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**From:** Mason, Michele  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 4, 2021 11:44 AM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** Public Comment, Board Meeting 2/9/2021

2/4/2021

Dear Board of Trustees,

I am writing today, because of the proposed changes to the English Language Department and the GT Programs. While it is clear the district is facing many difficult decisions this year, it must be acknowledged that the stakeholders being affected should be given the opportunity to work with those making the decisions to determine the best possible outcome for our students and families in spite of these challenges.

The decision to cut the EL Department's budget by 50%, as well as proposed staffing and EL service changes in the coming years, will affect thousands of students and families who currently benefit from these services. Like all things, there are areas of improvement in what the EL Department offers our families, but these services have been put in place for a reason- let's not forget the reasons or the individual students we serve in a reactive effort to manage budget concerns.

Additionally, our gifted and talented students are one of the most underserved student groups, with the misguided beliefs their gifts enable them to learn in any environment or circumstance. This simply is not the truth, and we do a great disservice to these students and their families by removing supports they so desperately deserve and need.

Each of these programs serve some of our most marginalized and vulnerable student groups. ALL students deserve the best we can offer, regardless of the circumstances. We can do better to address budget shortfalls without cutting these valuable programs to this degree. Our budget changes often, the needs of these students do not.

Sincerely,

Michele Mason

EL Teacher

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**From:** Jensen, Victoria  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 4, 2021 12:57 PM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** RE: EL item tabled until 2/9

Hello-

I am currently an EL teacher within the district, as is the case for many other EL teachers, I have several endorsements but I have chosen to remain an EL teacher because I recognize the importance and love my students. After reviewing the EL presentation, I do not see the evidence of this ELD site coordinator option working within secondary schools. It seems as if the data is geared towards primary-aged students and their schools. This is a vast difference and cannot be counted as effective until more, and substantial research is completed. The EL students numbers at the primary grade levels may be far less since the student populations are much less than that of a middle or high school. Likewise, the language learning curve bodes more in their favor since language acquisition is substantially faster and easier in the primary grades.

Secondary education for EL students comes with a far greater need for skilled and individual teachers to help support the leap from little to no core knowledge in English, and even less in academic English. We serve this population by increasing their awareness, and facilitating the learning of not only basic English but the massive expanse of varied English terms used within several core disciplines. And this work cannot be done by one person serving an entire school with hundreds of English learners. This must be done within the setting of a classroom. For co-teaching, the teacher of record teaches and then we, the EL teachers, clarify and make adjustments in real time. This is crucial for EL students because it is not happening a week or two later when the EL teacher finally gets to meet within a small group, but immediately. Likewise, EL teachers in sheltered classrooms help provide a safe space for kids to learn and practice their English skills. I have seen students read and write perfectly well, but cannot speak in English due to their lack of practice, and a large classroom setting is not the place to make the English learner feel at ease with their fear of mispronunciation and jeers from other students.

I just do not see enough data to support that an EL site coordinator would be more beneficial, nor do I see a comparison that expresses the varied options within secondary ED where co-teachers may exist, or may not and the size and level of the entering EL students. Our school grad rates, and testing data are only as good as the least able of our EL population. If we remove the teachers and therefore the community then we will see more and more dropping out, and lowering test scores because the students, with their needs, will not know who their advocates are and will therefore feel more disenfranchised. We fail to teach the "whole" student. The teachers of record cannot bear this burden alone. We should not return to the model of a single teacher trying to meet all the needs of her students. This cannot be done and if we try to dismantle the system before really studying it due to budgetary constraints then we fail the student and harm their academic possibilities., which is the exact opposite of what we are all trying to do here.

Thank you for your time-  
Victoria Jensen

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**From:** Harper, Will  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 4, 2021 1:08 PM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** More, not less for EL

BOT and Ms. McNeill,

WEA members received an email stating that, "the WCSD Board of Trustees (BOT) will be discussing reductions in EL and GT allocations at the BOT meeting tomorrow." I am hoping this is a misunderstanding. I am an EL Teacher so I will speak to that. EL population is one of the most vulnerable we serve in education. During this pandemic you have told us how important it is to serve these vulnerable populations and we have put ourselves at risk to do so. "Sight facilitators" and trying to place more responsibility on non-EL trained teachers, in an effort to deal with the cuts to education that have and are coming to education, would have a lasting negative impact on the EL population. Training teachers on how to work with EL students in context of the subject matter they are delivering is being done and is a good practice. It is not the best practice or a substitute for teachers dedicated and specifically trained in serving the EL population.

We should be asking ourselves how we can be providing more support and resources across the board in education but particularly for vulnerable populations like EL. While it is true that potentially all teachers are teachers of EL, there is no substitute for the training, skill and desire EL teachers bring to teaching the EL population. You could make the case that we all teach English so should we reduce the number of English teachers? Of course not.

Please match your rhetoric with actions. Please take the lead on fighting for and helping the legislators understand that THEY need to figure out either how to "do more with less" or come up with revenue streams that let us do more with more. Let our budget issues be the burden of mining, Tesla, Amazon, pro sports teams, casinos, etc. This should not be the burden of the vulnerable EL population or any other in education.

Please stand up for this vulnerable population!

Will Harper  
EL Teacher/WEA Building Rep/Mountain Bike Team Coach  
Spanish Springs High School



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**From:** Maria del Carmen Olivas Ramirez  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 4, 2021 3:36 PM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] ELL apoyo para nuestros hijos

A quien corresponda:

Hace cinco años llegamos a este país, con 4 niños que sólo sabían lo básico en inglés, las escuelas apoyaron a nuestros hijos con este programa, fue realmente la diferencia para esos cuatro pequeños, que dieron un cambio total en sus vidas, incluidos, idioma, costumbres y personas que los rodeaban, este programa ELL (English language learners) hasta la fecha es lo que nos mantiene en la jugada en la educación de nuestros hijos, apoyo al cien por ciento que se continúe con este apoyo a todos los niños, de kinder hasta high school.

Sincerely

Padres extranjeros.

Sent via the Samsung Galaxy S7 edge, an AT&T 4G LTE smartphone

*To whom it may concern:*

*Five years ago we arrived in this country, with 4 children who only knew the basics in English, the schools supported our children with this program, it was really the difference for those four little one, who gave a total change in their lives, including language, customs and people around them, this ELL (English Language Learners) program to date is what keep us in the game in the education of our children, I support one hundred percent that this support continues to all children, from Kindergarten to High School.*

*Sincerely*

*Foreign Parents*

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**From:** Gregory, Tessa N  
**Sent:** Friday, February 5, 2021 8:53 AM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** Letter in Support of EL and GT Teaching Positions

To Whom It May Concern,

Trained EL teachers are a vital part of the success of all students. There are so many EL students in WCSD. Removing these positions will not only negatively affect the learning of EL students, but also the learning of all students. Teachers without EL and Linguistic training will be forced and unable to meet the needs of EL students. This will impede the learning of all students at WCSD. Please do not vote to end this program.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

