

School Board Comments

November 12, 2024

Good evening Supt. Balderas, Board Vice Chair Rajee 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.

This evening, we are presenting you with a petition that has been signed by more than 2,200 certified educators and over 1,200 community members. The crux of the petition is simple: Beaverton students and educators deserve better, and we are all ready to fight for the schools our students, educators, and community deserve. The thousands of people who signed this petition did so with a commitment to take action alongside the BEA Bargaining Team as we fight for these issues at the table.

First and foremost, we demand **safe, supportive, and inclusive learning environments**. Educators' working conditions are our students' learning conditions. We demand schools that are physically comfortable and conducive to learning, schools that provide structure and support for students who are dysregulated, and schools in which educators have the resources and trust they need to serve all of our students. That includes allowing educators the freedom to use their professional judgment in determining what will best support their students' growth and learning, and to design lessons and adapt our teaching to meet the unique needs of each student. This directly impacts educators' ability to create learning environments where every child feels supported and safe. The District has a responsibility to ensure we have the resources to address student needs swiftly and effectively, and we intend to hold District leadership accountable.

We're also here to demand **professional respect, transparency, accountability, and shared decision-making**. Beaverton educators are highly qualified professionals who work directly with the students from our community every day, and our expertise and experience matter. This means we must have protected member-directed work and planning time for **all** members, including elementary specialists and counselors. Greater transparency, accountability, and shared decision-making are not just "nice to have"—they lead to better outcomes for students, educators, and families alike. We need authentic opportunities to engage in the decisions that impact educators, students, and families every day. It's time to prioritize meaningful collaboration to build the schools that we all believe in.

Third, we demand a **commitment to retention and recruitment**. To attract and keep highly qualified educators in Beaverton, our compensation and benefits must remain competitive. Inflation has eroded our take-home pay, while healthcare costs continue to climb and coverage declines. We know that the health and well-being of educators directly impacts their performance, which in turn affects our students. In addition, we know that our students thrive if educators want to stay and can afford to stay in this District. If we want the best educators in front of our students, we need the District to commit to offering wages and benefits that reflect both the rising costs of living and the value educators bring to this community.

Every single person who signed this petition is ready to stand up for the values that define Beaverton. We're united with our bargaining team in saying that these priorities—safe learning conditions, professional respect, and competitive compensation—are not negotiable. They are essential to fulfilling the promises we make to students and to building a school system that truly reflects our community's needs and aspirations.

Board members, we need you to step up and be part of the solution. Listen to the voices of Beaverton educators, students, and community members who have signed this petition. These are our classrooms, our schools, our community. Together, we're ready to take action. Thank you.