

PUBLIC COMMENT

June 1 – June 30, 2020

sbe@k12.wa.us

From: Tracey Beckendorf-Edou

Feedback re: instructional hours

Hello,

My name is Tracey and I am the superintendent of Cascade School District. First, I'd like to say thank you for all that you are doing to help our schools during this difficult situation.

I am writing to you because I saw that the state board is going to discuss instructional hours. I am really concerned about the definition of instructional hours and how we will meet that definition in the 20-21 school year. In the spring, it was made very clear to us from OSPI that when we were doing remote instruction, we could only count it as instructional hours if we were, say, doing a synchronous classroom Zoom/online lesson with our students. We have some ability to handle that expectation at the secondary level, although, of course, we need to consider students who do not have access to internet, etc. However, with our youngest students, we cannot feasibly meet instructional hour requirements under that definition if we have to do remote instruction. We can't Zoom with a 5-year old for the entire school day; it just doesn't work. Our parents have been quite clear that online instruction for our youngest learners requires constant parental supervision, and that is not workable for many families, especially for extended periods of time. In the spring, we provided a mix of packets with student activities that were individualized to the student and online lessons for our youngest learners. Thinking that we could move to all online for our youngest learners in the case of remote instruction is not realistic, even though I do think that we could learn how to improve our model. In addition, if we plan for a hybrid model of instruction, partially in-person and partially remote, we still run smack into the instructional hour concern for the times that students are working remotely. Right now, I feel like I need to plan for full in-person school for my youngest learners at minimum because I don't feel like I can realistically meet instructional hour requirements otherwise, and yet, planning for full in-person school as the only model doesn't seem right to do under our current public health situation.

OSPI has made it clear that 1) we have to meet instructional hour requirements next school year, 2) we need to consider other models (e.g. hybrid) in order to meet health requirements, and 3) we have to be ready to move to remote learning (Continuous Learning 2.0) at any moment. I feel that requirement #1 is causing huge problems related to requirements #2 and #3, especially for our youngest learners. I would like to be clear that I don't disagree with the expectations, but I don't think that the current definition of instructional hours allows us to meet all three requirements.

Anything the state board can do to help with this by making modifications to what qualifies as instructional hours would be greatly appreciated.

Thanks and have a wonderful day,
Tracey

From: Christopher Voss

Black History is American History

Dear Washington State Board of Education,

Hello, my name is Christopher Voss and I live in Kirkland. My children are currently students in the Lake Washington School District. I am sending this message today to discuss the integration of black history in school curriculum. It is a well-known fact that the pervasive racism in this country is a direct result of hatred and ignorance. However, no one is born racist; instead, it is taught. That said, it is possible to teach students to actively oppose racial injustice by giving an in-depth explanation of our country's history with racism. My hope is that if educators take the time to impart on their students the history from the United States' violent past, the new generation of students will grow to be tolerant of other cultures and aware of both previous and current injustices that African-Americans face in this country. The following is a list of subjects that should be taught in both middle school and high school in order to prevent racism in our country:

- The Mali Empire and Aksum Kingdom
- The Emancipation Proclamation and Juneteenth
- Red Summer, and the history of lynching
- The Harlem Renaissance
- Black Wall Street and the Tulsa race massacre
- The Philadelphia MOVE group and subsequent bombing
- Black inventions and contributions to culture (religion, food, music, style, etc.)
- HeLa cells

I urge the Board of Education to consider these requests and make strides to prevent the erasure of black history in schools, and believe that proper education will lead to the eradication of racial injustice in the United States. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,
Christopher Voss

Letter campaign: racial equity ed

Esteemed Board Member: I am writing to demand the implementation of Black experiences, voices, and history in K-12 curriculum. Subjecting students to a Eurocentric curriculum throughout their most formative years contributes significantly to the perpetuation of systemic racism within schools. This then contributes significantly to the degradation of Black people beyond the classroom. Please read the full letter of demands here:

<https://racialequityed.org/demands> These demands are not new. They are an amplification of the calls to action of activists, students, and educators who have asked your school district to immediately implement racially inclusive, anti-racist Ethnic Studies. The time is long overdue to make change. White supremacy in public education must end now. There is no room for negotiation and placation. The time is now to tear down racism and demonstrate your commitment to ending systemic racism perpetuated by the use of Eurocentric curriculum.

Regards, A concerned citizen

From: Lisa Edler

Subject: Please put our kids in school

Hi Susan,

We need to get our kids back to school full time in the fall. The current remote learning situation is NOT WORKING!

