

Public Comment to Woodbridge Board of Education

Dear members of the Woodbridge Board of Education,

I am writing as a member of the community whose family has benefited from the ACES Open Choice program. Our family lives in New Haven, and we were thrilled when our son Remy was offered a place in kindergarten in the Woodbridge Public Schools starting in 2022. We were thrilled not just for him, but because we have a second child, and the ACES Open Choice program applies sibling preference to determine where applicants are placed. Remy is now a first grader with established friendships in the Woodbridge community and we, as a family, have developed relationships with families, teachers, and other staff at Beecher Road School.

We don't presume to understand the history and concerns underlying the decision for Woodbridge Public Schools to no longer participate in ACES Open Choice. We can speak to our personal experience as a family that has benefited from the program and will be impacted by its closure, and we would like to share that now. Like all families, we have made the best decisions we could for our family at major crossroads in our lives. In addition to the excellent social and learning environment at Woodbridge Public Schools, the sibling preference policy used by ACES Open Choice was a major factor in our decision to enroll Remy in Woodbridge Public Schools through this program. Our daughter, Lila, will turn 3 years old in April, and she will be ready to start kindergarten in 2026. If the option to apply to Woodbridge Public Schools through ACES Open Choice is not reinstated, we will have to enroll our children in two different school systems, or otherwise remove Remy from Beecher Road School in the 4th grade (which is not a grade generally available for new student acceptance through Open Choice). We are sure you can imagine how challenging this would be for a family.

Therefore, we would like to ask the Board of Education to please consider providing an exception to families with children already enrolled in Woodbridge Public Schools through ACES Open Choice to allow siblings to attend school in the district. Thank you for considering our request.

Sincerely,

Catherine Mezzacappa and Ben Carey

catherine.mezzacappa@gmail.com
gbcarey@gmail.com