**Tessa Gregory**  
Sparks High School  
Teacher-Distance Learning and English Language Learners

*"Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world."-Nelson Mandela*

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**From:** Adamson, Billie L  
**Sent:** Friday, February 5, 2021 9:07 AM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Cc:** David Beecher; Payne, Jessica M; Csepelyi, Tunde; Reeves, Melanie  
**Subject:** Proposed EL instruction cut

Dear Washoe County Board of Trustees,

Please do not take away 18 of our EL teachers. Item 5.05 will harm our most vulnerable students. Our newcomers deserve quality instruction. Yes, all teachers are language teachers, but NOT all of us feel prepared to teach morphology, conventions, syntax, register, and culture.... Many of us have a limited understanding of second language acquisition theories. It will be such a disservice to our most vulnerable students to take away 18 EL teachers from our district. The EL teachers at my school are such loving and passionate educators, the thought of schools moving forward with less EL teachers is devastating. It is simply not accurate, acceptable, or appropriate to pretend every WCSD teacher holds the skills to nurture language acquisition. The students that will be most impacted are not the ones that will have families filing suits against the district. Ripping resources away from our most vulnerable students is unconscionable at best, grotesquely evil at worst. Do not cut our EL teachers, our students need them.

Very Respectfully,  
Billie Adamson  
Senior Army Instructor for Sparks High School

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**From:** Medina Martinez, America  
**Sent:** Friday, February 5, 2021 10:44 AM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** Board meeting, 2/9/21

To Whom it May Concern,

Hello, I'm America Medina from Hug High School. I'm writing to you because i don't want our teachers to be taken from us.

For me and for everyone in this program it is important, because we are learning English. Without is, is would be impossible to be studying, just like living in the United States or any place where they do not speak Spanish. This class helps me to read, understand and speak English.

When I arrived, I did not know anything, today I can understand and write a little. It is important to me because I am learning so I can live here.

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**From:** Perez-Perez, Antony  
**Sent:** Friday, February 5, 2021 10:45 AM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** Board meeting

Dear Board of Trustees

Hello, my name is Antony Perez. I am writing today because it is important to keep ELL classes.

Well, the importance of this class is that students have help when speaking two languages, and if you speak those two languages you will have a better chance of getting a good job in the future.

It has helped me to practice another language apart from mine and have a good job future by speaking two language and having more opportunities in my life.

Sincerely,

Antony Perez

Hug High Schools



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**From:** Piceno Ramirez, Jose  
**Sent:** Friday, February 5, 2021 12:19 PM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** Proposed EL instruction cut - Piceno

Dear WCSD Board of Trustees,

I want to be respectful of your time and get straight to the point. I truly appreciate the work you are doing and I know you have to take tough decisions. However, I wanted to share a little bit of my story to try to persuade you all slightly in our favor. I represent one of our most at-risk, fast growing, but still under-represented communities. I have been a teacher for the past five years and I have taught both groups of students, GT and EL's. And it doesn't take long to learn that one group can exponentially do better than the other. Here are two perspectives I would like for you to consider:

1. I was brought to this country when I was only twelve years old. I didn't know any word of English. It was very difficult to adjust to a new culture, to a new language, and to a new lifestyle. But luckily, we had the newcomers program at Pine Middle School. I had the opportunity to continue my education around people like myself. People who knew my language, understood my struggle, and that overall that was a support system for me to keep pushing myself to do better and learn the language faster. My teachers were amazing, they taught us English in a fun and engaging way while at the same time teaching us other subjects such as math and history. Not only that, they showed us the U.S. culture so we could incorporate ourselves faster and when there were issues there were always our go-to person. At some point, when we knew enough English to "defend ourselves" they had to let us go and we were transferred to our zoned school. Let me tell you the big difference. Back in my zoned school I did not have an ELL support and my progress hit a plateau. I was not longer learning English as quick as I was. I did not have the support system any more. And till this day, I remember my first day as it was yesterday. I walked into my first class, and the teacher began to talk for several minutes. I did not understand ANYTHING of what she said that day. It was the scariest moment of my young life. I felt so alone in that over crowded classroom. What I hope you understand is that our EL teachers are not only teaching us morphology, conventions, syntax, or second language acquisition theories, but also giving us support, teaching us the culture, and helping us with simple aspects of life such as updating vaccination records, applying for certain resources, etc.
2. Now, as a teacher I can give you a whole other perspective. I teach GT, and yes, those students have their needs. But as a teacher I can say that it is easier to meet their needs and challenge them even in a non-GT class. What is not easy, is meeting the needs of ELL students in your classroom, specially those core subject classes. As a former EL student, as a math teacher, as a bilingual teacher, and as someone who has worked directly with ELL students I can tell you that there is NO WAY to meet their needs with what you are all proposing. I have worked by myself and with a co-teacher and the job does not get easier. I have had classes where over 75% of my class was ELL and in some of those classes I had no co-teacher. As a bilingual teacher who speaks fluent Spanish (my students native language), I struggled to meet their need and it was a very frustrating year for me. I couldn't teach my class in two languages at the same time. I couldn't teach first in English and then in Spanish. It was like trying to do two things at once. Sure, I learned some strategies like talking more clearly, pointing to objects as I speak, but those are not enough strategies for ELL students to become fluent in English or comprehend what I'm saying. They need a special class where they're taught to decode the language. At Sparks High School, we have seen the benefits of the ELL department. Just last year, 91% of our 9<sup>th</sup> grade EL students earned five or more credits compared to 75% last year. Additionally, 62% of 9<sup>th</sup> grade EL students earned cored credit classes compared to 47% from the previous year. Even with such amazing data results, a lot of our students drop class because they often come from a low-socioeconomic status. They don't have the support system that many GT students have. Most of our students are working after school to help their families. For many, the EL department is their support group.

Thank you in advance,

**Jose M Piceno-Ramirez**  
Sparks High School  
Math Teacher



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**From:** BRUCE FOSTER  
**Sent:** Friday, February 5, 2021 1:33 PM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Agenda 5.02

**\*SUPERINTENDENT'S RECOMMENDATION:** That the Board of Trustees adopts Washoe County School District Board Resolution 20-011, A Resolution that states discrimination and harassment will not be tolerated and resolves to create a system-wide commitment to creating an unbiased, inclusive, and anti-racist society through education.


Hello:

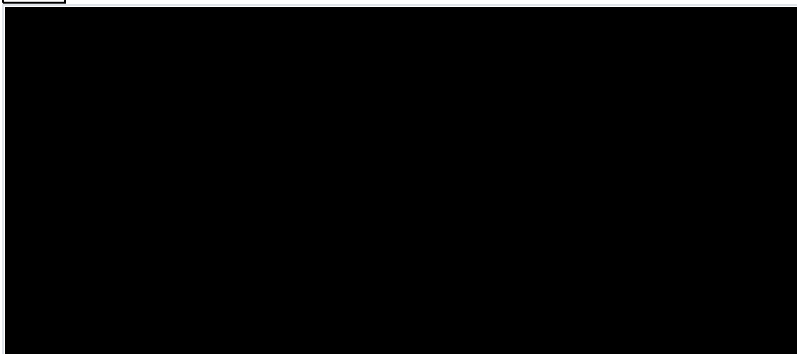
Absolutely oppose in diversity training.

