

ROOY & WSBE

Community Conversations Final Report Spring 2021

Section 1: Executive Summary

This report provides a brief overview of the six-week Community Conversation project led by the Root of our Youth (ROOY) and Fernell Miller, CEO/Founder, The Root of Us. Additionally, we provide the key takeaways and enumerate them further in our recommendations.

Project Overview

The objective of this project is to center student voice, especially Black, Indigenous, People of Color, queer, trans, and nonbinary, in three interrelated areas of SBE work:

- Profile of a graduate (a vision of what students would be able to know and do by the time they graduate from high school)
- [Statewide K-12 Accountability](#)
- [High school graduation requirements](#)

To accomplish this objective, Root of Us (ROU) and its Youth division, Root of Our Youth (ROOY), performed several different consultation services with SBE staff:

1. ROU and ROOY provided expert guidance, research/best practices, recommendations, and draft documents to guide and inform their community conversations (held every week for 6 weeks). In addition, ROU and subcontractors supported ROOY during the emotionally and mentally challenging discussions in which the youth willingly engaged.
2. ROU and subcontractors designed and hosted six Community Conversations in which ROOY were the centered participants.
3. ROU and subcontractors summarized each Community Conversation in writing, including themes, actionable insights, and key takeaways.
4. This is the final report and final product associated with this project.

Root of Us and Equity Institute Approach

Our approach to achieving the project objectives involves intentional support around building a framework of radical liberatory practices in which vulnerability, love, truth, personal and collective power, mutuality, respect, and healing are consistently modeled and firmly held.

We engage in Racial Healing and Social Justice practices rooted in trauma-informed, healing-centered practices and specialize in Educational and Racial Equity, Identity Development, Anti-Racism/Anti-Blackness Education, focusing on Black/Brown Youth Advocacy and Empowerment. We are committed to building strong communities of practice.

Grounded in Emancipatory Education: Vincent D. Perez MPA

Being grounded in emancipatory education means that we focus on identity and dignity by historicizing and humanizing each other so that we may heal and liberate one another.

RCW 28A.150.211: Values and traits recognizing that specific basic values and character traits are essential to individual liberty, fulfillment, and happiness. ([definition of Basic Education, values and traits recognized, minimum instructional requirements](#))

- (1) Honesty, integrity, and trust;
- (2) Respect for self and others;
- (3) Responsibility for personal actions and commitments;
- (4) Self-discipline and moderation;
- (5) Diligence and a positive work ethic;
- (6) Respect for law and authority;
- (7) Healthy and positive behavior; and
- (8) Family as the basis of society.

Methodology

We engage in [Participatory Action Research](#), which involves researchers and participants working together to understand a problematic situation and change it for the better.

The young people of Root of our Youth (ROOY) spent the spring meetings with the State Board of Education (SBE) in Community Circles to discuss the following topics:

1. Profile of a graduate (a vision of what students would be able to know and do by the time they graduate from high school)

2. Statewide K-12 Accountability
3. High school graduation requirements

ROOY follow a process by which they meet, humanize one another, meet in and keep circle (a process modeled after Indigenous Talking Circles) six, and bring ceremony and ritual to their conversations. Every meeting follows a similar schedule as the following:

1. Check-in
2. Land Acknowledgement with ROOY and guests offering the lands upon which they were currently zooming
3. Overview
4. Ground-In: This typically involves a mindfulness process by which the group brings their individual attention and focus to their mind, body, heart, and spirit, so that they may bring all of that forward to the meeting. This could involve breathing, brief meditation, etc.
5. Review of Purpose
6. Engage in First Round of Circle focused on the topic (youth only)
7. Second round (youth and adults)
8. Third round (youth only)
9. Closing

We provided WSBE with meeting summary notes and agendas from all the meetings. In addition, we created a visual depicting our findings. Finally, we offer our final recommendations, which are the five following broad categories:

1. Stop Doing Harm → Do No Harm → Reflect on Harm → Amend Harm → Commit to & Create Culture Change
2. Creation and implementation of a comprehensive & holistic, long-term Washington State School System Decolonization & Recommitment to Intersectional Anti-racist Public Education Plan
3. Bold Re-envisioning of Learning in Public Schools
4. Foster Connection, De-legitimize Power-Over, Affirm Collective Power & Self-Authorship
5. Create Pathways (Routes, Avenues, Paths) to Graduation for All

Section 2: Summary of Key Takeaways

The “Who” of Public Education

While not asking themselves this question or answering it directly, the Root of our Youth (ROOY) weekly conversations flowed from this central question: “Who was public education

built for, and who does it serve well?" Again, ROOY participants returned to this theme; the State of Washington School System was built and operated in and through White Supremacy culture.