I am the mother of 3 boys in the Kennewick school district. My oldest son is finishing his 5th grade year. He is on a 504 plan due to a diagnosis of Tourette syndrome, OCD, and anxiety. He has NOT received the help he needs due to KSD's rule of no individual instruction. This is unacceptable! I realize not all kids have access to the resources they need for individual instruction, making it even more vital that you put kids back in the classroom ASAP. I am currently writing to all board members and submitting a letter to the editor to let my voice and the voice of my children be heard. This cannot go on any longer. My kids are falling behind.

Please check your sources and realize that kids are not dying from COVID in the state of Washington and there is even research stating they are not major transmitters. We are putting our kids in more danger by keeping them out of school. Please see:

<https://data.cdc.gov/NCHS/Provisional-COVID-19-Death-Counts-by-Sex-Age-and-S/9bhg-hcku>

Please let my kids go back to school. You have the power. End the charade and let our kids learn.

Thank you,

Lisa Edler

From: Mallory Self

Subject: 2020-2021 School Year

To whom it may concern,

I am writing as a concerned parent with 3 school aged children in the Kennewick school district. While we have been 100% understanding about school being canceled this school year, we feel it IMPERATIVE for our children to return to school in the Fall full time. My 9 year old sons NEED a teacher standing in front of them, they need social interaction for proper development and I need to be able to return to work. This has effected my 12 year old daughter even more. While being a 4.0 student, she still shows signs of depression from the isolation. Social interaction is crucial for her. School sports are crucial for her, as I'm sure they are for many other students. They need that outlet. When making considerations about what to do in the Fall, please, I am begging you to take these things into consideration!

Thank you for your time,
Mallory Self

From: Madeline Crawford

Subject: School Fall 2020

I am writing as a concerned parent of 3 children who attend KSD. I have two children in preschool on an IEP and a incoming 6th grader. My children all require consistency and stability in order to best learn. Preston, 6th grade, comes from a background with immense trauma. He thrives with consistent expectations and routine. He has needs beyond what I can provide at home when it comes to academics. He needs to be back in a classroom full time. Micah, pre-K, attends Keewaydin Discovery Center. Through out this shut down he has missed 0 speech sessions through the school district. I understand the pandemic and don't fault KSD for this. But he is currently receiving PT, OT and speech through private therapies where they are able to provide services safely. My daughter is on an IEP in the area of adaptive, cognitive and social. She NEEDS classroom time with peers to help her meet her goals on her IEP. My daughter is medically complex and yet I recognize that she is not likely to be heavily effected by COVID. CDC has confirmed that COVID is no longer thought to spread easily from contact surfaces. WHO has confirmed that spread from asymptomatic people is not as common as once thought. The data shows that children are virtually untouched by this disease, with the exception of the rare inflammatory disease that a small amount of children in the US have contracted. Please have our children return to the classroom full time in the fall. With masks, good hand hygiene

and temperature checking, we should be able to keep the children safe and growing in their education. These children need an education and distance learning interferes with my Childrens' rights to a free and appropriate education.

Thanks,

Madeline Crawford

From: Ally Sutherland, Grade 11 at Woodinville Highschool

Subject: Action needed in NSD

Hello Dr. Reid,

I haven't received a response to my original email that I sent last week encouraging NSD to take steps to take additional action in educating students about the racial injustices in our country. Since then, I have taken additional steps to identify what needs to change in our school district. In the first email I sent, I asked for NSD to take a bigger role in talking about current events and what our community can do to help. My school, WHS, sent out an email stating that they will begin to have conversations with our students. NSD and the WA State Board of Education have also sent out some links for optional use. I was thrilled to hear this, and was hopeful for the upcoming discussions to be impactful. There has been none. Not one of my teachers has brought any light to this situation and are continuing to follow a normal curriculum. Since my last email and the failure to address the severity of this situation, I began a petition that has gotten over 525 signatures from students, alumni, teachers, staff, and parents to ask NSD to take an active role in educating our teachers and student body about racial injustices prevalent in our society, especially with current events. Link to petition here:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1NTluCo9p5G9k3W6rHL7yFnJV7MkFicdGMku_yvLDEhQ/edit . However it does not stop there. This must be an ongoing conversation that does not cease after events have "blown over." Since I posted this petition, hundreds of voices have come together to address the lack of African American representation in our curriculum and how it has affected all students, and their overall education and understanding of racism and the role it has played, and still plays in our society. I urge you to read every single response. There should not be one voice that goes unheard. This is your school district, and your community, and it is important you listen to them, and take action accordingly.