I do so with the concern that the WCSD may be trading academics for "Social-Emotional Learning". It is apparently designed to not educate with critical thinking skills but to transform children's core values, attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors. Also, as we have all seen the destructive behavior of groups such as Antifa and BLM Inc, both Marxist organizations, in the last year. I have read that there are students as well as educators that have bought into anarchist narrative, white fragility/ racism. American Exceptionalism bad, Socialism good. We all have been blessed to have been born to American Privilege, and now it is the goal of both parents and teachers to cultivate that exceptionalism. The 1776, by President Trump's Advisory Commission, lays it all out.....

As stated in the conclusion in the report:

Among the virtues to be cultivated in the American republic, the founders knew that a free people must have a knowledge of the principles and practices of liberty, and an appreciation of their origins and challenges. While this country has its imperfections, just like any other country, in the annals of history the United States has achieved the greatest degree of personal freedom, security, and prosperity for the greatest proportion of its own people and for others around the world. These results are the good fruit of the ideas the founding generation expressed as true for all people at all times and places. An authentic civics education will help rebuild our common bonds, our mutual friendship, and our civic devotion. But we cannot love what we do not know. This is why civics education, education relating to the citizen, must begin with knowledge, which is, as George Washington reminds us, “the surest basis of public happiness.”

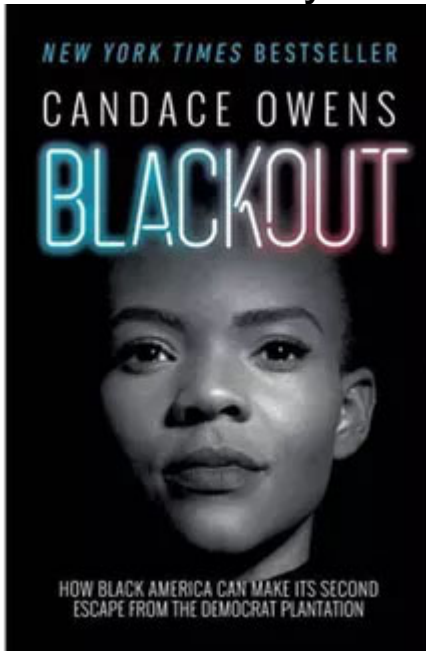
Other recommended resources: The documentary " Uncle Tom" by Larry Elder.  [Uncle Tom Documentary | An Oral History of the American Black Conservative](#)



**Uncle Tom Documentary | An Oral History of the  
American Black Conservative**

In a collection of intimate interviews with some of America's most provocative black conservative thinkers, Uncl...

A wonderful book by Candace Owens, "Blackout"



Bob Woodson : of The Woodson Center / [1776unites.com](http://1776unites.com)  
In response to the 1619 Project, Bob Woodson established the 1776 Unites Project to tell the truth of Black Exceptionalism.



Respectfully,

Bruce R. Foster  
Sparks

PS: I have grandkids coming of school age, and decisions will need to be made.

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**From:**  
**Sent:** Saturday, February 6, 2021 1:24 PM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** Secondary ELD Programming

**On behalf of Melanie Reeves, EL Teacher, Sparks High School:**

Let us go back to the 1920s where all students were thrown in together and English Learners were supposed to learn on their own or... not. Up until the 1960s English Learners had the opportunity to keep up with their peers or not and education did not worry about them or their education. Finally, the United States realized that English instruction could help immigrants to the United States and ESL was born. [History of ESL Education in the U.S. - Video & Lesson Transcript | Study.com](#) Evidently, we can take education back to one hundred years ago and forget about all the strides made in education for our newcomers. We can forget about how these new foreigners still believe they can receive an education and make a difference in their lives, here in the United States. We can regulate all the immigrants to low paying jobs and American poverty if they cannot learn on their own.

Welcome to education in Nevada!

Without EL classes for our newcomers, all of the teachers will have the additional requirement to teach to all students – even newcomers who do not understand the language – the same material at the same level of instruction and obtain results.

Teaching classes which contain 35 or more students will not allow teachers time to assist high school newcomers in understanding typical books and such as those taught in English 1 – 2 for example, the play “Raisin in the Sun,” by Lorraine Hansberry and, and essays which include “Salvation”, “In the Kitchen”, and “On Being the Target of Discrimination.” (Some of which should be read by all adults in education.) Teachers do not have the time nor ability to translate these essays into Spanish, Tagalog, Vietnamese, Dari, Swahili (all languages currently being taught English in our small school) while they help newcomers learn conventions, syntax, culture, etc. that are usually the focus of EL instructors. Not only English teachers will be affected. Science, Social Studies, all the Math subjects will also be responsible for teaching their own subject matter AND English to non-speakers. Teachers are not superhuman, they do require personal lives and sleep.

Nevada is 43<sup>rd</sup> in the nation for spending on education. [Education Spending By State \(thebalancesmb.com\)](#) We are listed as 48<sup>th</sup> for being able to prepare our students for college. [Best States for Childhood Education | US News Best States](#). College readiness is the set of skills, knowledge, and behaviors a high school student should have upon graduation and entering their freshmen year of college. It is all about the ability to find success while studying at an institute of higher learning. [What Exactly is College Readiness and Why Does It Matter? \(collegeraptor.com\)](#). How do we help our students obtain the ability for higher learning when programs that support such are slashed from existence, AVID just to name one? Nevada is not the best place for education if parents have concerns for their children’s education. This state uses funds for myriad necessities. Maybe it is time to raise taxes and really support education as it should be the number one priority for our state, especially in Washoe County. If we want a literate society, if we truly want education for all we need to have EL classes. To help students, to help teachers.

Our students matter. They all matter. Special Education students, EL students, GT students, and the lower economic students that come to our schools in Washoe County, in Nevada, to have a chance at education and a better life through education. We cannot stand by and allow school budgets dictate which students will be able to receive that education and which not. We cannot allow teachers to leave as their mental and physical health is pushed to extremes by the amount of work they are expected to produce. Teachers are people who care about our kids, yes, our kids. Some



teachers will stay just to help a single child learn and receive an education no matter what pay we receive, but is this right and fair? Please say no to ending these important programs that will indeed affect the future of the nation and the state.

Let us stay in the present and protect our future. Let us not retreat to education as it was in the 1920s. Please keep us in the 21<sup>st</sup> century to protect and teach our students.

Most Sincerely,

Melanie Reeves

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**From:**  
**Sent:** Saturday, February 6, 2021 1:26 PM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** Secondary ELD Programming

**On behalf of Anahi Velasquez:**

This program help me a lot.

With my English it help me

by ~~also~~ in my school life it

made my living in America

easier and in over all it made

a huge positive impact in

my life. as a person, student and friend

Anahi Velasquez

2021

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**From:**  
**Sent:** Saturday, February 6, 2021 1:29 PM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** EL Programming

**On behalf of Bahara Yousefzai, EL student, Sparks High School:**

Isahara  
Yousefzai

Ms. Reeves class is so important for me  
Because i'm come in U.S i am did not learn  
English properly and i learned a lot in this  
class and my English language became  
much better and i want to learn more  
English in this class to learn to much  
better.

