

LIST OF PUBLIC COMMENTS

OCTOBER 5, 2020 Board Meeting

TELEVISED COMMENTS

Remote Learning

- Brena Gattuccio, bgattuccio@gmail.com

WRITTEN COMMENTS

Remote

Remote Learning

- Elisa Tseng, ejtseng@yahoo.com

Inclusion/Equity

- Joy Randall, joyous1118@gmail.com

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Remote Learning

- **Elisa Tseng**, ejtseng@yahoo.com

I am the mother of a 9th grader at Redmond High and am writing to let you know about my thoughts about this “educational system” our kids are currently participating in called online school.

In general, after watching my daughter participate in online school for a few months this past spring and fall (and hearing from her peers about online school) I am concluding that our kids would have been better off not being in online school during this pandemic period. This “educational system” is taking a huge psychological toll on our kids.

After the schools shut down in March, I firmly believed that online school would be a good alternative to “real school”. And despite the technological glitches and my daughter’s protests that she didn’t like this new way of learning in the spring, I too had high hopes that online school could be improved over summer break. I commend all of you, our school administrators and teachers for really trying for our kids. All the work and effort our school administrators and teachers have done and continue to do so that our kids keep up their academic learning during this unprecedented time is truly heroic.

But now that we are 3 months into this grand educational experiment, my daughter still tells me that she hates online school every...

As a parent, it is hard to experience your kid cry sometimes because participating in online school is so frustrating and stressful for her. The other day my daughter cried from receiving a D grade on an assignment; the first time she has cried from receiving a poor grade in school. She is typically a very resilient kid... I noticed her psychological health fared much better during summer break when she was not in online school. I heard from another mom that her son (also in grade 9) is also very stressed from online school and has similar negative reactions to it.

From conversations among others in our school community, it is apparent to me that many kids are becoming increasingly unmotivated to do online school because this technologically-based education system simply is not “user friendly” for humans. For example, kids at her school are playing “animal crossing” and shopping online during the live lessons. My daughter draws, dances and sings during the lessons. She said she needs to do these activities during school so she can better cope and not “lose her mind” from the inherently

very isolating and monotonous nature of this educational platform. Now I wonder if kids are really learning and absorbing the lessons in a meaningful way.

As this article points out, many college students are really struggling with online school too. (So how can we expect young children and teens to adequately cope with such a system?)

<https://www.buzzfeednews.com/article/tanyachen/students-say-theyre-struggling-with-online-classes-in>

To reiterate in hindsight it would have been preferable that our kids been given a pandemic “gap period” similar to a “gap year”; effectively pausing school for all kids until it is safe for the kids to go back into the schools. (To be fair, all teachers and staff should still be paid their salaries for the duration of the gap period).

In the hopes of making this educational experience more bearable for the kids, my daughter and I request that all schools in the District implement the following changes:

Give the kids more breaks from online school so they have increased time to engage in socially and emotionally-fulfilling activities which will help de-stress them during this bewildering pandemic time. For example, we suggest more days off and longer holidays until the kids can go back into the schools.

Put aside the anxiety-inducing traditional grading method (with grades A to F) for the duration of the online school period. Instead, adopt the motivating grading system that some Seattle schools had adopted; giving an A for doing enough to pass the course and an I (Incomplete) for not fulfilling enough of the class requirements. The next best grading system would be to return to the grading system Redmond Middle implemented at the end of this spring which was to give a P for doing enough to pass a class and I for not doing enough.

Thanks so much for your time and considering our suggestions.

- **Joy Randall**, joyous1118@gmail.com

I wish to acknowledge how much I do appreciate the opportunity to have spoken with board members, Mr. Carlson and Mr. Laliberte and Assoc. Superintendent Mr. Van Orden the other day through our linkage session. In addition, to hear from a student, teacher, and other parents was invaluable.

My heart still weighs heavy after hearing what was shared by the others of the challenges they've experienced when not feeling supported, trusted and valued in our school settings. It was clearly communicated how much we need to address inclusion and racial equity urgently, and not wait when there are students of color who are suffering in silence, teachers of color who need validation and support, and parents

feeling helpless in trying to find culturally competent assistance for their children's needs.

If LWSD does wish to show how much equity and racial justice is valued, then following through with giving Gloria Henderson a seat at the table as a cabinet member is an important action to begin with. Learning from the linkage session, I see that implementation of changes takes time, but after 3 years and still not adopting an Equity policy or providing the Equity Director a real budget to work with does not show much urgency, let alone interest or value.

The Northshore School District announced their Department of Racial and Educational Justice along with a newsletter last month highlighting the mission to "explicitly address and challenge institutional structures of oppression that have founded education". They continue to state that "addressing these issues isn't a choice or an optional part of education in the Northshore School District".

The Shoreline School District adopted S.B. 6066 that Gov. Inslee signed this summer to expand their curriculum.

Where is LWSD in moving forward as these other districts are?

I as a parent am still waiting to hear from the principals of my children's schools, of "how they are going to involve students and parents" in the Equity teams at their schools. Why is this not even been entertained or thought of before? There does not seem to be any encouragement or incentive directed to the principals to involve students or parents on these equity teams at each school. Why is that?

I encourage you all to read this article, if you have not yet.

MEET THE NAACP YOUTH COUNCIL AND THEIR PLAN FOR A SCHOOL YEAR OF RACIAL JUSTICE

<https://southseattleemerald.com/2020/10/04/meet-the-naACP-youth-council-and-their-plan-for-a-school-year-of-racial-justice/>

It is about an advocacy group, the Washington NAACP Youth Council (N-YC). They are hosting a virtual event, Launching the 2020-21 School Year of Racial Justice to unveil demands for the new year and promote Black Lives Matter at School's new Year of Purpose. Unfortunately the event is tonight, at 6 pm, but it should be recorded so that we can all learn and be guided by those that have been working so hard already on making change. The event info to access it is in the article link as well as other resources that are helpful. Please take a look, there are many resources out in our community.

It is equally and especially important in predominantly White school districts to address what's happening in our country right now. Silence only teaches our children to not care, to not feel they are part of a community that can make a difference, and really they are our main hope right now to ensure that BIPOC, particularly Black, Indigenous, Brown lives are valued and truly matter.