this difficult time. I hope that there is a plan in place to help keep school leaders safe. I look forward to hearing what it is.

2020/07/16 10:18:29 AM AST
Jennifer Neal
7752 Sandra Lane
Raleigh, NC 27615

We don't have the funding/resources/staff available to SAFELY implement Plan B. This is just as hard on teachers to teach online, but at what cost are we going to put hundreds of thousands (students/staff/their families) at risk and in jeopardy. Our society is unfortunately not responsible enough yet to go to Plan B. There is too much at stake to risk going back in person.

2020/07/16 10:44:14 AM AST
Jennifer Neal
7752 Sandra Lane
Raleigh, NC 27615

We don't have the funding/resources/staff available to SAFELY implement Plan B. This is just as hard on teachers to teach online, but at what cost are we going to put hundreds of thousands

(students/staff/their families) at risk and in jeopardy. Our society is unfortunately not responsible enough yet to go to Plan B. There is too much at stake to risk going back in person.

2020/07/16 10:55:05 AM AST

**Shauna Morrow
1032 Laredo Ln
Durham, NC 27703**

There is going to be no "perfect" scenario in the issue of how to proceed with school during a time like we're in. However, the closest we can get to perfect is to offer a choice. Plan C does not take into consideration unsafe homes, real issues like suicidal depression, single parents who cannot work from home and cannot leave their 6 year old alone. It does not take into consideration that everyone's situation is not the same or that all kids do NOT fare well with remote learning. Plan B, while not perfect either, takes everything into consideration and allows people to make a choice. Plan B feels like the way to accommodate the highest number of people.

2020/07/16 11:41:50 AM AST

**Meagan Bostian
2725 Stuart Drive
Durham**

The decision between virtual school and in-person is a near impossible choice for working parents. And as a parent of a rising kindergartner it seems additionally difficult as my child hasn't actually LEARNED to learn yet and doesn't fully grasp assignments and lessons or the structure of a classroom. I saw recently that Charlotte has opted to send all students to school (in shifts over 2 weeks) to allow students to meet teachers, receive their hardware and be shown how to use the computers / programs for online learning. They will then go virtual for the first quarter. This sounds AMAZING to me as it allows students to grasp that school is starting (not just a parent sitting them at a computer) but then allows for additional safety by going virtual upfront. The thought that this COULD allow students to return (if they chose) after the first quarter instead of after the first semester is also extremely appealing. I would hope that Durham would see the benefit of a plan like this.

2020/07/16 11:46:06 AM AST

**Autumn Ehinger
417 Edward St
Durham**

Yesterday at the DAE meeting, the head of maintenance and building operations admitted it is a known fact we have poor air quality in many of our schools. Prior to COVID, DPS had already requested (and were denied) funding to fix critical problems in filtration and circulation. Our air

quality was already unsafe prior to COVID, and even now, the state gives us no funds to address these critical issues for the most basic safety of our students and staff. No matter what precautions I and my fellow teachers take to keep students safe, if our buildings are fundamentally unsafe, if there is no proper air filtration or circulation, nothing we do can protect our students or ourselves.

2020/07/16 12:03:24 PM AST
Abigail Council
1615 Wensley Drive
Durham, NC 27712

Please explain why the board meets via zoom and then explain your justification in sending thousands of teachers, staff and students back to school in person.

2020/07/16 12:16:55 PM AST
Beau Borek
1811 Northgate st
Durham NC 27704

The simple fact that this meeting is being held online to prevent the spread of covid should be enough to realize the danger of sending students and staff into a classroom. What this communicates to me as a classified employee of Durham public schools is that the members of the school board matter more than the students and staff in the schools. It does not matter how frequently we meet in person, one meeting is enough to spread a virus that is literally killing people. The refusal of Plan C is enormously disappointing. Schools were closed in March because of the spread and it has only gotten worse over the summer. Nothing has changed to make it safer to be in close proximity to others. When the inevitable outbreak happens, won't we close schools anyway? I want to go back to school, to see my students, and continue as normal. But I stand firmly against going back too soon.

