

School Board Comments
September 26, 2023

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 Education Northwest report on the middle school schedule will be shared tonight, and I encourage the district to heed the findings. Middle school is such an important and tumultuous time for young people, and it is imperative that the district develop a schedule that incorporates the input from educators and students who are in middle schools every day. I know this is a complex issue, and I'm hopeful that there is a solution that will underscore the importance of our students' experiences as well as our educators' expertise.

There is also a report on summer school tonight. I want to take a moment to recognize the incredible efforts of our staff to make summer school successful. From instructional aides, counselors, and teachers to site coordinators, district coordinators, and many other folks who worked diligently behind the scenes, summer school is a huge undertaking and requires many hours of work to make great things happen for Beaverton students. Thank you to all of you for giving our students a wonderful experience.

I also want to take a moment to acknowledge and lift up the efforts of the many people in our region who are fighting to improve our communities for students and families. Specifically, the United Auto Workers, the OHSU nurses, and our colleagues at the Portland Association of Teachers. These folks are working to ensure that families can afford to live in the beautiful Pacific Northwest, that our students and families have the resources they need to thrive, and that corporations and organizations are held accountable to supporting the communities in which their workers, customers, patients, and students live.

Finally, I want to bring to your attention the dire situation in many of the district's specialized programs due to critical understaffing of paraprofessionals. Students receiving special education services deserve safe classrooms with enough adults in the room to provide the support they are legally provided. With so many unfilled paraprofessional positions, there are many many classrooms that are not safe and that don't have that support. I hope the district will act swiftly to address this situation, to incentivize people to take on these positions, and to get our students and staff the support they deserve and so desperately need.

I hope that we can continue to work together toward the shared goal of supporting all of our students and creating the very best school communities we possibly can.