The students made comments such as, "education was not designed for me. I try to access education, and I am ignored, do not belong, am not seen, cannot access it because education is racist, full of White supremacy, the culture is based on White, middle-class values, and I am constantly being erased, targeted, marginalized, and minoritized." Specifically, ROOY highlighted the following areas as concerning:

- Erasure of intersectional Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) histories, accomplishments, and experiences
- Lack of BIPOC staff, faculty, and administrative representation such that BIPOC students fail to see themselves represented in meaningful ways within the school districts
- Ethnic Studies is not offered frequently, if at all, and it should be offered at every level and start at an early age (K-12).
- "My mental health is not taken seriously at school." The lack of seriousness surrounding mental health is something that ROOY youth return to again and again. The mental health of BIPOC and queer, trans, and nonbinary youth is overlooked and underserved.
- Counselors are often not available at times when students are in crisis, said one ROOY participant,

I think counselors should be available on weekends and evenings because that is often when student crises happen. We often do not feel comfortable just talking with the people closest to us.

Continuing on the topic of mental health and what is missing from schools, ROOY participants stressed that the importance of mental health be within the awareness of all adults on campus because it is one of the most critical issues facing young people. They noted that the stress of school did not help with that; in fact, it made it worse. They said that all roads to graduation, inclusive of the formalized Pathways, were built for White, middle-class families and stressed their lives and those of their families. One participant shared,

I was never made to feel more like a failure than when I worked a 19 hour day and was shamed for not doing more.

The students noted that this also perpetuated eating disorders stating that one lesson taught them how to count calories, which was “not a great idea for a bunch of teens who are already worried about their bodies all the time.”

What is the profile of a Washington Schools graduate?

A graduate who is ready for the world as it is, not as it was, as we wish it were, or as we think it should or could be

- This means the graduate has had opportunities such as:
 - Learning with and from a diverse set of teachers, staff, administrators, and peers
 - Taking self-directed courses that align with student interests allows them to better prepare themselves for their idea of success—not one prescribed by “White, middle-class standards.”
 - Internships and/or credits can be applied to work-study or skill-development (e.g., learning how to record, podcast, balance a budget, understand and work with feelings, deal with conflict, etc.)
- We want graduates who feel prepared for their next step, whatever that may be (college, work, gap year, taking care of family, 2-year degree, internship, travel, military, peace corps, activism, etc.)
- Life Skills: life skills class that teaches things like taxes, financial planning, applying to college, transitioning to post-high school life, trade school readiness, and more.
- All graduates should have taken at minimum one Ethnic Studies class: Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC), queer, trans, and non-binary (QTNB and/or LGBTQIA+) narratives, histories, and experiences should be represented throughout the curriculum.
- Schools should Ethnic Studies at an early age.
- Mastery-based learning should be considered more readily across the state because it leads to deeper learning and is more student-centered.
- Student-directed learning is needed because as students, ROOY, noted that they wanted more flexibility to direct their career development, pathways to graduation, and better understand how classes applied to their real lives.

I try to access education and a pathway to college, and I am ignored, do not belong, am not seen, cannot access because education is exclusive and elusive. The pathway to college is a mystery to me (as a first-generation college student), my parents did not go and do not know how to go, and counselors make so many assumptions.

- A graduate who has felt valued and respected holistically
 - Intersectional anti-racism as a central value and practice of Washington Schools

What is missing from Washington Schools?

Public education, rife with White supremacy culture, “was not built for the people I care about or me; we are erased, ignored, tokenized. My mental health and the mental health of Black, Indigenous, Students of Color, queer, trans, and nonbinary students is not taken seriously.”

When contemplating what was missing from Washington’s schools, ROOY students returned to conversations about equity, holistic education, connection, relationship/community building, ethnic studies, a commitment to an anti-racist and anti-oppressive school system, and mutuality.