I am angry and endlessly frustrated that those in power have decided to sacrifice me, my coworkers, and students to save face. This moderate decision in the face of a crisis both acknowledges the danger but also accepts the risk. My question is: how much death and suffering are you willing to have on your hands? This is not a hyperbolic statement. People have died. Children have died. Opening schools too soon is an acceptance of death and suffering.

2020/07/16 12:29:57 PM AST
Jackie Turnwald
1119 Cabin Creek Rd
Durham, NC 27712

Good Evening,

My name is Jackie Turnwald and I'm a teacher at Middle College High School. I'm writing to ask our BOE to start our district on Plan C for the fall. At this juncture, I have to ask why we are continuing to have this debate when we should be pouring our time into the resourceful ways we will need to support our community on Plan C. If we move forward with Plan B, we are saying that education has no value. Because moving forward with Plan B would require that we ignore the fruits of education (science and critical thinking) that tell us our metrics clearly indicate this is not a safe operational plan. What value is there in an education, if we will not use it to save our own lives? I listened to our Governor speak with pride about how teachers have been digging into their own pockets for years to supplement what our state has withheld from our children. This should be the shame of every politician in this state. And now we are asked to dig deeper? How deep must we dig? Six feet? While I am a high school teacher and I am currently scheduled to teach remotely, I have no intention of burying my K-8 colleagues or their students. Nor do I wish to saddle them with potentially lifelong medical consequences such as lung damage, heart damage, clotting disorders, strokes, Kawasaki's disease, and even brain damage. Our society is at a critical moment, where we are deciding if we will bear burdens together and all move forward slowly or we will deem some people worthy of throwing into the mouth of the volcano so that we can hurry up and pretend like life can be normal again.

Below I have provided some of the many reasons for my position, as well as articles that offer supporting evidence (Standard: Provide textual evidence):

Even in a low contact environment, without students, with masks, and sanitizing, teachers conducting virtual summer school from a school building were infected with Covid and one died: <https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/education/2020/07/09/covid-19-school-reopenings-arizona-teachers/5411122002/?fbclid=IwAR1KlaxFkagMP1-o1raLUq1tN1sGeyu2Txz4r7GS1SppI7PxOiyw48F8VmY>

Studies are showing that coronavirus can damage the brain:
https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-brains/scientists-warn-of-potential-wave-of-covid-linked-brain-damage-idUSKBN24837S?fbclid=IwAR2-k75810E4A-xPCsZd_IJqiuZf2ptFKC7sluNloKfN8nKW_nLyhJj2qsA

These brain disorders are appearing in people who had mild Covid symptoms:
https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/jul/08/warning-of-serious-brain-disorders-in-people-with-mild-covid-symptoms?CMP=share_btn_fb&fbclid=IwAR2RIQirvhp6-MO9rQyz8-4T5c13NdULTohqDEDjMpG65IOWkUom7MrhtOI

There is increasing evidence that a person can be infected more than once with potentially increasingly dire consequences:
https://www.vox.com/2020/7/12/21321653/getting-covid-19-twice-reinfection-antibody-herd-immunity?fbclid=IwAR2BfvmiWzcxrYRtOC2ZruTRHBwKe5hMfS_C9VQs60ctYqfgRDA3tck0Lws

Israel, which had much lower rates of Covid than us when they opened schools, demonstrated that schools become superspreader sites:

https://news.yahoo.com/second-wave-covid-hits-israel-162129002.html?soc_src=hl-viewer&soc_trk=fb

The average age of infection in the United States is falling rapidly, specifically in states where the virus is not being well contained:

<https://www.newsweek.com/oregon-coronavirus-among-under-10-kids-grows-fivefold-nearly-many-cases-people-over-80-1514811?fbclid=IwAR02xT9p3XYn73Z4Nv-PGxKm2jXK3E-3jD3VUnhTVnVnlneVGqRsEHUDZ4k>

