
To forward to all school committee members, please

Spencer Harlow/Patty Miranda Harlow <theharlows@gmail.com>

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To: kfitzgerald@arlington.k12.ma.us

Hi Ms. Fitzgerald,

I tried to figure out how to email all the school committee members at once, but couldn't, so I am hoping you can pass along the message below. I appreciate your help and hope you and your family had a peaceful and lovely Thanksgiving.

Best,

Patty Miranda Harlow

Dear members of the School Committee,

We are parents of a 9th grader at AHS and filled out the survey about the second semester this past week. It was disappointing to not be given the option of leaving things as they are.

Clearly, one way of doing things won't for everyone, but it seems like the teachers are in a good rhythm and that asking them (and the HS administration) to pivot in a short amount of time is more disruptive than helpful. Being all-remote in the spring also means that there won't be the disruptions of unexpected returns to remote when AHS community members test positive.

It seems to us that keeping the current program, but addressing any specific issues that have arisen makes much more sense than switching to something completely new in just a matter of weeks.

We feel for the teachers who are balancing their jobs with their families—we are back in APS after 5 years in private school and our daughter has been having a very positive experience academically so far. Her teachers have gone above and beyond to make class interesting and interactive, while also creatively designing projects and assignments to get her outside and engaging with classmates. We never thought she'd feel connected to the school having been gone so long and being all-remote, but she really has.

We know there's pressure from all sorts of people to get the kids physically back in school, but we just don't think that works at AHS because of the construction and space limitations. It's a sad and hard time for everyone for different reasons, but what's been happening at AHS has been working well and improving. And of course, this year is a blip on the radar in the grand scheme of things—though it can seem endless amidst the chaos.

We are hoping the school committee listens to what Dr. Janger is saying. He's been so impressive and circumspect these last months. We trust that he has the best interests of all at heart and is doing what is feasible to keep improving the experience, but he can't get rid of the pandemic or make the physical space magically work. We would love to allow him and the staff to put their time and energy into running the school remotely—not into trying to make pipe dream wish lists turn into reality.

Thanks so much and wishing you all the best this holiday season,

Patty Miranda Harlow
Spencer Harlow