Said best by Jane Elliot, "People who are racist aren't stupid, they're ignorant. And the answer to ignorance is education." I am asking NSD to be active in teaching your students how to be anti-racist. It is detrimental to only gloss over certain parts of our history, and only display one side of the story, which is overwhelmingly a eurocentric perspective. Begin adding black voices, and a black lens. Many of your black students have admitted to feeling underrepresented, and as if their history means less. It does not. It is apparent that students in our district are openly racist, and don't understand the impact of their words and actions. The media and their families can teach them this. It is your job to help them unlearn their racist thoughts and behavior, and

hopefully that message can even relay to their families. Teaching children who are extremely impressionable how to be active allies, fight internalized biases, and understand their privilege and how they can use it for good is needed if we want to create an equal, and anti-racist future. You are teaching the next generation. Do not ignore certain topics because you don't want to offend white families. If you are more concerned about the comfort of your white students than the oppression of your black ones, that is the real systemic issue in your school district.

I am willing to help and offer ideas, along with many other students and teachers standing behind this. My english teacher stated in the petition, "The district must be ready to hear what students and teachers are discovering in this work even if it means big change, even if it means everything we think we know about education might be wrong." We can no longer be unwilling to have uncomfortable and hard discussions about racism. If you truly preach that this is an important matter to you, you won't stop here, and you won't just "encourage" teachers to talk about it, it will be enforced. Let's begin to reshape how we view education. Whether that means implementing more African American history and the trials and tribulations they endured, and not just the gloss over slavery, or holding students accountable for their actions and words. Teach your students to never say racial slurs, to never treat another student like an outsider because of their skin color or background, to understand their racial biases and how to be active in unlearning them, and to actively see color and what struggles come with that. Do not stop today.

You now have over 500 people watching how you will go around change. We will help you, give ideas, and work with you, but it is ultimately up to you to make that change within your school district. I have linked a resource which could be a great outline for a new curriculum surrounding racism in our country. Link here: <https://nmaahc.si.edu/learn/talking-about-race/topics>. This needs to be part of K-12 learning, whether it is through english, history, or any other class where this discussion can be applied. There needs to be more representation within your staff and community, so your students feel heard. I am CC'ing Peter Maier (Chair of the State Board of Education), and Randy Spaulding (Executive Director, State Board of Education) who recently shared their commitment to racial equity stating they are "compelled to take part in creating new systems and structures that support equity for all those who live, learn, and work in our state." I am also including Chris Bigelow (Director of Equity and Diversity), and Ayva Thomas (Equity and Diversity Specialist here in the NSD). Finally, I am including a few of my peers who have offered to share this further and are interested in hearing your response.

The voices in this petition have shared both the struggles and the potential solutions that we can apply. Again, it is important you take the time to read every response on the petition. My hope is that when you read the input from your district it will become clear how important it is to drive real change within our district. As you always say, "imagine the possibilities" if we were to work towards a more equitable education to better our students.

Thank you,

Ally Sutherland, Grade 11 at Woodinville Highschool

From: Kara Clawson

Subject: How Will We Do Better?

Hello,

I want to say how much I appreciate your post on June 4th regarding your commitment to racial equity. I am curious to know exactly what actions are being taken to address this issue. Are we going to see a more thorough and inclusive curriculum that teaches true history and that embraces authors, inventors, scientists and activists of all colors, genders and ethnic and economic backgrounds? Will we build in SEL components that teach interpersonal skills to listen and understand others? That encourages a brotherhood with all humans on the planet?

I currently have 3 children enrolled in Washington public schools. I am also an employee of the Everett school district. As educators we are given this amazing opportunity to bring awareness of so many of these things while young minds are just starting to become aware of the world around them. We are in a position to teach them how to think critically and how to stand up and speak out when they see something wrong. We can do better by our students than has been done by us. They are the future of our society and if we want to see a change in society then this is an important place to start.

Thank you for your time.

Kara Clawson
Bothell, WA

From: Stephen Griego

Subject: Anti-racist Curriculum

My name is Stephen Griego, and I am a high school teacher. I have also taught from all ranges of age, from 6 years old to university.

I didn't realize that our education system failed me and other WA citizens until I taught for a year in a middle school in Oakland. Coming from Bellingham, with a 1.5% black population, in Oakland I saw the realities of the disparity, segregation, and police brutality that exist in our nation, and, devastatingly, how it effects black children growing up in this oppressive system.

Even still, I didn't realize until the recent protests how much the problem of endemic racism affects our own state of Washington. That our lack of diversity can make us even more amenable to not only deny that racism exists in our state, but to not recognize or be apathetic when we encounter it.

As an educator, I would like to propose a reform to WA education curriculum, which integrates a distinct and factual approach to American history which highlights the path of racist ideas and how it formed the oppressive state we are in today. Students should be educated on strong anti-racist principles, and why segregationist and assimilationist ideas are still racist and contribute to endemic racism and put black lives in danger.

I realize that such a system would have blow-back. But this is not a political issue. We need to remove political sensitivity from the Washington state curriculum because it will, in the end, save black lives and promote equity. Simply stated, it is the right thing to do.