<https://thehill.com/changing-america/well-being/prevention-cures/507442-almost-one-third-of-florida-children-tested-are?fbclid=IwAR2f-avazMvJD-z6GzAMm1HVTolsm-Xu-KiwqMIKOioitXU7UuNnlGGWaWE>

Data about coronavirus and children is not sufficient to say it is safe for students to come to in person school. The data we do have tells us “children and adolescents 5-17 years have remained persistently plateaued at about twice the positivity rate of all other age groups 18 and up”:

<https://www.facebook.com/photo?fbid=10223511361077776&set=a.10208290149717005>

Many are pointing out the negative impacts of staying home for students, but few are talking about the negative psychological impacts and trauma that will be experienced in a stringent, social distanced, masked schooling environment:

https://gadflyonthewallblog.com/2020/07/11/mask-to-mask-instruction-may-be-more-problematic-than-distance-learning/?fbclid=IwAR0t8UyQuqLoc1wwnfbzvJIBC3W0aDAGA5vksiwIOL_BizIQB8H4PhAbwfQ

There is evidence that coronavirus is airborne:

https://thehill.com/policy/healthcare/506587-who-reverses-says-covid-19-may-be-airborne-indoors?fbclid=IwAR1r_nWA51zulxzw4VocyQT8iGqbRL9ewbt1LU0EeD4w29iW6W8oBXUXMwY

It is possible that coronavirus may lead to male infertility in some individuals:

https://journals.physiology.org/doi/full/10.1152/ajpendo.00183.2020?fbclid=IwAR1S-TxL1r_tvesupR5hIOKNnL9TaXOiqO1EukNWiHh5osdkbFbB4xn69Lo

North Carolina is among the WORLD’S top 25 worst outbreaks of Covid-19:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/08/briefing/arizona-mary-trump-facebook-your-wednesday-briefing.html?auth=login-facebook>

Original guidance allowed for 8 students on a school bus. Now it’s been changed to 24 with no explanation as to how this is safe:

https://content.govdelivery.com/attachments/NCSBE/2020/07/07/file_attachments/1490239/Gov%20Cooper%20Letter%207.7.2020.pdf?fbclid=IwAR2f-avazMvJD-z6GzAMm1HVTolsm-Xu-KiwqMIKOioitXU7UuNnlGGWaWE

Sweden has demonstrated that opening for the sake of the economy results in more deaths AND the economy doing as poorly as places that have remained closed:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/07/business/sweden-economy-coronavirus.html?referringSource=articleShare&fbclid=IwAR2f-avazMvJD-z6GzAMm1HVTolsm-Xu-KiwqMIKOioitXU7UuNnlGGWaWE>

Studies are showing that there will not be herd immunity:

<https://www.cnn.com/2020/07/06/health/spain-coronavirus-antibody-study-lancet-intl/index.html?fbclid=IwAR1WLaBCnGvWhHYFXxkWjB3iucn9hWgDYuke6r-JeeJV4Q6MvBMTM22PyMs>

Having had coronavirus may result in an individual becoming ineligible to serve in the U.S. military:

<https://www.militarytimes.com/news/your-military/2020/05/21/the-ban-on-covid-19-survivors-joining-up-has-lifted-but-some-cases-could-still-be-denied/>

There are studies saying that coronavirus can be spread as easily by children as adults. We continue to lack a multitude of studies in this are BECAUSE WE'VE BEEN KEEPING KIDS AT HOME!:

<https://twitter.com/drericding/status/1278445193155489793?s=21&fbclid=IwAR0iKm37ZjRsdXOB08LfLTK5v9dynamGwAaz9VdmHA2L-XHW42WljD2DGWY>

