

School Board Comments

February 20, 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.

The first thing I want to talk about is bargaining. We had our first session last Thursday, and I'm glad we've gotten started. While you are looking over our initial proposals I want to remind you that educators' working conditions are our students' learning conditions, and the contract is our legal avenue to maintain and improve those conditions. We are excited to work toward agreements that truly serve the best interests of our students and educators. When our members get the necessary plan time to prepare the best lessons for their students, when our members get fair and competitive compensation, when our members have a limit to the number of students that they are providing meaningful feedback to...we can ensure equitable and intentional learning experiences for all Beaverton students. That's what we deserve. That's what our students deserve.

I see that the Board has a retreat later this week and I noted on the agenda for that meeting that you will be discussing student conduct and discipline data. I appreciate that the board is digging into this data, and I hope that you will have thoughtful discussions around it. In looking through the report, I can't help but notice that there are counts of disciplinary data from first semester of this year that show lower instances of many types of student conduct than in the first semester of 2018-19. I'm concerned because the many many stories that I've heard from members around the district paint a very different picture. We are seeing students' unmet needs manifest in unprecedented ways in every level, and I'm wondering why that is not borne out in this report. I'm hopeful that the board will dig into the veracity of this data with District administrators. We need to be clear-eyed about the challenges our schools, students, and staff are facing so that we can rise to meet those challenges in new and creative ways. We can't serve our students if we aren't willing to tell the truth about their experiences.

I also wanted to take a moment this evening to talk about the Dual Language programs in Beaverton. The expansion of these dual language programs taught by union educators brings valuable skills and perspectives to our students in a rapidly changing world. We are excited to see the legacy of these programs in our District. I also hope that as the expansion no doubt continues in Beaverton, that there is more intentional communication and involvement of our staff and communities in the selection of and implementation in schools.

And finally, I want to acknowledge that our union colleagues who work in the Northwest Regional Education Service District are still in mediation for their bargain with the Northwest Regional ESD administration. I want to express our solidarity with our union siblings and demand that the Northwest Regional Board come to a swift and fair settlement with these invaluable educators.

Thank you for your time this evening.