I realize you must be busy, but I would appreciate a reply and an update on recent developments. Thank you for your time.

Best regards,

Stephen Griego

From: Jenn Kuoppala

Subject: Citizen input

To Whom it May Concern-

As a WA state community member and parent, I want to first express gratitude for your openness in considering all students during this time of upheaval and change within our communities. We are all in this together and being in your respective positions can't be an easy one when it comes to making decisions.

May we all be granted courage, unity and strength.

This resource regarding OSHA violations in regards to mask wearing was recently shared with me- written by a former Director of Teacher Education at the University of California, Irvine <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5ec33703d876e52434d8b91c/t/5edb22a93e8b82209be8ed9c/1591419562328/Presentation+to+Schools+and+Parents+-+Peggy+Hall+The+Healthy+American.pdf>

Please take the time to read this 1 page resource as well as look through the sources on the 2nd page.

The information is specific to California

The takeaways:

- lack of oxygen raises cortisol levels which long term is detrimental to health.
- lack of oxygen kills brain cells.
- masks restrict oxygen enough that it becomes an OSHA violation.

You may find these links informative as well:

<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5ec33703d876e52434d8b91c/t/5ee3c0e07c188012668acade/1591984353010/NEW+Letter+to+Schools%2C+Teachers+and+Parents.pdf>

<https://www.thehealthyamerican.org/research-links>

Please share with all the members of the "REOPENING OF WASHINGTON SCHOOLS FOR 2020-21 STAKEHOLDERS"

Contact information was not provided by our local district so I chose 30 members randomly to include in this email.

Best Regards,
JK

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From: Shalom Powell

Subject: We need our kids back in school

Dear educational leader of our state:

We Need Voices for Our Children.

Headlines have captured the impact Covid-19 has had on our vulnerable populations - those over the age of 65 and/or those with comorbidities. But there is another vulnerable population that hasn't had a voice and hasn't been a part of the discussion - *our children*.

Our children's school year ended with almost no notice in March. Plans for Fall 2020 are currently underway and again, our children have no voice. We have rumors of remote learning for two more months with a gradual return to hybrid learning in November, right when flu season starts, after 8 months of quarantine.

How do these policies make sense for our children?

I have heard of endless stories of children feeling depressed and isolated in addition to losing math and reading skills despite the best efforts of them and their parents. I have heard of parents struggling to be both teacher and provider for their family.

Parents should be paid part of what the state allocates for the education of each student (\$11,500).

Although stay-at-home school may have been necessary initially under emergency measures for a short duration, the longevity of these part-time to remote learning educational models have long term consequences to our children's education for the rest of their lives. In particular I think of the K-3 children who are supposed to be learning how to read so that after 3rd grade, they can read to learn. We can only imagine how much this will affect high school dropout rates. This critical time will affect the trajectory of their lifetime educational and professional career.

What type of danger does Covid19 present for our children?

In the first 5 months of 2020, there have been a total of 17,390 US deaths from all causes for ages 0-24 years. **136 were "provisional" Covid19 deaths.**

Let me emphasize this.

For an age group with a population of *over 103.8 million*, there have been only 136 Covid19 deaths. The common flu killed 147 individuals during the same time frame for this age group, 11 more deaths than Covid-19. Covid-19 deaths account for less than 1% of the total deaths that threaten our children, teenagers and young adults. So what is killing them? Based on 2017 CDC data, the top 3 causes of death for 10-24 year olds are: unintentional injuries (40%), suicides (19.2%), and homicides (14.4%). In 2017, there were 6,200 US youth suicides (15-24 years). How are we fairing this year? The federal crisis hotline, "Disaster Distress Helpline", had an *891% increase* during March of 2020 compared to March of 2019.

Have the continued "stay-at-home" Covid19 policies made our children safer?

The decision to keep our children out of school has taken away the only safe haven many children have access to. Not surprisingly, reportings of child abuse have dropped over the last 5 months - not because children aren't being abused - but because children are no longer interacting with primary abuse reporters: schools.

Child abuse is linked to a host of long term health consequences: depression, anxiety disorders, PTSD, drug and alcohol abuse, smoking and unsafe sex. Furthermore, the CDC states "approximately 80% of those who attempted suicide had a history of child abuse."

Are closing schools the most effective option?

In April, The Lancet published a systematic review, analyzing the effectiveness of school closures on reducing the Covid-19 outbreak. "Recent modelling studies of COVID-19 predict that school

closures alone would prevent only 2–4% of deaths, much less than other social distancing interventions. Policy makers need to be aware of the equivocal evidence when considering school closures for COVID-19.”