Many folks have said Plan B gives people choices, but this ignores the many choices that teachers, administrators, and their families won't have with Plan B. I'm hoping this doesn't mean that people are overlooking the fact that we're people too:

https://www.scarymommy.com/reopening-schools-we-cant-forget-abou-teachers-support-staff/?fbclid=IwAR0UUrClnZhHNFUQ_Q4vScpIUyOLcmnGd4MKNAld3vray2c35ob_iuJ1ls

2020/07/16 12:37:22 PM AST

Darby Schenkel

11 Garden Hills Court

Durham NC 27712

I am a DPS parent and teacher going into my 21st year of teaching with Durham Public Schools. I am one of the biggest advocates for our under served and marginalized populations. I understand the equity issues we are facing with the consideration of 100% virtual learning. Nevertheless, I do not understand how we can jeopardize the health and safety of our entire Durham community by allowing schools to open. This would be an irresponsible decision that

will most definitely lead to a rise in Covid cases in Durham and deaths among our school community and beyond. How can we justify opening schools with such an enormous risk? How will you justify the death of even one child? One teacher? One staff member? How will you justify the long term health implications that will likely impact so many people in our community? We all know this won't go well and schools will be forced to shut down anyway. Keep it simple and keep it safe. I implore you to go to Plan C in the best interest of our community, our teachers and staff, and our children.

2020/07/16 12:50:16 PM AST

Brian Callaway

307 Gresham Ave

Durham, NC, 27704

To the Esteemed Members of the Board of Education,

Rumor has it you are being pushed by a vocal contingent to eliminate Plan B (adjusted in-person instruction) and shift to exclusively Plan C, online only for this fall. I caution against making that decision at today's board meeting for several reasons:

1) I understand some teachers' reservations about working in-person during these times. But not every teacher I know supports the position of 100% online. Many want to return to a Plan B scenario that takes as many precautions as feasible. Many others simply cannot embrace Plan C due to the risks posed to their own health and/or those they live with, and I understand and accept that—accommodations certainly can and should be made. Has DPS surveyed its teacher roster to understand how many teachers are available for a possible Plan B approach? I am hearing from principals of students I have been sheltering with that their schools will be ready for Plan B—but I don't even know what Plan B might look like. Before you throw out Plan B altogether, I believe you (and the administration) owe it to the community to fully investigate and announce Plan B scenarios because... (#2)

2) Many families are unable to continue to function under a 100% online instruction course. And prominent members of our education community have clearly expressed the importance of in-person instruction to many of our students (see Ms. Zagbayou's editorial). Even if surveys were to show 75% of our families want online only, that means up to 25% feel like the benefits/importance of in-person instruction and child care are worth the risks. We face risks as we send our kids out of the house every day. Just as I expect our institutions to mitigate all the other risks posed to us throughout a "normal" time, I believe Dr. Mubenga and his staff are capable of devising a Plan B that mitigates risk for our families who need services from DPS—whether those are families who face the daily crises presented by poverty and racism in our community or those who are middle-class single-parent families who need something more than Plan C in order to maintain the only job they may be fortunate enough to still have. Even in my 75% for online/25% for in-person hypothetical breakdown, we are talking about

thousands of families who would be severely and negatively impacted by your removal of the Plan B option. And if you remove Plan B now... (#3)

3) You run the incredible and real risk of driving thousands of students away from DPS during a time when their head counts are vital to the future of DPS. How many families will immediately do whatever it takes to find alternative options (charter, private, etc.) to DPS if they knew on July 16 that DPS will only offer an instructional model that abandons their needs? How many fewer resources might that lead to for DPS? How many kindergarten students will skip registration? How many students do you think would ever return to DPS?

If you vote to eliminate Plan B options this evening, I believe you run some very serious risks of turning your backs on many members of the community who are looking for DPS to step up rather than back in this moment.

Further, you may want to publicly or at least privately warn teachers and the DAE that they should not be spreading through the community that parents of wealth should sign up for Ignite AND also enroll in private schools as a supplement so DPS can continue to receive funding. That is called fraud and subjects the district to potential penalty. I encourage you to clarify to the public that performing that action, even if it is being promoted by teacher organizations, is NOT legal and could subject the district to great harm.

