

Good Morning Madam Chairwoman and Board Members of the State Board of Education. Thank you for coming to the great city of Yakima to let us provide input and partake of the important work that you do for the students of the state of wa, families and our economy.

My name is Ruvine Jimenez, and I am a Community Organizer for the League of Education Voters working in Eastern WA and other areas as assigned. We have obtained a field office space at the Goodwill Employment Center in Pasco, WA at 3521 W Court Street Suite B, Pasco, WA 99301

I would like to give public comment on the importance of academic skills in career readiness. As our Chairwomen Ms. Munoz-Colon mentioned when she shared the conversation she had with her plumber, **There is a base level of reading, writing, and math knowledge that is necessary to be successful in any career and we need to make sure students have those skills.**

- **Focusing on academic skills is not in opposition to career ready, it is part of career ready.**
- **Career ready is not just about technical skills, it is about the building blocks necessary to be successful in any field.**
- **We can't think of career ready as just the first job a student will have, a career is about lifelong learning.** For example, my first job was as a daycare assistant and as a food order taker for to go meals. Which, when I was let go at the restaurant I was told it was because I had made errors in calculating the meal tab.
  
- I was born in New York and lived on the 18<sup>th</sup> floor. the way I played outside was through reading. I learned how to read at a very early age and read every Children's book I could get my hands on and through my reading I traveled the seven seas with Sinbad, down the river with Thumbelina and learned to be careful for what I asked for as in the case of the red shoes. Through my early command of reading even though I did not graduate from High School because my family moved just as much as migrant families even though my family was not a migrant family. I had to take responsibility of my learning in order to be able to claw my way to an affordable living wage as evidenced by these certificates that my family pokes fun at me about. Therefore,
  
- **In addition to the academic skills, we need to make sure that students have skills (disposition) like working on a team, perseverance, and personal responsibility.**
  - **These are important in all things students will pursue after high school, whether it's a job, a two-year degree, or a four-year degree, who like myself might take a lifetime to figure out what they want to do when they grow up.**
  - **It is the K-12 system's job to make sure that students have the skills to access all of these opportunities.**
  - **Academic skills, learning skills, and social emotional skills.**

As a community organizer I had two different conversations with 2 students. One student was attending Pullman University and student number two was attending Yakima Valley Community College.

In two separate conversations they both told me that high school was a waste of their time as indicated by their having to take remedial classes. The horror I see is that these students thought that because they had a high school diploma that they were college ready.

I also know of a student that attended a STEM high school, graduated with a C-D average and passed the SBAC and started community college enrolled in college level classes. However if you only looked at the grade point average you would think that they would not make it in college.

After over 12 years of attending school, High School Students want their Diplomas to mean that they are either college or career ready.

I personally have seen that many students do not finish school because they are not challenged enough to make it enticing for them. Our students want to know that their high school diploma means what we have been telling them all their educational life that it will prepare them for a level entry job and or college or a university. Please do not take the accountability for rigor away by making things easier for students while they are attending school only to find out that they were not properly prepared for life.