In Europe, 22 countries opened their schools this spring in some form and had no alarming increase in Covid-19 cases or deaths. Studies are finding that children are not the drivers of transmission for this virus. In fact, Switzerland, a country with a population density 5.6 times greater than WA state, opened their schools to full time at normal classroom capacity on June 8th.

We are going to look back at this and be blown away by the short and long term effects of keeping our children out of school for 8 months (3 quarantine, 3 summer, 2 proposed fall online). It’s hard to see this as a “cautious plan”. It is destructive to the lives of our youth. Our children need a plan to get them back to full time school as soon as possible. Please give our children a voice. Speak up now for our children.

Concerned Kennewick citizen and mother,

Shalom Powell

Sources:

[https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanchi/article/PIIS2352-4642\(20\)30095-X/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanchi/article/PIIS2352-4642(20)30095-X/fulltext)

<http://leap.leg.wa.gov/leap/budget/2019CitizensGuidetoK-12Finance.pdf>

<https://data.cdc.gov/NCHS/Provisional-COVID-19-Death-Counts-by-Sex-Age-and-S/9bhg-hcku>

<https://www.doh.wa.gov/emergencies/coronavirus>

https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/nvsr/nvsr68/nvsr68_06-508.pdf

<https://www.cnn.com/2020/04/10/us/disaster-hotline-call-increase-wellness-trnd/index.html>

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1494926/>

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4504697/>

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5101274/>

<https://www.cbsnews.com/news/coronavirus-school-reopen-millions-children-europe-asia-return-covid-guidelines-2020-05-21/>

Dear Officials,

I am writing to strongly discourage the State and district from implementing the COVID-19 "Guidance", specifically the wearing of facemasks by students, teachers and administrators, forced six-foot separation and the not sharing of instructional materials, games, etc. All the government agencies that are trying to "mandate" masks do not cite any reliable sources. They all reference back to other agencies with no medical research linked.

It does not make sense that we expect children to wear facemasks properly, when most adults cannot do the same. I also worry about children having clean facemasks. They need to be washed daily and it is not reasonable to trust that every family has the ability to own multiple masks for each person in their household and wash them often enough. If they are not washed properly then we have to worry about cross contamination of COVID or other germs, especially since most children will be touching their masks. What will children do with their masks during lunch? It seems like the teachers are being put in an impossible situation where the majority of the day will revolve around them policing masks instead of teaching the children the actual school curriculum. It also worries me that children will be treated differently based on their disabilities or beliefs/religions if they cannot wear masks. Finally, why would we require the least vulnerable population (children) to wear masks when communities are already in various phases and the whole population is not wearing masks? Forcing kids to wear masks, use hand sanitizer all day and social distance is traumatizing to children. Not being exposed to any germs will turn them into immune-compromised people.

The one positive that has come out of all of this is frequent hand washing. The schools should have focused on hand washing a long time ago. I hope this will be incorporated into the curriculum before lunch time for all students from now on. Children are constantly sick and germs spread so fast in schools because they are not allotted sufficient time for basic hygiene. I hope the new standard for hand washing at school will help the spread of germs at the schools in the future.

Below are the reasons (with corresponding references page) why school districts should open normally this fall and challenge the guidance being set by DOH, LNI, WA State Governor, and OSPI with no masks, nor forced distancing, no plexiglass dividers, etc:

These are Guidelines only and not enforceable by law. There is no legal statute that enforces these guidelines. "Guidance" means recommended actions. There are no legal penalties for not following these guidelines. Each district and/or school has the authority to implement the guidelines according to their own needs.

Requiring teachers, administrators, or students to wear masks is a violation of OSHA regulations regarding a safe and healthy workplace because of the documented health harms associated with wearing a mask outside of health care settings.

Per OSHA COVID-19 FAQ's - cloth face coverings:

The guidelines include a link to WA OSHA regulations, which state: "Cloth face covers are not protective equipment and do not protect the person wearing a cover against COVID-19."

Will not protect the wearer against airborne transmissible infectious agents due to loose fitting and lack of seal or inadequate filtration.

Are not appropriate substitutes for PPE such as respirators (e.g., N95 respirators) or medical facemasks (e.g., surgical masks) in workplaces where respirators or facemasks are recommended or required to protect the wearer.

Your workplace is MORE likely to be sued because of the health harms of wearing a mask by both the teachers and the students, including reduction in oxygen (below OSHA regulations) which can result in students or teacher passing out due to carbon dioxide toxicity and possibly falling, hitting their head and dying.

The FDA states "Cloth face coverings, whether provided by the employer or brought from home by the worker, are not respirators or disposable facemasks and do not protect the worker wearing them from exposures. Cloth face coverings are only intended to help contain the wearer's respiratory droplets from being spread. Used in this way, CDC has recommended cloth face coverings..."