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**From:**  
**Sent:** Saturday, February 6, 2021 1:30 PM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** EL Programming

On behalf of Brandon Gonzales, EL student, Sparks High School:

Brandon Gonzalez,

este Programa me a ayudado en este pais  
porque sino fuera asi no supiera lo poco  
de ingles que se en tances me a abierto  
pocas Puertas.

*This program has helped me in this country. Because if it weren't available I wouldn't know the little English I know. It has opened a few doors for me.*

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**From:**  
**Sent:** Saturday, February 6, 2021 1:31 PM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** EL Programming

On behalf of Cristal Martinez, EL student, Sparks High School:

Cristal Martinez Uribe.

pues el programa de Ingles si me a ayudado un poco pero no lo suficiente.

Y me a ayudado en mejorar un poco mejor la prononciacion y a aprender unas palabras. Me gustaria que me dieran mas clases donde pueda aprender mas el Ingles.

*Well, the English program has helped me a little but not enough. And it has helped me to improve my pronunciation a little better and to learn a few words. I would like to receive more classes where I can learn more English*

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**From:**  
**Sent:** Saturday, February 6, 2021 1:32 PM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** EL Programming

On behalf of Daniela Serrano, EL student, Sparks High School:

Daniela villanueva serrano  
Period 5<sup>e</sup>

Querida sparks High school queria aportar con mi opinion sobre lo que esta pasando con las clases de ingles, de acuerdo lo que esta pasando yo opino que deberiamos de tomar clases de ingles por que eso nos puede ayudar con nuestro Futuro aparte que hay personas que estan llegando a la escuela para poder aprender ingles, y tambien para aprender cosas nuevas, y cada dia estamos creciendo y queremos que no las cancelen para el bien de todos los estudiantes

*Dear Sparks High School, I wanted to contribute with my opinion about what is happening with English classes, according to what is happening I think that we should take English classes because that can help us with our future, besides there are people who are arriving at school to be able to learn English, and also to learn new things, and every day we are growing and we want them not to be canceled for the good of all students.*



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**From:**  
**Sent:** Saturday, February 6, 2021 1:33 PM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** EL Programming

**On behalf of Lenis Lopez, EL student, Sparks High School:**

Lenis Lopez

El programa de ingles me ha sido  
util he aprendido cosas como presentaciones  
los dias de la semana y los meses  
del año y algunas palabras mas.

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**From:**  
**Sent:** Saturday, February 6, 2021 1:34 PM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** EL Programming

**On behalf of Marlyn Mendez, EL student, Sparks High School:**

I think it is unfair that they remove this program because for those who come to this country and do not speak English it is very difficult to understand, although for some it is not very difficult to learn but for most it is, so in my opinion it is unfair that remove the program.

Marlyn Mendez.

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**From:**  
**Sent:** Saturday, February 6, 2021 1:35 PM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** EL Programming

**On behalf of Rashidi Juma, EL student, Sparks High School:**

Rashidi

Friday 2/05/2021

Yes, It's helpful, Without the question "Why". I've come in the US, I did know even how you say "Pi" but in a year and a half, here I am writing in English, even too many mistakes, I'm trying, and I hope to be better in the future. I'm doing something also with is helping me as well, but I will say in my whole life SHS is the foundation and the enlightenment of my English language.

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**From:**  
**Sent:** Saturday, February 6, 2021 1:37 PM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** EL Programming

On behalf of Zyanya Chairez, EL student, Sparks High School:

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5/2/2024  
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Week 5

OPTION

Is that they don't close and have the class because they help a lot. And that they have opportunities to learn English, and have opportunities for many people who have a future. Each of them as people, don't take it away they need that class to learn English.

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**From:** Nancy Galt  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 7, 2021 3:29 AM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] ELD ITEM 5.05-NANCY GALT

Attn: Honorable Board of Trustee Members:

My name is Nancy Galt and I have been an ELD teacher for 15 years at Wooster high school. I am committed to my students and SCHOOL! I am open to change as long as there is thoughtful research and extensive planning put into redesigning or reconfiguring how we educate and care for one of our most marginalized populations in our district, our newcomer ELD students and their

My colleagues and I at Wooster High School diligently serve our newcomers/Refugees and long term ELD students living in the United States.

The SIOP framework we use with our sheltered ELD culture, English and reading classes is effective and is a research-based protocol that creates a safe learning environment for newcomers.

ELD newcomer students have ELD classrooms that are specifically designed to prepare, guide and teach them skills and strategies that will help them navigate their new school, new culture and to learn English as a second language.

It is a sheltered environment where they can thrive, ask questions and not be teased for their accents, or any other nuances that come with being a second language learner.

These classes assist the newcomer in adjusting, and gracefully developing socially, emotionally, and academically as they transition to living in the United States.

Having also worked as a co-teacher with Dr. Dierenga in biology, at Wooster high school, for the last four years; we have first-hand experience working closely in a mixed classroom with general education students and ELD newcomer students.

We have a strong partnership and we have refined how we work with our English language development students in our general education biology classes. But because our classes are larger in size, the experience can still be daunting for a newcomer ELD student.

Any general education classroom is overwhelming for a newcomer to the United States. However, after they have transitioned through the first few ELD classes, they are more equipped and confident to partake in a full schedule of general education classes.

Firstly, when our newcomer ELD student arrives in America, many times they are nonverbal and have some times come from war torn country's or extreme poverty. They struggle and many times do not even have basic survival English words/phrases that they need to navigate their community, school schedule, make new friends, and try to communicate with teachers, students within a general ed classroom such as biology.

They don't speak English nor are they acclimated to living in the United States. This process takes time and is gradual. This is where our short term ELD classes come in to play.

The common goal of all ELD students in a newcomer class, is that they are learning the target language English and the culture together in an authentic learning environment. We have coherent curriculum guidelines and lessons for each leveled class.

The ELD student in a short term ELD classroom experiences safety and common ground when they each compare and contrast firsthand experiences as they go into the different general education classrooms. This many times is how their friendships begin to blossom in an ELD newcomer classroom. They are all surviving living in a foreign land, learning a new language and culture, and most of all learning how to socialize and adapt to living in the United States.

They don't feel so different and isolated after all. Even though they are all fish out of water living in a new country, new culture, all while learning English as their second language. Not to mention, that they are expected to master content in the various general education subject areas at the high school level while limited in their English speaking reading and writing abilities.

The good news is after having time in our short term sheltered ELD classes, they are able to take these learned tools into a general education classroom, such as biology, and feel more confident and secure as they navigate the academic biology vocabulary, discussions and interactions with the general education students.

In the ELD sheltered classroom, they have practiced social communication , vocabulary, reading strategies, and various English reading, writing and communication tools that make it easier for them to have conversations with other students socially and academically in their general education classes.

Dr. Dierenga and I have learned grouping strategies and have implemented several ELD teaching modalities that make the biology curriculums accessible to our newcomers. However, even after four years, I still feel that we have a lot of work to do in meeting the needs of our newcomer students in our biology and general ed classrooms.