Equity

- Mental Health is not prioritized and/or ignored.
- Flexibility is lacking in terms of pathways, credits, time of day when classes take place, really everything.
- Care for Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) students
- Care for queer, trans, and non-binary (QTNB and/or LGBTQIA+) students
- Types of credits: Make it more accessible for students to achieve credits through life/work/familial/community experiences such as internships, work-study, activism, student-directed research, and more.
- Types of activities that are funded (sports, particularly football, basketball, soccer) vs. those that are defunded in budget crises (music, drama, art, areas that have a subjective aspect to them vs. more “objective” courses)

Teaching Black students their lives are political and don’t belong in classrooms.

Ethnic Studies

- Ethnic Studies is not a focus and does not exist in every school or at every level.
- We know that Ethnic Studies is under attack nationally, so this is the time to ensure that we include ES in our curriculum.
- Ethnic Studies should be offered at every level and should start in Kindergarten.

Narratives not focused on White communities or White people and White history are left out, told poorly, or narrated from tragic perspectives. We need to center these stories, teach them from a holistic view with nuance, and understand that counter-narratives are not enough. We need just plain narratives too.

Open & Honest Conversations about White Supremacy & Cis/Heteropatriarchy

ROOY participants often spoke clearly, and without hesitation about the systemic oppression present throughout the schools. They named racism, cissexism, homophobia, classism, and nationalism as some of the more common forms but stated that all of them were present throughout. They wanted the schools to take an active anti-oppression stance, but they had not seen that the entire time they had been in school. They are tired of waiting.

Black, Indigenous, & Students of Color are not political matters to be shied away from; they are students.

- ***Narratives of resistance, not just tragedy***
- Pointed efforts at identity development for all
- When oppressive things happen, they are infrequently dealt with by teachers.

School feels like an institution stuck in the 19th century, teaching students to be compliant and obedient workers lacking creativity.

Holistic Education

Most of the students said that they did not feel that high school had prepared them for college.

I started doing Running Start classes, and I am astonished by how different it is from what I have been told to do all of my life.

Many people do not realize that the teachers' hands are tied, and they are required to teach the curriculum adopted by the district. In the experience of the ROOY participants, high school prepares you for higher education but not to be self-sufficient or to properly operate as a functioning individual in the real world. The youth talked about wanting to learn things like balancing their accounts, paying bills, handling conflict, and other daily activities.

Additionally, ROOY participants wanted more flexibility from their schools. They wanted to have more student-directed learning, more flexibility in credits, flexibility to show how you know what you know, and flexibility in how you get to graduation.

Relationship/Community Building & Mutuality

ROOY participants talked in-depth about the few parts of their school experience that they enjoyed, and that felt meaningful. All of these experiences were about connection. They all agreed that they had “like, one teacher that they took every class from.” This quote highlights both the scarcity and importance of the few adult connections ROOY youth have found within their schools. Connectedness and mutuality should be prioritized in classrooms, discussions, and other school settings, especially for Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC), queer, trans, and non-binary (QTNB and/or LGBTQIA+) students. Students agreed that engaging in discussions that center Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC), queer, trans, and non-binary (QTNB and/or LGBTQIA+) voices when learning about different topics is critical for several reasons: 1) for representation of the truth of the world; 2) to undermine White supremacy culture and work to rebalance systemic power in more equitable ways; 3) to hear and see their narratives, histories, experiences, and accomplishments in the center of the story of the U.S.; and 4) to counteract any historical legacy of White supremacist and cis/het oppression that lingers within and threatens U.S. culture and those who are BIPOC, queer, trans, and nonbinary. They stressed the importance of recognizing the value and worth of ALL students—especially Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC), queer, trans, and non-binary (QTNB and/or LGBTQIA+) students in classrooms and curriculum.

The participants often said that the best way to hold space was to share power, to sit in a circle, for everyone to be at the same level, creating a humanizing, comfortable space. They said that it was only when the element of authority/hierarchy entered that the area became uncomfortable.

Randy (the authority) stepped into our room, which we created, so Randy is the spectator, and this space is still comfortable because he enters the student space.

ROOY wants schools to create classrooms that feel like safe(r) spaces for Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC), queer, trans, and non-binary (QTNB and/or LGBTQIA+) students. They question whether schools are worried about compliance or comprehension. They stressed the importance of concrete attempts to connect with students and roads to understanding catered to student needs.