But there is no harm in waiting for more clarity on a Plan B option and to conduct more surveys to understand parent needs for a Plan B option. I hope you don't throw away the babies of our community in order to guzzle down the bathwater ale that the DAE has passed along to you.

Thank you,
Brian Callaway

2020/07/16 12:54:39 PM AST
Shawtaya Carter
506 East Parker St
Graham NC 27217

School should be virtual

2020/07/16 1:00:32 PM AST
Jill Blalock
305 Get A Way Lane
Bahama N.C. 27503

I am writing to you as a parent and a teacher. I have a 4th and 5th grader in DPS and I have been employed by DPS for 13 years. I want to thank you for all that you are doing for us during this difficult time; however, I also want to express my concern for the opening under plan B. I

do not feel that it is what is best for the students or for the staff. I do not feel that we have enough data about how Covid impacts students and the information that is coming out of Oregon and Florida is not looking good. Even if younger children are not getting as sick, we still do not know the long term effects of covid. They can also still spread it to adults in the building while they are asymptomatic.

After attending the Town Hall meeting with Dr. Mubenga earlier this week, listening to Gov. Cooper, attending the DAE town hall with Dr. Mubenga today and the NCAE meeting tonight I do not feel like we have the funding we need to have the essential parameters in place to keep the students and staff safe. I realize that there is no easy solution, but I don't feel like people losing their lives is ever the best solution.

Durham is also not meeting the metrics that would make it safe to reopen. We have too many daily cases and have not been able to stop community spread. I would love for the board to open the school under Plan C until we can meet these metrics and ensure that the schools have the funding that they need to open safely.

Thank you for your time and consideration!

2020/07/16 1:10:30 PM AST
Dana Branch
700 Walnut Crossing Dr
Whitsett NC 27377

I love my job and love the families that I serve. However I am scared for my health and for my children's, if we have to go back to school in person. I'm high risk, I have a medically fragile child, and my other child has risk factors as well. Please allow online learning options only. Please don't make us risk our lives to provide for our families. Please.

2020/07/16 1:13:40 PM AST
Cindy Dorner
4416 Dolwick Dr.
Durham, IL 27713

It seems safest to begin the school year after numbers of infections have lowered, or after a vaccine has been created and made available. If we choose Plan B, perhaps we can start classes after Labor Day.

2020/07/16 1:17:00 PM AST
Natalie Boyden
4319 Lazyriver Dr

Durham

Electing the hybrid model of Plan B because it “provides a choice” for families is a slap in the face to school faculty, administrators, and support staff who are offered no such choice. It negates their personhood, by making them a default, unconsenting component of a deadly equation. How can we expect these educators, custodians, bus drivers, cafeteria staff, and others to risk their lives in order to create a more convenient arrangement for the rest of us, with no solid scientific reasoning behind that demand besides “kids learn better at school”? Will our children really benefit from a physical school environment in which they must be masked for 6 hours, not touch their friends, be denied physical comfort, eat separately, and face constant learning interruptions for hand-washing? Not to mention the guaranteed trauma of losing a teacher, staff member, or peer to a pernicious disease that continues to see rising numbers of mortality & morbidity in our state. Plan B is not a conscionable choice, from any angle. We can choose Plan C (fully remote learning) and still support working families and food-insecure families with the many resources available to our amazing city, especially when we can keep those same people alive and healthy at home.

2020/07/16 1:24:30 PM AST
CAROLINE HARTLEY
3209 WINSTON RD
DURHAM

I am an elementary school specialist. Since students will be staying in their classrooms, specialists will go to them. That means I will be visiting up to 25-30 classes a week, exposing myself to hundreds of students and staff in close quarters, in classrooms where the air conditioning often fails. 5 year olds do not have the mental fortitude to keep masks on their faces for 6-7 hours. I feel like this arrangement will mean that I cannot see my family, as I cannot in good conscience expose them to my potential contraction. I know this is a difficult place to put parents in, but so will having students and teachers get sick or potentially die.