Our students and their families need to be protected and provided sheltered ELD instruction while they are living and attending school in the United States. This is our responsibility as teachers and staff within our various schools and communities. The families and students need these basic resources for learning English and adapting to living in the United States.

Lastly, working closely with our site facilitator Nancy Carroll has been a strong support to our ELD department at Wooster. She has offered many effective reading and teaching strategies for our Reading and English language short term ELD learner classes.

Having an ELD site facilitator who closely works with our short term ELD teachers and students has been effective partnership.

Please consider all the different challenges that our ELD population of students are faced with when they enter the United States for the first time. It is critical for us as a district to create a balanced and holistic approach to providing for our ELD short term students and their families.

Thank you for taking the time to reflect and thoughtfully vote on this important issue.

Sincerely,

Nancy Galt, M.Ed  
ELD Teacher  
WOOSTER HIGH SCHOOL



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**From:** Escobar, Juan F LS2 USN, DDG77  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 7, 2021 8:57 AM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] ELD CLASSES REMOVAL

Good morning to all concern,

First of all I want to introduce myself, my name is Juan Escobar. I was born and raised in Colombia, I moved to the US when I was 14 years old and due to my grades from back home I was supposed to start my sophomore / junior year in high school. With the level of English I had, I could barely understand what people would say to me unless it was written. As you may know, we "Hispanics" have a hard time with pronunciation because of our hard R's and thick accent. Being around kids from other places around the world, different cultures but similar difficulties gives you that forceful backup not to be and feel ashamed of yourself when it comes to participation in classes. There was times in some of my regular English classes where I couldn't show my talent and high level of knowledge because I was afraid of speaking, people looking at me, not being able to go in front of the board and resolve a math problem and explain it or even raise my hand when I knew the answer to the question given because people would laugh at me. Well, this was not an issue in the ELD classes. I personally want to thank my 3 teachers from Earl Wooster High school Mrs. Nancy Galt, Mrs. Kaitlynn Cooper and Mr. John Martino for teaching me everything they knew, for being patient when I was having issues and for giving that forceful backup to stand up and be myself. Today, I am a logistics specialist for the US Navy. I manage millions of dollars on military equipment, maintain over 15,000 line item inventory, give reports to high ranked officer and still have the chance to have diversity on nationalities within my work space and this is all because of my ESL teachers.

V/R  
LS2 ESCOBARJIMENEZ, JUAN (SW)  
SUPPLY SUPPORT  
DLR / GCPC MANAGER  
USS O'KANE DDG77

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**From:**  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 7, 2021 7:42 PM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] COVID in High Schools

This excerpt was from Meet the Press on 2.7.2021.

“CHUCK TODD:

You set K-8 as the line here. There’s been -- is there more confidence on the elementary school level of the safety, versus middle and high school, and that’s why we sort of draw a line at eighth grade here?

DR. ANTHONY FAUCI:

Well, yeah. It's data -- you know, it isn't overwhelming, but it's strongly suggestive. There have been a number of studies to show that, when you have children that are a certain age, namely above eight -- eighth grade and higher, that they transmit as easily as adults transmit. Whereas younger children, even though they have virus in their nasopharynx when they get infected, they do not transmit as readily. So for that reason, you want to focus on that group, the K-8 group. But there are some data that suggest that.”

Although if you never had enough contact tracers to keep up with school and community cases, I guess it is easier to tell people there is little or no risk of COVID transmission in high schools???

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows 10

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**From:** Eliseo2  
**Sent:** Monday, February 8, 2021 5:52 AM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] ESL WCSD

To whom it may concern:

Hello, My name is Elíseo Cruz Bautista. I'm writing this email in an attempt to ask the WCSD to keep the ESL, ELL classes open. The reason for me to ask that is because I know if it goes away it will hurt a lot of foreign students coming to this country. I came to the USA in 2006 but it wasn't until 2007 when I moved to Reno that I had the opportunity to meet Ms Galt. It was my first year at Wooster and honestly it was very hard, I had only been in school for a year and my English was nowhere near to be perfect. I remember my first day, I wasn't only new to the school but to the City, I had no friends but Ms. Galt open her arms to me, I remember spending lunch time at her classroom. Weeks went by and I continued to do that and that's because I felt comfortable with her. Spending time with Ms. Galt became a regular routine for me since I didn't have any friends nor did I have anywhere to go. She was not only a teacher, she was a friend, she would help me with anything she could. Another good teacher I had was Mrs. Klum, I know she's retired but I couldn't leave her out, there's more teachers that also lend a hand when needed but I personally spent more time with them. After three years at Wooster I graduated in 2010 and Ms. Galt and Mrs. Klum were they supporting not only me but all my other classmates, seen them there made my graduation day and unforgettable one. Getting rid of the ELL/ESL classes would be a big mistake because without them I would've not been able to learn English, without those classes I'm not sure I would have been able to have the level of English I have right now and although I didn't not learn all my vocabulary at Wooster I know for sure it was the ESL classes that set a great foundation to my English.

Sincerely yours: Eliseo Cruz Bautista

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**From:**  
**Sent:** Monday, February 8, 2021 9:12 AM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] 2/92021 WCSB Board Agenda Item 5.02 resolution 20-011

I am writing in favor of item 5.02 resolution 20-011. It seems like a no-brainer to vote to create a System wide commitment to creating an Unbiased inclusive and anti racist society through education. But I am certain white supremacy in our community is out in full force with their comments. This is the fight America has been engaged in since before the Little Rock decision. The struggle continues every day, everywhere in our Country. This is your opportunity to vote for of a more just society. Please vote Yes.

Valerie Wade

Sent from my Verizon, Samsung Galaxy smartphone

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**From:** Lepe Lopez, Armando  
**Sent:** Monday, February 8, 2021 10:20 AM  
**To:** Public Comments

Dear Boar Of Trustees,

My name is Armando Lepe and I am Hug High School Student.

Ell class is important because we can learn different languages and so we can have open careers we can study what we like dear board of trustees.

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**From:** Uribe Rico, Cinthia  
**Sent:** Monday, February 8, 2021 10:37 AM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** proposal to reduce EL funding

Dear Board of Trustees,

My name is Cinthia Uribe, and I am a Hug High School student.

For people who do not know much English, our program is important to reinforce language. The EL class supported me to learn and understand more about the language.

The EL class is important to those of us that speak languages other than English, because if we want to study a career, be it doctor, or a Flight attendant we need to know English.

On the contrary if this class was removed or defunded it would be very difficult to learn the English language.

Thank you for your time and for reading my letter.

Sincerely,  
Cinthia Uribe Rico  
Hug High School English Learner

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**From:** Phyllis Westrup  
**Sent:** Monday, February 8, 2021 10:51 AM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Equity Training and Subjects

These subjects are social subjects--not what schools should be teaching. Please return to teaching our children ( my grandchildren) subjects that will help them go on to higher education and get a job. And while you are at it open our schools up. My granddaughters are in high school and are suffering because of the distance learning where they cannot interact with their teacher and other students. If you don't think teaching is a critical job, maybe teachers need to find a new occupation.