Testing

The overall consensus around mandated state testing was that schools should stop teaching to the required tests and reduce mandated testing. Additionally, ROOY participants said they wanted to see more Project-based learning and a reduction in standardized test score reliance because test scores were not indicative of being well educated.

Given the expense of SAT and ACT prep courses, the participants all agreed that offering free SAT prep courses would be ideal.

Types of Learning

ROOY participants asserted their desires for more project-based learning, more mastery-based learning, and less banking model of learning. The sit-and-learn model of school in which information is deposited into young brains is flawed as we know that all people better understand, retain, and use knowledge and skills when they engage with them deeply. While this might be time-saving at the moment, it is time-wasting in the long run, and when we attempt to “save time,” who are we centering? ROOY said that tests needed to have more application and less about showing what you know at a particular point in time.

- Traditional learning (Banking Model) is transactional and top/down, which does not foster deep understanding and often discourages interest.
- Traditional/Colonial learning focuses on binaries (right/wrong, good/bad, Black/White), whereas real-world, authentic learning and demonstrations of knowledge focus on how the world functions in all shades of colors across the spectrum and the in-betweens.
- ROOY focused their attention on critical thinking and learning as keys to this kind of nuanced and authentic learning. Being able to ask questions of oneself, of what one thinks they know, of the sources of material, of the way in which knowledge is produced, and more is critical to liberated and authentic learning.

They said their favorite classes were often those without tests, that they preferred projects and puzzles, and wanted to show what they knew. Puzzles and logic games are not only fun, they frequently reflect real-life scenarios that require collaboration, thinking through problems, conflict-resolution, creativity, collectivity, and all the skills that ROOY continually tout as centrally important to an authentic and human educational experience.

Section 3: Recommendations

Recommendations emerging from ROOY answer the question of “How” to do the “What” they have been talking about to achieve the “Why” that they explain to adults repeatedly.

The “What’s” of the ROOY conversations can be summarized into five major themes: 1) Stop Doing Harm; 2) Create and Implement a Long-term Anti-Racist & Anti-oppression Plan; 3) Bold re-envisioning of Learning in Public Schools; 4) Understand Schools & Learning as Relational not Transactional; 5) Re-evaluate, re-vamp, re-align

1. Stop Doing Harm → Do No Harm → Reflect on Harm → Amend Harm → Commit to & Create Culture Change

- a. Lead with Intersectional Racial & Gender Justice ~ Racism, Sexism, & all other forms of Intersectional Systemic Oppression
 - i. Race & Gender are the binaries that are the skeletal system for racialized and gendered capitalism.
 - ii. Racialized and gendered capitalism undergirds the foundation of every system (schools included) in the U.S.
 - iii. ROOY speak to how racism, sexism, classism, xenophobia, and other forms of prejudice and bigotry feel pervasive throughout their school experiences; marginalizing Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC), queer, trans, and non-binary (QTNB and/or LGBTQIA+), and women’s histories, narratives, experiences
 - 1. Example: Lack of ethnic studies coursework, lack of history courses that center Black, Indigenous, and People of Color narratives
 - 2. Example: No commitment to anti-racist curriculum
 - 3. Example: Lack of depth, innovation, creativity, and curiosity when it comes to the lives, contributions, narratives, and experiences of ALL—especially Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC), queer, trans, and non-binary (QTNB and/or LGBTQIA+)—students in classrooms and curriculum

- b. Tend to the Mental Health needs of Students more holistically
 - i. Intersectional understanding of mental health--students are more than one “thing.” Students have family, family culture, ethnicity, race, sexuality, religion, gender, ability, nationality, language, body image/consciousness, culture, class, and so much more
 - ii. Black, Indigenous, and People of Color students have had to do the work of educating themselves on concerns of interacting with whiteness, just to go to school and protect themselves--this is causing stress, harm, anxiety, etc.
2. Creation and implementation of a comprehensive & holistic, long-term Washington State School System Decolonization & Recommitment to Intersectional Anti-racist Public Education Plan

