

Kristine Edwards
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To the Woodbridge Board of Education Members and Interim Superintendent Syriac,

I am writing to express my concern that ample attention has not been given to the possibility that a hybrid model for the beginning of the 2020-21 school year. If it has been, it has not been communicated to the public by the Board of Education. I would like to see the hybrid model considered as possibly best option to mediate the safety concerns of both teachers and parents and foster a more calm and nurturing educational environment as the new normal is being discovered.

The hybrid model allows for a more nurturing experience for the children. Ten or so children in masks will be able to move around more and so do more interesting work. There will be more space to spread out for hands-on activities. The number of children in a classroom at 70-75% capacity means that they will need to stay in small desks with shields most of the time and the teachers will be tense trying to keep children separated and keeping masks on. Working outside will also be easier with smaller groups. The lower numbers of students per day in the hybrid model translates to so many benefits for the children socially, psychologically, and physically compared to the all-in model that we have in place now for the fall. It really needs further consideration.

The Amity district was able to confidently choose the hybrid model for the middle and high schools, and while the logistics are new and a bit confusing to parents, at the Amity Middle School Bethany PTSSO president, I can say that there seems to at least be confidence in this decision and clear expectations being rolled out. The idea of beginning the year in the hybrid model as teachers, students, and families alike navigate this new normal only makes sense. If the numbers remain low, and support an eventual full opening, an initial phase in the hybrid model will ensure that all in-person learners have learned the protocols and routines in a safe and calm manner and prove that as a community we can safely and effectively teach all under one roof.

Thank you for your time and I would appreciate if this concern would finally be addressed in the special meeting tonight, August 26th.

Kristine C. Edwards