Phyllis Westrup

Reno, NV 89503

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**From:** Zane Taylor  
**Sent:** Monday, February 8, 2021 11:19 AM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Public Comment for 2/9/2021

Dear WCSD Board of Trustees,

As a former student of the district, it pleases me to see the district taking a firm stance on areas of civil rights and equity. The plan discussed in agenda item 5.02 is a chance for you all to show and finalize your commitment to being anti-racist and to correct any mistakes made in the past. I do hope that along with the steps outlined in the resolution, that you will look to specify Board Policy 1310, a policy that was debated many times since summer 2020. I hope you all will look to specify that speech related to support for both equality and equity and support for a world of anti-hate is indeed not political. Your resolution's steps look to provide students to know that they belong, so much as they can be their "authentic" selves. Your controversial past decisions that dealt with Black Lives Matter and the LGBTQIA+ flag have dealt a blow to students' sense of belonging and I hope this resolution accompanied by its actionable steps will seek to ensure that decisions such as that, which go against wanting students to be their authentic selves, will be reversed and not happen again. Agenda item 5.02 has my full support and I'm glad, again, to see the district stride to be a more anti-discriminatory institution.

Best regards,  
Zane Taylor, former student



The EL program is important for people who come from other countries. It is important not to take it away because it helps us learn English so much. This program helps us to lose fear and be able to talk to people, the ELL class is an opportunity we have to learn a language other than our own. These classes can provide us with a better future!

Thank you for listening!

Abril Dayanna Ramírez Peñuelas  
Hug High School

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**From:** Pereda Santana, Ivanna  
**Sent:** Monday, February 8, 2021 1:09 PM  
**To:** Pereda Santana, Ivanna  
**Cc:** publiccomments@washoeschools.net  
**Subject:** Letter to WCSD

Hello WCSD:  
We need to keep the ELL classes.

My reasons:

- 1) I am very happy with my friends, teachers and more.
- 2) I learn to read, speak, listen, and write.
- 3) The teachers are very good . We are learning in the classes.

Thank you for reading this.

Sincerely.

Ivanna pereda santana

Hug high school ELL Student

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**From:** Barrios, Cindy  
**Sent:** Monday, February 8, 2021 1:31 PM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** Board Meeting 2/9/21

Dear Board of Trustees,

Hello, my name is Cindy Barrios. And here is what I think the ELL program needs...

The importance of this class is that it helps you to improve your English and that you feel good because almost no one speaks Spanish. This class is helping me learn more English, to know how to talk and know words. The ELL program is important because it helps you feel good because you are learning.

These classes have helped me in my other classes because that way I can understand the other classes...

Please continue to fund the program.

Thanks, you for your attention.

Cindy Barrios

ELL Student at Hug High School

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**From:** Trook, Rebecca  
**Sent:** Monday, February 8, 2021 1:48 PM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Cc:** Csepelyi, Tunde  
**Subject:** EL Program

If we ignore the diverse needs of our students in Nevada, we would be breaking Civil



Rights Law!

R.S.Trook, SHS Library

Under civil rights law, schools are obligated to ensure that ELLs have equal access to education.

**Federal law is violated if:**

- students are excluded from effective participation in school because of their inability to speak and understand the language of instruction;
- national origin minority students are inappropriately assigned to special education classes because of their lack of English skills;
- programs for students whose English is less than proficient are not designed to teach them English as soon as possible, or if these programs operate as a dead end track; or
- parents whose English is limited do not receive school notices or other information in a language they can understand.

The Supreme Court agreed, saying that:

**There is no equality of treatment merely by providing students with the same facilities, textbooks, teachers, and curriculum;**

**for students who do not understand English are effectively foreclosed from any meaningful education.**

An equal education is only possible if students can understand the language of instruction.

Phone: (800) 421-3481

Email: [ocr@ed.gov](mailto:ocr@ed.gov)

URL: <http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/index.html>

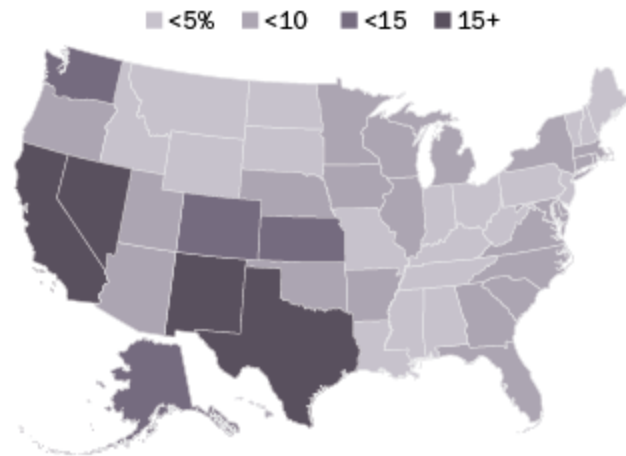
**National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition (NCELA)**

4340 East-West Highway, Suite 1100 | Bethesda, MD 20814 | [askncela@manhattanstrategy.com](mailto:askncela@manhattanstrategy.com)

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## States in Southwest have largest shares of ELL students

*English language learner students as a % of total public elementary and secondary school enrollment, fall 2015*



Note: State shown in highest possible category.  
Percentages are aggregated from data collection at the school district level.  
Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics.

**PEW RESEARCH CENTER**

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Dear Board of Trustees and Superintendent McNeill,

First thank you all for your time and dedication in looking out for what is best for Washoe County students. I know that you are tasked with many important and difficult decisions and while many have opinions on those decisions only a few step up to the task of making them.

I write to you today regarding the proposed changes to English Language Development services. I know that some changes are inevitable given the current budget situation and I want to make sure that as you consider what changes to make you are doing so with a full understanding of what EL instructors are tasked to do outside of instructing students, collaborating with content teachers, planning and prep work, duty, parent communication and all of the other teacher responsibilities that we all know about.

EL teachers have numerous time-consuming compliance responsibilities which you may not be aware of which include:

Responsibility	Time Frame	K-5	6-12	Nc
Screen new students, scoring tests, completing documentation	beginning of the year (high volume) and as need throughout year	X		X
Send home Continuing Placement and Exit Letters	Once yearly	X	X	X
Individualized goal setting/goal monitoring	Ongoing throughout school year	X	X	X
*Progress Monitoring Exited Students, (ESSA requires 4 years of monitoring after exiting)	October and April	X	X	X
Helping in identifying Designated Support for current & exited ELs for testing purposes	Mid-November to mid-December	X	X	X
ACCESS Testing	January to March	X	X	X
Writing Samples & data collection for 5 <sup>th</sup> & 8 <sup>th</sup> graders for transition meeting with feeder schools	March	5th	8th	

Transition meetings with feeder schools	April and May	X	X	
Score interpretation/ Placement Consideration based on student's needs	May/June	X	X	X

Nc = Newcomer sites

\*This can add numerous students that are not counted in an EL caseload to the EL teacher's caseload for this time period.

Please consider this work, which is Federally mandated, when you are considering allocations for EL teachers. As allocations stand now this can be overwhelming for EL staff to complete. As we continue to cut, we need to consider how these important duties will be completed without people to do them.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,

Stacey Gillish

WCSD Assessment & Compliance Facilitator

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**From:** YeVonne Allen  
**Sent:** Monday, February 8, 2021 3:43 PM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] 2/9/21 Public Comment BOT Meeting

Hello Wonderful WCSD Folks!