- a. State-wide Audit of School System inclusive of the following:
 - i. Policies & Practices inclusive of:
 1. Graduation Requirements
 2. Recruitment, hiring, retention, promotion, & demotion of staff, faculty, administration
 3. Testing
 4. Project-based learning vs. Essay/exam-based learning
 5. Collect more statewide data from communities that have been neglected
 6. Pathways to Graduation
 7. Teaching styles, learning styles, and how they might best align
 8. Space-how schools are designed, built, decorated, etc.
 9. Financing of schools
 10. Equity across the board
- b. Analysis of Findings from Audit & Strategize
 - i. Who: Youth, teachers, community, administrators, consultants
 - ii. What & How: Strategize & Develop a Plan
 1. Create a long-term strategic plan with some short-term, quickly implemented changes guided by a working group of youth, community leaders, teachers, administrators, consultants, etc.
 2. Make plan public with a public report page, whereby the public can track progress, make comments, ask questions (See Right to

3. Bold Re-envisioning of Learning in Public Schools

- a. No Banking-Model
 - i. The sit-and-learn model of school in which information is deposited into young brains is flawed as we know that all people better understand, retain, and use knowledge and skills when they engage with them deeply.
 - ii. While this might be time-saving at the moment, it is time-wasting in the long run, and when we attempt to “save time,” who are we centering?
- b. Mastery-based learning for deep learning
 - i. Deep learning helps students connect the information to their lives and helps them see why it might ever be important to them in the real world - this is critical in a world that is becoming ever-more practically focused.
 - ii. Mastery-based learning fuels student confidence in their ability to learn, their intelligence, their ability to use the information with which they engage and consequently builds confidence and efficacy.
- c. More Project-Based learning for deep, experiential, real-world problem solving (see the above two points for this line item)
- d. More Student-Directed learning
 - i. This differs from student-centered in that the impetus for the subject of study, the methodology of the study, and everything else emerges from the student with the support of the teacher and peers as coaches.
 - ii. Affirms and follows student ingenuity and power to author their lives and path to success ~ following the students’ leads.
 - iii. Repeatedly ROOY called for learning and knowledge production as authentic and collective processes, wherein humanity, community, intuition, embodiment, reciprocity, intersectional racial & gender justice, and real-world value are centered.
- e. Social & Emotional Learning Prioritized
 - i. Social & Emotional Learning is one of the most important kinds of learning in K-12; it is de-emphasized and or wholly neglected.

1. ROOY spoke of hearing teachers say things such as, “I don’t do SEL...” and wondering, “How can you not do SEL? It is literally in everything!”
 2. Child psychologists, child development experts, and others will tell you that children change so much, have tremendous growth, hormonal shifts, and biological changes that compete with learning expectations and social development. Two of the most important aspects of schooling are the social and emotional components.
- ii. ROOY spoke to how Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC), queer, trans, and non-binary (QTNB and/or LGBTQIA+) and all minoritized and marginalized students are called upon to do daily, sometimes hourly, frequently moment-to-moment affective labor and empathy provision for other students, teachers, and administrators
1. Example: “When faced with microaggressions, students make survival/thrival choices around how to deal with these moments, which is an extra expense of energy and labor that they should not have to spend on nonsense but should instead be able to focus on learning.” ROOY
 2. Example: “Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC), queer, trans, and non-binary (QTNB and/or LGBTQIA+) are frequently asked invasive, disrespectful, and often inflammatory questions (both in class and out of class) and are either expected to answer them or expected to respond to them without showing anger or hurt.”
 3. The rules of engagement for minoritized/marginalized students are vastly different from those for cis/het, White, middle-class students who also fit other normalized identity categories.

4. Foster Connection, Deligitimize Power-Over, Affirm Collective Power & Self-Authorship

- a. ROOY spoke to the importance of the few connected relationships they do have at school (with mentors and peers)
 - i. “I am only connected with like one or two teachers, but I would literally take everything from them if I could.”