2020/07/16 1:33:43 PM AST
Vikki Vilcek
5206 Longwood Dr
Durham, NC 27713

First, we want our children, teachers, staff, and families safe and healthy. However, the lack of information offered on a Plan B return is irresponsible. It also seems intentional. If NC can't get COVID numbers under control, then yes, delay the school start or force us online temporarily. But this complete refusal to have a safe opening plan NOW when we are supposed to have a choice is what concerns many parents. There absolutely are teachers that want to be back in the classroom with precautions, and many students of course want to be back. The overpowering push filtering down to school listservs to choose online-only is real, yet there is an absence of Plan B information even though for various reasons that might be the only or

best option for a family. Please provide families with a real choice to weigh. Regardless of the current COVID environment, we should focus as much energy on an ultimate shift back to the classrooms, since not all families have the online choice. We cannot assume kids and teachers can remain home indefinitely.

2020/07/16 1:47:54 PM AST
Belkyn cardona
1219 Camden ave
Durham nc 27701

Opción C...

2020/07/16 1:57:10 PM AST
Ronda Taylor Bullock
1705 Willowcrest Road
Durham, NC 27703

Hello, I'm submitting comments as the Education Chair of the Durham Committee on the Affairs of Black People. We solicited feedback from the community, receiving 128 responses. We can't represent everything here, but a few themes that emerged are: parents and educators are anxious and very concerned about the safety of everyone; about 60% of respondents are not supportive of the tentative plans to reopen; if in-person instruction will occur for some, 9th graders should be included; people are disappointed with the lack of communication and the means in which information is being communicated; many are concerned about elementary students' ability to wear masks all day; and many people want a stronger emphasis on the socio-emotional well-being of students. Thank you!

2020/07/16 2:05:33 PM AST
Kelly Cosby

Durham, NC 27713

I want my children to learn in person with their peers, led by education professionals in a welcoming, nurturing school building as part of an in-person community with hands-on activities, able to move their bodies freely. This quarantine has caused intense levels of continuous stress for so many people. We need to be able to work and live in sustainable conditions, to put food on the table and pay our bills, and to be able to trust that our children are in the care of competent professionals as they learn together in a safe educational environment during the day. Schools are integral to our community and society; they are essential.

AND YET it is crystal clear that it is not yet safe to return children and educators back to schools under the current conditions. I had thought we would be in a more stable place with covid spread right now... we are not. State and federal public education funding was woefully insufficient before the pandemic; it is lethally insufficient now. It has to be Plan C, until it doesn't have to be.

Like many others, I have plenty of concerns. I'm actually quite uncomfortable with the idea of "distance" or "virtual" learning for young children, and I'm side-eyeing the concept of "personalized learning" too whenever it is referenced in isolation of the fact that children learn best in community with their peers and facilitated by skilled educators. I'm skeptical of standardized online learning platforms and tech companies collecting data on and advertising to captive young audiences. I'm worried that these platforms could function as new structures for sorting our children into tracks that funnel them into predetermined life trajectories based on a limited set of measures that benefit racial capitalism and white supremacy. I'm scared that we are participating in the stirring up of a perfect storm for the privatizers to construct narratives and use select data points to further undermine and undercut public education, and that, if we are too successful in our initiatives, that they will turn our efforts back on us to justify mass layoffs, deeper disinvestment in in-person learning systems, etc. I'm concerned that screen-centered instruction will look like test prep and we will have to focus on whatever can be used to prove to lawmakers that we are "progressing" students.

