

## **School Board Comments**

June 18, 2024

Good evening Supt. Balderas, Board Chair Pérez and members of the School Board.

For the record my name is Lindsay Ray and I am a high school math teacher currently serving as the president of the Beaverton Education Association.

We made it to the end of this year! I hope that all our staff, students, and administrators have some time to truly embrace some rest over the coming weeks.

I want to start this evening by talking about two resolutions that were recently passed by the Beaverton Education Assembly Representative Assembly. First is a resolution on Dual Language programs. We want to celebrate the educators who are lending their passion for and expertise in educating students in not just two languages but also in academic content and cultural experiences. The opportunity to become multilingual is a gift for our students, and we are so excited those opportunities exist here in Beaverton. That said, we also want to be clear that the educators on the ground with students who are doing that incredible work need to be an integral part of discussions at the District level about these programs. We continue to ask for transparency, accountability, equity, and shared-decision making and this and all things that impact our staff, students, and families.

The second resolution is on the use of cell phones and smart devices in schools. The crux of the resolution is that we support banning cell phones and smart devices outright during instructional time. There are countless resources and stories from our own schools of students who are becoming more distant from each other, who are experiencing cyber bullying and an onslaught of mental health problems related to the use of smart devices. These trends are showing up in students at younger and younger ages. As educators who are working to create safe and effective learning environments for students, we must take a stand about the use of cell phones and smart devices within our school walls. Many many things are out of our control, and we must work to have a direct positive impact where we can. I have copies of both of these resolutions here to share with you tonight.

I'd also like to bring up once again the impending costs of Youth Services Officers or YSOs in schools. At \$750,000 for this next school year, this program is eating up funds that could be used for more counselors, for more social workers, for substance abuse specialists, and for a variety of mental health support for students. The fact that this funding amount for YSOs will increase over the next few years is maddening, as more and more of BSD's budget will be put

toward paying for police officers in our schools rather than trained educators who can help address the root issues of students' behavior. I hope the board will reconsider this expenditure in the next year and in years to come.

And finally, I'd like to talk about bargaining. We are taking a pause over the summer, and will be back at the table on August 20th. We hope the BSD team will come back to the table ready to reach an agreement. Our members are paying close attention to this and the bargain with our siblings in OSEA, and we stand ready to fight for the contracts our educators and our students deserve—contracts that recognize educators' expertise, that offer fair compensation, and that help to establish the transparency, accountability, equity, and shared-decision making I mentioned earlier.

I hope that you are all able to take some time to reflect on this past school year during this summer, to lean into the challenges, to recognize the bright spots, and to help us make the next year one of positive change for our students, staff, and families.

Thank you for your time this evening.