

School Board Comments

April 30, 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.

This evening I'd like to talk about the journey over the last couple of weeks with health insurance. According to our collective bargaining agreement, BEA members and the BSD school board are required to ratify any substantive changes in health insurance benefits. Two weeks ago, our members were forced to make an incredibly difficult and complex choice in a very short amount of time about huge changes in those benefits. BEA and BSD have a long history of collaboration, and it was disheartening in this instance of disagreement that as we sought information for members making this impossible choice, we were unable to get answers to emergent questions from the District's insurance broker and in fact were blocked from communicating whatsoever with them. To say the ordeal was frustrating is an understatement.

I do want to point out that I'm surprised not to see a ratification vote on the school board's agenda this evening as required in our collective bargaining agreement. With open enrollment starting tomorrow, I'm confused as to when this vote might occur to ensure that we are proceeding according to our agreements. I can promise that we'll be in touch very soon about that.

I want to acknowledge that every employee in BSD, including our members and our colleagues in OSEA, are facing difficult decisions with the offered healthcare options this year. We know that healthcare, like everything, is becoming more expensive, and we also know that one of the things that sets BSD apart as an employer is access to great healthcare benefits. The plans on offer are all going to cost our members' money in one way or another.

All that said, educator Appreciation Week is next week, which I think is strategically placed at a point in the year when educators are exhausted. I've heard stories from across the District of great things happening with students in classrooms, in hallways, in offices, in music rooms, and on playgrounds and athletic fields. I've also heard stories of educators who are burnt out, who are tired and trying to meet ever increasing demands, and who are coming to a job every day that is DIFFICULT. I can think of no better way for BSD to honor our educators than to commit to coming to the bargaining table with compensation proposals that reflect our expertise and

value to the Beaverton community. That includes the upcoming bargain with our OSEA colleagues.

In addition, we know that placements for next year are likely coming out next week. This time of year can often be fraught for educators. Another way to show appreciation for BSD educators next week is for administrators, whenever possible, to honor educators' wishes and place them in positions that they have asked for rather than transfer them unnecessarily.

To close, I'd like to reiterate something I shared here a few months ago. 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 is what we deserve.

Thank you for your time this evening.