

From: Cesar G
Sent: Thursday, January 30, 2025 11:55 AM
To: Public Comments
Cc: ♥ BABE ♥
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Removal of Elon Musk Mural

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Dear Members of the Washoe County School Board,

I hope this message finds you well. I am writing to express concern over the mural of Elon Musk that currently adorns the walls of Smithridge STEM Academy Elementary School. While I recognize that Musk is a prominent figure in technology and innovation, I believe it is important for our school community to reflect values that align with inclusivity, respect, and positive role models for our students.

Musk has been a controversial figure, with his public statements and actions often sparking heated debates and controversy. In light of recent events that our country is currently facing that are beyond controversial, idolizing Elon Musk has a new meaning. Albeit this mural is merely a portrait, his recent actions during a press conference resembled and had many similarities of a reprehensible and heinous time in world history. His behavior on social media and in the public eye has raised concerns about his impact on discourse, especially in educational environments. Given these factors, I respectfully request that the school board consider removing the mural of Elon Musk from the school.

As an immigrant, United States Citizen, and more importantly a father to a child that attends The Smithridge STEM Academy Elementary School, many of my sons classmates and friends come from so many diverse and immigrant backgrounds we simply should not have someone such as Elon Musk pictured and idolized alongside people that have had such amazing impact and contribution in our country's history.

Our schools should serve as a space where students are inspired by positive, uplifting examples of leadership and innovation. I believe that there are many figures—both historical and contemporary—who better exemplify the qualities we want to encourage in our students. These role models promote inclusivity, kindness, and responsibility, values that will better serve our students in their academic and personal growth.

In accordance to the Washoe County School District

The Washoe County School District in Nevada has a student body with the following ethnicities:

- White: 41.6%
- Black: 2.7%
- Asian or Asian/Pacific Islander: 4.3%
- Hispanic/Latino: 42.3%
- American Indian or Alaska Native: 1.2%
- Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander: 1.5%
- Two or more races: 6.3%
- English learners: 14% (2023-2024)

Given these statistics, it is clear that many of our students come from immigrant and historically marginalized communities. For these students, the image of Elon Musk—whose controversial actions and statements often undermine the dignity and respect of working people—does not reflect the values we want our children to emulate. The mural does not honor the richness of their backgrounds nor does it inspire them to pursue their potential with compassion, integrity, and respect for all people.

I appreciate your attention to this matter and the board's ongoing commitment to creating a supportive and enriching educational environment for all students. Thank you for considering this request.

Sincerely,
Julio Cesar Gonzalez
Parent and concerned community member