1. The connection between ROOY and mentors Fernell Miller & Erin Jones are perfect examples of this sentiment.
2. During the pandemic, ROOY youth met multiple times weekly without deadlines, without grades, without external incentives, without threats, but because they were connected and their mentors. Because they were being nurtured and fed by one another and their mentors

b. Connectedness related to Representation

- i. Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC), queer, trans, and non-binary (QTNB and/or LGBTQIA+) need to see themselves represented in the schools as teachers, nurses, social workers, administrators, other students, everywhere.
 1. As Ms. Fernell Miller says, “If you can see it, you can be it.”
 2. Seeing oneself represented, mirrored as an educator, professional, or worker, allows students to place themselves in that realm of success.
 3. Representation leads to the connection of one’s potential, dreams, aspirations, and who that person is in the world.

c. Connectedness & Mutuality are values that undermine White supremacy

- i. Mutuality vs. Individualism
 1. Mutuality does not mean co-dependence; it refers to the many world cultural norms of interdependence in which the health and well-being of the whole community are centered because it is the organism of which all are a part.
 2. The whole community benefits individuals by being healthy and robust. It is the part of every person to tend to its well-being, understanding that we are in this together, we rely upon one another, and the whole makes us stronger as individuals.
 3. Mutuality is often derided as co-dependent, a state in which individuals are fused, not creating a healthy whole, but rather dismissing parts of themselves -- sacrificing fundamental elements to make whole. This is not mutuality.
 4. Individualism and mutuality are not binary oppositions but are often held as such. In truth, mutuality or interdependence requires individuals to be clear and decisive about who they are

to be committed to connecting, giving, and in relationship with their community. Both are important.

- ii. Connection & Mutuality Build robust learning environments.
 - 1. Bonds and interconnectedness lead to more commitment to one another's success.
 - 2. This kind of learning environment helps a student fall in love with the process of learning and can engage a person in lifelong learning.

d. Connection & Mutuality foster kindness, understanding, civility, and equity:
In short, we humanize one another

- i. A primary theme from this work is that of no equity.
- ii. Connection and mutuality undermine power dynamics, enhance listening, understanding, humanization, and healing.
 - 1. To allow oneself to treat another with less than equitable circumstances or as less than a human, one must dehumanize that person or the group to which that person belongs.
 - a. Mutuality & connection require us to re-humanize one another
 - b. We must see each other in our complexity, pain, triumph, mistakes, assets, and everything in between
 - c. It is no a coincidence that the most violent and vile cultural moments that have occurred on this planet have taken place as power became more and more limited, to the hands of fewer and fewer, nearly always men
 - d. When power is shared, when we flatten hierarchies, when we believe there is enough, when we act in the best interest of others thinking that it is ultimately in our best interest, we undermine the brutality of White supremacy and connect with humanity that is right there for all of us
 - e. Facilitate community building between groups--this might mean helping to share histories, talk through traumas, etc.

5. Create Avenues to Graduation for All

- a. Testing
 - i. Addressed above

- b. Create more flexible graduation requirements
 - i. Create more student-directed pathways to graduation
 1. Internships
 2. Student-developed work-study experiences
 3. Student-developed exploration seminars where students could learn about, explore areas of interest such as creating podcasts or film making or financial independence and trading on the market
 4. Make it more accessible for students to achieve credits through life/work/familial/community experiences
 5. Create graduation pathways for students to feel prepared for their next step--whatever it may be
 - a. College
 - b. Work
 - c. Gap Year
 - d. Taking care of family
 - e. Activism
 - f. 2-year degree
 - g. Trade
 - h. Internship
 - i. Travel
 - j. Military
 - k. Peace Corps
 - l. Americorp
 - m. Running a business or two or three
 - n. Professional sports
 - o. Professional X, Y, or Z
 - p. And More

Section 4: Next Steps & Conclusion

While not representative of all students in the State of Washington, ROOY represents several significant subsets of students who have experienced historical and contemporary minoritization and marginalization: Black, Indigenous, People of Color, queer, trans, and nonbinary students.

The clear directives from this report are: 1) ROOY Washington State Board of Education (SBE) needs to radically intervene in Washington schools to transform the White supremacy embedded throughout the system; 2) SBE should develop a public accountability process around a committed long-term plan to decolonize its school system and eradicate racism, sexism, and oppression; 3) BSE should re-evaluate graduation requirements, monitoring for the diversity of options, pathways for success, flexibility, kind of credits, student-led learning, and student-centered approaches; 4) SBE should re-evaluate the learning process and how students learn, particularly in this time of high technological engagement, practicality, and social, economic, environmental, political, and civil disintegration within the boundaries of many nation-states; and 5) the importance of connection, community, and mutuality should be better understood, valued, and centered in Washington schools, as the most profound learning occurs relationally, not transactionally.