The guidelines refer to the CDC, which offers no reputable medical or scientific evidence that supports the use of masks outside of a medical setting to prevent illness. None of the CDC's referenced studies are on the efficacy of wearing facemasks.

The Washington DOH states "This is not a mandate that you must wear a face covering." The California Board of Health states that "wearing masks could INCREASE RISK OF INFECTION". The New England Journal of Medicine states that, "Outside of a medical setting, the wearing of masks provides little, if any, protection against the transmission of disease."

Instructional impediments to learning: Will cause problems for daily learning and create problems for students with disabilities. Columbia University: "Many young children burst into tears or recoil when someone wearing a mask approaches. By putting on masks, we take away information that makes it especially difficult for children to recognize others and read emotional signals, which is unsettling and disconcerting."

There are countless documented physical, mental and emotional harms associated with wearing masks, social distancing, barriers, and hand sanitizer. Facemasks are threatening, menacing, and divisive; they impede normal social interaction; language is garbled; a barrier between student and teacher is created. According to American Academy of Pediatrics "Even a small amount of alcohol can poison children, depending on their weight and age".

There is no sound, scientific or medical evidence supporting "social distancing" or any other onerous recommendations (these are not laws, nor are they enforceable by law) such as no sharing of instruction materials or games, etc. There is ZERO science for having students sit in desks 6 feet apart. It is the opposite: the division is harmful on a physical, psychological, emotional and instructional level.

Your school is at risk for being sued for discrimination on religious grounds, because mask wearing may violate a person's individual religious beliefs. Discrimination based on disabilities is also a risk.

If students are kept from going to your school(s) because of a mask-wearing requirement, your school(s) may LOSE FUNDING based on attendance.

If a parent would like their child to wear a mask, that is a personal choice. There are no legal grounds for a parent to require that the entire school or student population be required to wear a mask.

Please see all of my references below. I look forward to hearing a favorable decision for returning to school in the Fall "as normal".

Sincerely,

Sarah Arrington
Lynnwood, WA

REFERENCES:

The reference number correlates to the number in my letter:

More data and links are at www.thehealthyamerican.org, along with additional well-researched instructional videos.

State Guidelines for Schools and School-Based Setting

<https://www.k12.wa.us/sites/default/files/public/workgroups/Reopening%20Washington%20Schools%202020%20Planning%20Guide.pdf>

"This is an important finding to inform occupational health and safety. Moisture retention, reuse of cloth masks and poor filtration may result in increased risk of infection."

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4420971/>

<https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/covid-19/covid-19-faq.html>

<https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/covid-19/covid-19-faq.html#cloth-face-coverings>

OSHA statement that "**cloth face covers do not protect against COVID-**

19." <https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/respiratoryprotection/standards.html>

<https://www.fda.gov/food/food-safety-during-emergencies/use-respirators-facemasks-and-cloth-face-coverings-food-and-agriculture-sector-during-coronavirus>

<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/32232837/>

<http://scielo.isciii.es/pdf/neuro/v19n2/3.pdf>

<https://medcraveonline.com/JLPRR/effects-of-long-duration-wearing-of-n95-respirator-and-surgical-facemask-a-pilot-study.html>

CDC has no evidence supporting the wearing of cloth face coverings

Video showing **no evidence from CDC** references regarding

masks: <https://youtu.be/OUUOq1ksiQQ>

None of the referenced studies are on the efficacy of wearing facemasks. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cloth-face-cover.html#studies>

Rothe C, Schunk M, Sothmann P, et al. Transmission of 2019-nCoV Infection from an Asymptomatic Contact in Germany. The New England journal of medicine. 2020;382(10):970-971.

Zou L, Ruan F, Huang M, et al. SARS-CoV-2 Viral Load in Upper Respiratory Specimens of Infected Patients. The New England journal of medicine. 2020;382(12):1177-1179.

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Board Members of the Washington SBE
PO Box 47206
600 Washington ST SE
Olympia, WA 98504-7206

Dear Board Members of the Washington SBE,

Firstly, thank you all for your hard work in pivoting and adapting your students' learning, in the aftermath of the global outbreak of COVID-19. I appreciate all you did and continue to do to keep our children safe. Next, I want you to know I write this letter as a person of color and the opinions expressed are only my own. I was educated in the public-school system of California. Right now, my son is enrolled at Garfield High School in Seattle. My primary goal here is to give you input as you reflect on, advocate for, and create our children's future education requirements. I usually do not write you letters but I accepted your invitation to hold you accountable.¹

As you plan to better our children's educational future, I ask that mandatory U.S. History lessons include more of what happened in our country's past, at age appropriate times (of course). As stated in the Washington Code laying out the goals of a basic education in our school system:

"A basic education is an evolving program of instruction that is intended to provide students with the opportunity to become responsible and respectful global citizens, to contribute to their economic well-being and that of their families and communities, to explore and understand different perspectives, and to enjoy productive and satisfying lives." RCW 28A.150.210

These are not my personal aspirations; it is the law. In pursuing these goals, I ask that your educators shine a light on the dark events of the past. Children are not born with racist biases it is learned behavior. As responsible and respectful global citizens, we all benefit when our children learn from our country's past mistakes.