Even with the best of intentions and scaffolding, some children, teachers and families will thrive with online learning and some will flounder and struggle – because we live in an inequitable society, we are at risk of reproducing and amplifying the same inequities via distance learning as well. I'm worried about what this means for Black and Brown children. I'm worried about what this means for families with low-incomes/ cash-poor. I'm worried about what this means for families who speak a language other than English at home (and this includes the many other languages spoken in Durham besides Spanish). I'm concerned about how the shift in the learning environment and curriculum delivery might negatively affect children who use EC and ESL services in order to fully access their rights to education. I am worried about the new ways that discipline disparities might manifest in this new distance-learning context and the fact that our student code of conduct and district discipline policies likely don't adequately address practices and procedures within these new online spaces and distance contexts. I'm worried that we will veer off track in our district- and community-wide goals for students to engage with culturally relevant curricula, texts and pedagogies.

AND YET Durham is, in this moment, equipped and able to move towards an infrastructure that can provide, at a minimum, nutrition services and some stop-gap instruction for a period of time so we can save lives from the virus, and focus on dismantling those inequities while demanding more for our children, staff and families.

Finally, I'm worried about the potential dangerous repercussions of high schoolers (and potentially middle schoolers, or younger, if we move to Plan C) being left alone all day for who knows how many months—this is a real danger for children who feel like harming themselves

or engaging in risky behaviors, or those who are not currently safe at home. I'm worried about the stunting of our youngest children's social and emotional development because of the lack of anything resembling normalcy for an extended period of time. I'm worried about the many hits to adults' mental health while enduring the complete upheaval of our lives and as we all try to raise and teach young people in this context.

AND YET our children, teens and adults still need to be actively protected from covid-19, to be alive, in order to protect our individual and collective well-being. Regardless of which plan we end up with, we need an infusion of funding and resourcing to support the mental health and well-being of our entire community. This is non-negotiable. (It is also a chance to consider reallocating county funds used for law enforcement in schools to full-time nursing staff – which of these are most needed to protect our students' and teachers' safety and well-being in this time?)

We can't remain in isolation indefinitely, but we don't know how long the present danger will linger or if/when it will spike, or re-emerge later. I hope that we find ways to use technology, during this time apart, not to keep children busy, quiet and distracted or for students to simply absorb discrete bits of knowledge that check boxes on core standards, but that we take this moment to realize and fully process the worth and significance of public education and why it's worth protecting and transforming. We still have the opportunity to construct curriculum and knowledge together, in relationship with one another, and nurture our community through this painful time.

If it has to be Plan C, and it is apparent that it must be, please let us honor children and educators enough to support them in doing meaningful work, in these online spaces, that is connected to their lived realities, interests and relationships. We can manifest this through critical, anti-racist and liberatory pedagogies, texts and curricula that affirm and engage learners, educators and families; through opportunities for children to learn in their heritage and home languages and preferred ways of learning, and for the curriculum to reflect their existence and value; and through inclusive online community experiences that are not segregated by race, class, language or ability. We are blessed to have local experts in this work that we can look to for guidance and ongoing assessment, and then when school buildings re-open, let's expect these to be the standards going forward in person.

No plan is without risks.

AND YET Plan C is the one that can keep the most people from getting covid-19. We are not stable enough in Durham to risk losing more of our neighbors by opening prematurely. Let us name the many risks inherent in Plan C, and then tackle them together until we can be present in the same spaces together again.

It has to be Plan C, until it doesn't have to be.

**4418 S. Alston Avenue
Durham, NC 27713**

As a DPS teacher, I greatly appreciate the willingness of Dr. Mubenga and the board to do what is best for the teachers, staff, families, and students in our district. I ask that you join other districts in our state and move forward with plan C for the health, safety, and lives of our whole community.

**2020/07/16 2:27:22 PM AST
Angie Mejia
14 Sweetbay Court
Durham NC 27704**

I don't think reopening schools is a great idea. We are putting our children and school staff at risk.

**2020/07/16 2:28:50 PM AST
Lauren Sartain
1006 W. Markham Ave.
Durham, NC 27701**

I am disappointed the the district is signaling moving away from Plan B. Personally, my child would benefit tremendously - academically and socially - from being in a safe, socially-distanced classroom. We did not excel at schooling from home, far from it - particularly with both parents working and a 3 year old to watch as well. It was stressful, and our Kindergartener did not grow as a scholar. She needs the expertise and guidance of trained educators and the support of other school staff; she needs her peers to play with and challenge her.

