

Public Comments to Morris Brandon GO Team – May 21, 2018

Good morning – my name is Brian Williams. I'm a parent of a 3rd grader and another student who attended all 6 years at Brandon.

I'm here to encourage the GO Team to live into its full responsibility for governance of our school. A large part of that responsibility includes more active feedback on the principal's performance.

Yes, APS collects many quantitative metrics on student performance. But measuring the true health and success of a school involves more.

Performance feedback on the principal must address areas like school culture, teacher morale and the principal's leadership behaviors.

The transition to a new principal is an important moment for this school and community. And we need to collectively commit to ensuring the right kind of leadership from the start. But equally important is implementing an improved approach to evaluating principal performance.

We should demand better for the sake of our children and our teachers, who deserve more than what they've seen recently.

Shame on all of us. The signs of trouble have been there for some time. In the last four years we've seen:

- The departure of so many of our strongest, highest-caliber teachers
- Three assistant principals in the last four years
- The filing of grievances and ethics complaints against the school administrators
- Public protests and picketing by teacher advocacy groups
- Extremely low teacher and staff morale

Brandon must move beyond the current leadership culture of fear, intimidation and micromanagement.

These issues and more are evidence that we cannot solely rely on APS to manage principal performance. The GO Team must be actively involved in the evaluation process. We should also demand action when our concerns fall on deaf ears at APS.

We are so blessed to live in a community of abundance – economic resources, influence, and high parental involvement. And we need school leadership that embraces this spirit of abundance and positivity, while demonstrating the values we want to teach our children.

I know the GO Team has a tough job. But providing continuous performance management and feedback on the principal must be a priority. For example, I would encourage the GO Team to conduct a meaningful and objective survey of the teachers on an annual basis. This survey should cover areas like overall morale, culture and organizational health. Data from such a survey should balance student achievement data to form a more holistic view of principal effectiveness.

Our teachers and staff need a true advocate, especially when they haven't seen that in APS or their principal these last four years.

The parents and broader community are here to help. Don't hesitate to reach out. Thank you for your service.

Brian Williams
bcwilliams100@gmail.com
404 772-2800