Against the backdrop of anti-Mexican, anti-immigrant sentiment, a pandemic poisoned with anti-Asian sentiment, we collectively experienced the horrific murder of Mr. Floyd, and the

¹ "As the State Board of the Education, we are compelled to take part in creating new systems and structures that support equity for all those who live, learn, and work in our state. The State Board of Education is making the commitment to stand up and call out policies and practices that do not center the lives and mental health of our Black students and all students of color. The Washington State Board of Education members and staff are engaged in the ongoing work that includes recognizing our privilege, and continually reviewing our biases, beliefs, and actions. We ask each of you to hold us accountable." SBE's Commitment to Racial Equity, dated June 4, 2020. <https://www.sbe.wa.gov/news/sbes-commitment-racial-equity>

passive aggressiveness of the Amy Cooper incident. Anti-black racism was always ever present in people's daily lives. It seems to me that some people are just now waking up from a lack of awareness-of a deeply engrained systemic racism that persists, and that people of color have been fatigued from experiencing since the beginning. I asked myself, why is that? Why did it take some people so long to feel a strong desire to end racism? Maybe because, for these people, race and racism was an abstract topic, until now.

For me on the other hand, racism has been a very real part of my life. I was born in California. I was born into a family of agricultural workers, who worked in the vineyards planted in the hills of what is now known as Wine Country. I too worked out there in those fields as a child, alongside my parents. Over the years, with hard work and determination, my siblings and I, broke free from that life. But we could never escape racial injustices.

Based on my personal and professional experiences, and research on race and equity in the law, I humbly opine that some Americans feel this relatively new desire to act for positive changes because they are, just now, digging and unearthing knowledge to fill in the holes of their education. I further opine that the traditional curriculum normalizes racism, as it presents a sunny version of White people and White American history. White people and White Americans have long felt included in our American culture, in our public education, while others of us continue to be excluded or othered. The history of Black people and people of color, like those who look like me, has been mostly dismissed from mandatory lessons in history.

I grew up being treated like a foreigner by teachers and peers, which I resented. "Yeah but, where are you from from?" I have always felt pride to be an American, yet I am still too often seen as an outsider, as not belonging in my own country. President Obama's experience of this was public when some people refused to believe he was born here and demanded to see his birth certificate.² I have also experienced random micro-acts of racism from people like Amy Cooper, especially during Trump's "Build the Wall!" campaign era. Nowadays, these things are being filmed and shared. The topic of racism is not so abstract anymore, and students deserve the

² Also public is the unquestionable acceptance of President Trump's immigrant wife legal status. I realize a president's wife is not subject to the same citizenship requirements. It is also a fact that Michelle Obama was harshly dehumanized in some criticisms of her. Racism is a moral issue not a political issue.

historical context to appropriately understand and react to the ongoing racial justice issues in our country.

Black people, people of color, and those of othered ancestry backgrounds, have for too long been excluded from our children's history lessons. Their contributions to this great country have been swept under the rug, and their suffering reduced to a footnote or removed entirely from many curricula. That needs to end. The history of Native Americans spans thousands of years. There is so much to say about them. Another often-overlooked history lesson are the lynchings of Chinese Americans, Mexicans and Mexican Americans that happened. It is estimated that at least 597 Mexican Americans were lynched between 1848 and 1928. In my childhood schooling, I was not taught about the expulsion of Mexican Americans during the depression era. Moreover, as a young person I did not get a chance to acknowledge the fact that WWI and WWII were fought and won by all class of Americans, including members of often dismissed populations, like Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, Japanese Americans, African Americans, and Mexican Americans. In school, I did not sit with the discomfort of learning about the Japanese internment camps that were established during WWII by President Franklin Roosevelt. Nor did I learn to feel compassion for Chinese Americans after knowing that they worked so hard to build the railroads, to then have the Chinese Exclusion Act made law and signed by President Chester A. Arthur on May 6, 1882, prohibiting all immigration of Chinese laborers. It was the first law implemented to prevent a specific ethnic or national group from immigrating. I also did not learn to empathize with my fellow Black American's racial trauma, because I did not know of things like the Wilmington Massacre of 1898. Nor did I feel the sense of American pride, as a child in school, because I did not learn about the groundbreaking case *Mendez v. Westminster*, a class-action lawsuit--that successfully desegregated four school districts in Orange County, California. Mexican American families helped give way for the landmark case *Brown vs. Board of Education*.