For some families, being in school means their children are safe and fed, and we as a society need to recognize that and the hardships a Plan C may impose in those situations. I know that in-person schooling poses some risks, but the benefits (and harms of remaining outside of the classrooms) need to be considered as well.

I know that there are some teachers who **want** to be back in the building a month from now. Can there be a plan that allows some teachers to come back and others to remain at home? That can allow families whose students need the structure of the classroom environment to return? My understanding is that the current Plan B would allow for that (and must have that for all of the students enrolled in Ignite).

Thank you for your time. This is a very difficult time, and I want to recognize the hard work that goes into making these decisions.

2020/07/16 2:29:08 PM AST
Greg Boyden
4319 Lazyriver Dr
Durham Nc 27712

Schools should not reopen when we are reaching higher than ever covid-19 infections and deaths. It's irresponsible and will not help the economy.

2020/07/16 2:46:01 PM AST
Anna Saucedo
311 S Lasalle St
Durham, N.C, 27705

Thank you in advance for taking in consideration our concerns. I would like to remain anonymous. I am currently dps employee. I have a young child and No family here in Durham to help if my child or myself get sick. This year was better upto covid19 hit better than 2018-2019 year. I am in a high risk due to I am in the frontline first contact person. My office is a high traffic area not properly protected and need Plexiglass Dividers pluse there is no ventilation. There is no available nurse. So, I kid of follow next to assit with general nurse concerns. When parents are called for pick up they take 1hr or upto a whole day to pick up students by dismissal. In where I'm extremely concern after dismissal when students are return from the bus. Sometimes parents don't have way to get students home or take upto 1hr/ half to pick student up after dismissal I'm also at high risk race catogory. Therefore I'm extremely concern for my child saftey. August is usually when the RSV - respiratory viral syndrome effect kids. September is when the flu will start impacting on top to deal with Covid-19. I would like to continue to remain anonymous and trust for you to make the best decisions for DPS staff.

2020/07/16 3:09:16 PM AST
Dana Branch
700 Walnut Crossing Dr
Whitsett NC 27377

I love my job and love the families that I serve. However I am scared for my health and for my children's, if we have to go back to school in person. I'm high risk, I have a medically fragile child, and my other child has risk factors as well. Please allow online learning options only. Please don't make us risk our lives to provide for our families. Please.

2020/07/16 3:17:19 PM AST
Laura McPherson
2618 Camellia Dr. Apt. G
Durham

I have been a teacher in North Carolina for 18 years and have worked in Durham Public Schools for ten years. I want nothing more than to be back in my self-contained class for students with disabilities this fall, but the hybrid plan that Durham Public Schools has presented is just not a feasible way to do this safely. Here are a few of the concerns I have:

1) Many of our school buildings are old and the HVAC systems are out of date. So you tell us to open the windows and take the kids outside. What about when it's a million degrees outside? Raining? Or when it gets cold? That's not adequate for me.

2) We don't have the staffing to create small enough groups of students to be safe, especially not to provide teachers for each of these groups.

3) We can't find enough substitutes during normal times. I haven't yet been given adequate explanation of how coverage for sick teachers would be provided.

4) We don't have a nurse in each school building. Saying we are going to have to "make do" just isn't adequate.

5) There has been no adequate explanation given of what the procedure will be for students who refuse to wear masks/maintain social distance/etc. I realize that we will need to have patience and compassion, but am also not willing to put myself and my other students at risk if one student is consistently refusing to do what they need to do. Also, what about our students who have disabilities and more challenging behaviors?

Until these questions can be answered more adequately than they have been, I have to respectfully ask that we proceed with Plan C. This is not a situation where we will get another try. We need to go in with a plan that will actually keep people safe, or we don't need to go back yet.