Please consider below to be my Public Comment for the February 9, 2021 Board of Trustees Meeting, Agenda Item 5.02.

Hello WCSD Board of Trustees.

I am in support of Agenda Item 5.02 regarding the Anti-Racism Resolution Action Plan.

I support the work of the Equity and Diversity Department, Equity and Diversity Task Force, and District Leadership. We need to spread the message of "All are Welcome" to our students, ourselves, and our communities. We need inclusivity for all of our students. We need to demonstrate to our most vulnerable students that we care, we see them, and we are working on being better. We need Brave Spaces.

Opponents of inclusivity may try to cloud this equity lens. But it is needed and it needs to be clear.

I appreciate your support on this action plan, and I look forward to continued collaboration as we strive for anti-racism practices and inclusive learning environments.

**YeVonne Allen**

Truckee Meadows Community College - Equity, Inclusion, and Sustainability Program Director  
City of Reno - Civil Service Commissioner



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**From:** John Helmreich  
**Sent:** Monday, February 8, 2021 4:38 PM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] BOT Meeting 2/9 Agenda Item 5.05 ELD Programming

Dear Members of the Board,

I recognize the difficult decisions you must make and the challenging nature of your role. Thank you for taking time to read this email in regards to item 5.05 – changes to English Language Development (ELD) Services.

I am asking that any changes to the existing resources and programs for students receiving ELD services be delayed at this time. I know you recognize the value of these programs and the importance of conducting such services in the most effective manner possible. Please consider a delay for several reasons:

- 1) Students, families and teachers were not consulted in the formulation of these changes. Inclusion of these groups is not only a required element (per ESSA) but it is an essential component. Their inclusion helps determine the kinds of changes that are most appropriate and it helps promote the acceptance of any change. Input from these groups is simply essential for successful outcomes.
- 2) While budget cuts will likely be unavoidable in many areas, I am concerned that the most severe cuts will affect those populations that are often marginalized and are least able to represent their needs and interests. In your role, it is critical that elements of equity and fairness be considered.

I am sorry that I will be unable to attend your board meeting in person. I hope that this brief letter will convey my desire for a delay of any changes to the English Language Development Services. Thanks again for your attention to this critical issue.

Sincerely, John Helmreich, Reno Resident

PS As a retired former HR Director for a large manufacturing operation in Reno, I appreciate the importance of ELD services in helping individuals become valued and contributing members of our community. These services are truly important. They are the right thing to do, as well as a prudent investment.

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**From:** Emma Palmer  
**Sent:** Monday, February 8, 2021 4:41 PM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] WASHOE COUNTY ESL PROGRAM

To whom this may concern,

I am writing to you today to express my concern about the closing/ changing of the English as a Second Language program in our county. As a recent graduate from UNR with a International Affairs and Spanish major, and previous student at Wooster high school, I have personally seen how this program is crucial to students in our schools and, if anything, it needs more funding rather than to be closed down.

In high school I knew so many students who would not have succeeded without this program, who would not have had the tools needed to learn English and graduate high school. One of these students is my best friend Joceline Esquivel who moved back to the US as a freshman with no knowledge of the English language. She now speaks amazing English and is studying Psychology at TMCC, and I am so proud of her many accomplishments. I know this was not an easy journey for her and that it might have been impossible if not for the ESL program at Wooster. Two other students I know from high school who excelled through the ESL program are Nikolas and Juan who went on to join the Navy and fight for our country.

These are the stories of only three people I know that would not be where they are today without the ESL program and I know that there are many more students in our county who deserve and need the support and knowledge the ESL program offers. It would be shameful and irresponsible to close/change this program when our county and students so desperately need.

I urge all Washoe county educators to consider the importance of this program, and the disastrous effects of closing it. Do what is best for our county's students and decide to keep this program alive and well so that many more will be able to succeed and achieve their dreams.

Sincerely,

Emma Palmer Malmsäter

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**From:** Guevara-Lopez, Amy  
**Sent:** Monday, February 8, 2021 5:10 PM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** EL Programming

Hello,

I please urge you to relook at the new proposed overview of the District's continued transition to the English Language Development (ELD) Site Facilitator Model. As an EL teacher who has worked with this model, I know that this puts a heavy strain on general ed teachers. The "all teachers are teachers of ELs" mantra is another way of stripping student from trained EL teachers and simply putting it on their general ed teachers. My fear is that the classroom teacher will again be told by administration and the ELD facilitator that it is their responsibility to fill in the gaps from losing our EL teachers and need training that isn't equivalent to that which our EL teachers specialize in for our students. I urge you to please not to go through this model. We need EL teachers to support newcomers, modify lessons, conduct ACCESS testing, and countless of other tasks.

Thank you.

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**From:** Cindy Gallimore  
**Sent:** Monday, February 8, 2021 5:11 PM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] BOT Meeting 2/9 Agenda Item 5.05 ELD Programming"

Esteemed Members of the Board,

Good evening,

I am writing this email to ask you to please VOTE NO on any proposed cuts to Washoe County's English as a Second Language programs. I understand that we have to make serious sacrifices due to the inevitable budget cuts, but these sacrifices should not have to be made by our most vulnerable students, who will suffer the consequences ten fold. Thank for your time and consideration of these thoughts.

Cindy G

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**From:** Tele Raack  
**Sent:** Monday, February 8, 2021 5:28 PM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] BOT Meeting 2/9 Agenda Item 5.05 ELD Programming

“Esteemed Members of the Board, I am writing this email to ask you to please VOTE NO on any proposed cuts to Washoe County’s English as a Second Language programs. I understand that we have to make serious sacrifices due to the inevitable budget cuts, but these sacrifices should not have to be made by our most vulnerable students, who will suffer the consequences ten fold. Thank for your time and consideration of these thoughts.”

Sent from my iPhone

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**From:** Lizbeth Garcia  
**Sent:** Monday, February 8, 2021 5:36 PM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] ESL IMPORTANCE

Hello,

I myself was an ESL student and have friends who were also in ESL - I was also an IB student and know how important this program it is for students. Without the ESL program I would have not been able to be as successful as I am today post college .

Im very thankful for this program as it helped me excel in both languages.

I ask you to please consider how valuable this program is to all students in need of assistance with English learning.

Thank you,

Lizbeth García

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**From:** Ava Asefirad  
**Sent:** Monday, February 8, 2021 5:38 PM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] ESL Program

To Whom it May Concern,

I hope this email finds you well. My name is Ava Asefirad and I am a Wooster High School alum. I graduated with an IB diploma in 2016 and have been furthering my education in Reno as a medical student at UNR.

I recently heard about Washoe County's possible decision of eradicating the ESL program from schools throughout the area. It greatly saddens me to know that a community that claims to promote diversity and inclusion would make such a drastic decision to further isolate individuals who, with such a program, would be given the chance to become wonderful, contributing members to our community. The international baccalaureate program gains so much from international students and students of different backgrounds, especially when it comes to financial gain for our high schools. It is extremely hypocritical to rid our schools of such a wonderful program, knowing how underserved our non-white communities are and how many students of different backgrounds our community houses.