It was not until after college that I learned of the above-mentioned events. I learned because I studied on my own. I learned about Redlining and the Jim Crow laws. It was also later in life that I learned of the tragic plight of Jewish passengers aboard the M.S. *St. Louis* that cruised off the coast of Miami in June 1939, because U.S. immigration authorities denied the passengers permission to disembark in Florida. Most of the ship's passengers were trying to escape Nazi Germany. Before knowing that, I thought the U.S. a sunny place with no part in that era of ethnic

cleansing. These are simply some examples of the raw history I went seeking. The history we must teach our children at age appropriate times. It may save them from a future that repeats past mistakes. It may liberate their minds to imagine a brighter future.

Although an idea of an optional Ethnic Studies course would be a valuable bonus to the coverage of a U.S. history course that excluded all of the above, it is not enough. Why not? Because it would not be mandatory and if it was mandatory and called "ethnic" studies it would in effect be viewed as the history of outsiders. When our great country's history is retold with all its richness, ugliness, and beauty, we all benefit. We all feel included and we see each other as fellow Americans.

Knowing these pasts may also help students acknowledge the American-ness of their fellow Americans. Knowing these pasts may help shine light on the fact that Black people and other people of color, like all Americans, are capable and intelligent enough to achieve personal and academic success.

When racism is kept safe within a school system it is continually fueled to persist, grow, and spread. As you reflect carefully on our students' current school curriculum, how honest are you willing to be when deciding on the necessary positive changes? How important is it for you to deliver to our children an education that better reflects the shared experiences of all Americans of one United States America? Like the late American Cesar Chavez once stated, "we need to help students and parents cherish and preserve the ethnic and cultural diversity that nourishes and strengthens this community-and this nation."

Thank you for reading my letter. I patiently look forward to your response.

Yours truly,

/s/ Trina Saldana 6/30/20

Trina Saldana

CC: Superintendent Juneau and School Board Directors: 2445 3rd Ave. S, Seattle, WA 98134

From: Andrea Lutes
Subject: History

Good Morning

First let me say that I do not have school age children, but with all of the things we have going on in our country maybe it is time to rethink what we teach in school.

As time passes we forget what this country is and stands for. A large part of our society has never known. No one taught them. Let's change that.

I am old and when I was in school we learned about our country and how it began.

Now there are young people in this country who do not even believe the Holocaust was real. Black people are still being targeted in many ways, when, after being brought here against their will, they managed to help build and defend this country and survive hundreds of years of racism. Do young people even know their history? I bet not. I am just learning myself.

I think its important for every American to begin their history at the youngest age possible. It should be a class that is required throughout their education. Not as an elective when they reach high school. How else will they be able to make the right choices for our country? They sure cannot do it by looking at social media.

You are educators. Please educate.

Thank you

Andrea Lutes

To whom it may concern,

My name is Rileigh Daniels and I am an alumna of the Lake Washington School District, Class of 2017 from Eastlake Highschool. I currently attend the University of Washington in Seattle. I am contacting you today regarding the implementation of “Life Skills” courses into graduation requirements for high school students in the State of Washington. Though I certainly received a fantastic education in courses such as arithmetic, English, history, etc., I do believe there are many necessary life lessons that should be taught alongside those courses. This could include lessons on basic banking skills, investments, how to read through contracts (such as home leases), how to file taxes, voter registration, job interview prep, resume workshops, etc. No matter how important it is to teach students a diverse array of skills such as arithmetic and science, these basic life lessons could help expand education past strictly academia, but also help prepare students for all aspects of life they will unquestionably encounter.

By educating students in these basic skills, graduating seniors will feel more prepared to go out into the world knowing they have these basic skill sets to get them started. I am in no way stating that they should have college level coursework on the fundamentals of investing, but rather that they should have a glimpse into those subjects listed above to help get them started.

The question I pose is, why not? I believe that education should not be restricted solely to academia, but rather include lessons on how to make oneself a better and more successful person in all aspects of life. Any of these skills I have gained in my life I have learned through my parents, but many young students do not have the privilege of that. Many students do not have this opportunity, thus setting them further back compared to the students who do. Teaching these types of skills will help give more opportunities to those without resources such as parents who are able to help their children in these areas. These skills are very important in everyday life outside of high school and college, and I believe that these skills will help educate and prepare young students for the life set ahead of them.

Please let me know if you have any questions or would like to discuss this further. I am happy to give more insight into these suggestions. I have directly contacted LWSD, but would like to further extend these suggestions to be implemented state-wide.

Thank you for your time and considerations,

Rileigh Daniels