

## **School Board Comments**

September 17, 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're a little over three weeks into the school year, and over the past three weeks, the educators at FLEX Online have been working in conditions that, as many of you are aware of, are exceedingly difficult to teach and learn in. My understanding is that those staff were notified today of a number of moves to other District facilities to mitigate the noise, which is one of the chief complaints. While I appreciate the action to address concerns about noise, we are still left wondering why FLEX Online staff are being asked to report to random locations across the district, supposedly in the name of "collaboration" and "student access," when the staff had a system set up last year that was working well to meet the unique needs of FLEX Online students. These reasoning behind these decisions need to be explained to staff to prove that District leadership is being thoughtful about making transparent decisions that best serve Beaverton students and educators.

I also want to take a moment to recognize the work of the BSD maintenance staff who I'm sure have been working incredibly hard throughout the last couple of weeks as we struggled through several days of hot hot weather. I also want to make sure that our community and you know that even as the weather has turned cooler, we still have several pockets of classrooms and workspaces that are uncomfortably hot and stuffy. While many of our school buildings in Beaverton are in better shape than other districts, we must acknowledge that many of our classrooms still have unresponsive thermostats, vents that aren't connected, systems that need to be constantly reset, etc. The fans and windows that barely open (or don't open at all!) aren't keeping classrooms comfortable. I know our maintenance crews are continuing to work diligently, and we ask that there be communication with building staff about the progress of that work.

I'd like to talk about bargaining. I'd like to congratulate our union siblings in OSEA for reaching a tentative agreement with BSD.

For our own bargain, our team continues to advocate for safe learning environments, fair compensation, workload relief, and most importantly transparency, accountability, and shared decision-making from the District. I do want to mention that we've noticed something in the

proposals from the BSD team that is disconcerting. Beaverton educators are highly trained professionals who care deeply about our students and our colleagues, and we want to be able to provide the best education we can for our students. The proposals from the District team rise to a level of micromanagement that frankly does not respect our professionalism and expertise. We don't need more admin-directed plan time, we don't need every classroom activity to be under a microscope—we need to be supported by BSD leadership so that we can do our jobs well.

As we continue to bargain, I also want to note that in the BSD budget, the ending fund balance, which is money leftover after expenditures, is at \$147.2 million, or 19.8% of revenue. Over the last school year, BSD had an ending fund balance ranging from 20.0% to 22.8%. This amount is simply exorbitant. This is money that BSD should be spending on today's students for today's needs.

Our next bargaining session is this coming Thursday, 4-8 pm in this very room, and I hope the BSD team will come ready to recognize us as professionals and move toward a fair settlement.

And finally, as emergency ESSER funds from the federal government dry up in a couple of weeks, it is imperative for our community to know that we must demand from our lawmakers adequate and stable funding for public schools. We know that educators are being asked to do more and more with students whose needs are higher than ever, and we must have robust funding from the state through the state school fund and from the federal government through Title 1 and IDEA to create learning experiences that are meaningful and nourishing for all of our students. I encourage all of you to reach out to your lawmakers and demand that they fully fund Oregon schools.

Thank you for your time this evening.