In high school, I met one of my closest friends through the IB program. She moved here from Guatemala and was able to learn how to communicate with me in English through the ESL program. To this day, she holds such a valuable place in my life and I am truly grateful that I can reflect on my high school experience in such a positive way due to the friendships I was able to make.

I am writing to ask that you do not eradicate this program from high schools in our area. Everyone deserves to be given the opportunity to become more knowledgeable and learn to communicate with the people in their communities in order to better our society as a whole. As a medical student, it is crucial to emphasize the importance of constantly seeking new knowledge and learning to interact with different kinds of people on a daily basis. One of these aspects in the importance of bilingualism, especially in fields that focus on serving our community.

Thank you for taking the time to read this email. Please feel free to reach out about any questions and concerns you may have.

Best,  
Ava Asefirad

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**From:** Nancy Ritchie  
**Sent:** Monday, February 8, 2021 5:49 PM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] BOT Meeting 2/9 Agenda Item 5.05 ELD Programming

Dear Members of the Board,

Thanks for taking your time to consider this email. I am writing to express concern over actions you are considering in regards to the ELD programs. I recognize the difficult decisions you must make, but reductions that are being considered are not appropriate. Minimally I would ask that you delay any actions at this time. These actions are being proposed without adequate input from interested parties – parents, students and teachers. Without this input, all options are not fully considered and the final approach will not be readily accepted. These students in particular are often marginalized and not in the best position to argue their cause. Broader involvement will result in much better outcomes.

As a retired special education aide at both the middle school and high school level for many years, I know first-hand the value of these programs and their importance. These services are needed. Their value is clear and the payback is real as they help students become much more effective and productive as they move into our community.

I do appreciate your time and appreciate the opportunity to share my viewpoint. I wish you all the best in carrying out your challenging responsibilities.

Nancy Ritchie, Reno Resident



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**From:** Neema Ziaie  
**Sent:** Monday, February 8, 2021 6:09 PM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] ESL Program

To whom it may concern,

Please do not disband your ESL program as not all students in your county have the proper resources to learn English.

Sincerely,

Neema Ziaie

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**From:** Shayla Palmer  
**Sent:** Monday, February 8, 2021 6:08 PM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Washoe county ESL program

Dear Honorable Board of Trustees,

I am writing to you today to express my concern regarding the closing/ changing of the Washoe county ESL program. This program is essential to English learning and should be funded, not closed down.

As a mother and resident of Washoe county, the news of the possible closing of the ESL program in our county's schools greatly saddens me. I have one daughter who is currently attending Roy Gomm Elementary school and another daughter who graduated from Wooster high school in 2016 as a International Baccalaureate diploma student who went on to graduate from UNR with a double major in International Affairs and Spanish. While at Wooster both my daughter and I were able to see how impactful and important the ESL program truly is. She has many friends who were able to excel and accomplish their goals due to this program who would not have the same opportunities if the ESL program did not exist.

It is also ludicrous to eradicate the ESL program that offers such crucial knowledge and support to international students while continuing to fund the IB program at Wooster. The International Baccalaureate program is just that, international and was designed to accommodate international students. Instead of eliminating the ESL program, it should receive more funding so that it can work jointly with the IB program in offering international students support and academic excellence.

I urge the Board and Washoe county educators to reconsider the closing of the ESL program as it is critical to our schools.

Sincerely,

Shayla PalmerShayla Palmer

---

**From:** Donald Abbott  
**Sent:** Monday, February 8, 2021 6:12 PM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] BOT Meeting 2/9 Agenda Item 5.05 ELD Programming

Attachment available until Mar 10, 2021

Washoe County School Board Trustees,

I was not an ESL student myself but I'm thankful for it which allowed me to have friendships with many of my dear friends that went to Sparks High School as well as other friends I have in this community. They are looking at cutting the ESL program completely and have Math, Science, English, and other teachers be responsible for teaching ESL to these students. I was in the speech program up until about 4th grade and I couldn't image my "normal" 3rd-grade teacher trying to help me enunciate the letter "X". Check out this video to get more information from both myself and my dear friend

[Jesus Gutierrez](#)

who has a personal story to tell about the ESL program from when he was at Hug High School.

I am writing this email to ask you to please VOTE NO on any proposed cuts to Washoe County's English as a Second Language programs. I understand that we have to make serious sacrifices due to the inevitable budget cuts, but these sacrifices should not have to be made by our most vulnerable students, who will suffer the consequences tenfold. Thank you for your time and consideration of these thoughts.

Thanks,

Donald Abbott

[Click to Download](#)

ESL Video.mov  
29 MB

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**From:** Roxana Noguera  
**Sent:** Monday, February 8, 2021 6:13 PM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] DO NOT TAKE AWAY ESL

DO NOT TAKE AWAY ESL!!!!

There is always people coming from other countries or who need help and ESL is the best program. I actually participated when I was younger because spanish was my first language. To hear that you guys want to stop this is astonishing because schools are supposed to help you learn!! Whether that's mathamatics, language, p.e whatever it is. Trump is out of office do not do this! This should be a country of oppourtunities to whoever! This is disgusting that you guys even want to do this, I am baffled. If it wasn't for EsI I would've never learned English nor would've I graduated top of my class and gone to college. Rethink this Washoe County because this is revolting and diminishing to many of us. DO NOT TAKE AWAY ESL!!!!!!!

---

**From:** Tayler Duby  
**Sent:** Monday, February 8, 2021 6:19 PM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Keep the ESL Program

Hello,

Please keep the ESL Program in Washoe County. All children have the right to accessible public education. To make public education accessible, Washoe County School District must maintain the ESL program to ensure that its students have the resources with which to learn. We live in a diverse community and we must protect that diversity by maintain accessibility in our schools.

Thank you,  
Tayler Duby

To WCSD and my Wooster Community,

I am writing to you because I just heard the deeply troubling news that there is a meeting tomorrow regarding the termination of the Wooster English as a Second Language Program (ESL). This would be tragic news to hear from any educational institution, but it was especially painful to hear from my Alma Mater.

For those for you who don't know me, my name is Gina Galvin and I was an IB student at Wooster High School, Class of 2016. I have since graduated from college, where I spent many years studying and researching Education Inequality and Disparities in Public Education. I often cited Wooster as a school that was doing things different - doing things right. A school that truly cared about all of its students, regardless of their race, religion, gender, ability or language. A school that celebrated diversity and provided a strong education to every child. My passion for this topic came directly from my experience at Wooster, from making lifelong friendships with classmates, teammates and other students from every walk of life (many of whom were ESL students).

With that said, it brings me profound sadness to know that my Wooster community would EVEN CONSIDER removing the ESL program, which has served as an instrumental resource for Wooster students past and present who do not speak English as their first language.

Before I explain my case any further, I would like to remind you of Wooster's Mission and Beliefs:

**"Our Vision** - To change societal beliefs on what is possible in every single child. To help our children build a better tomorrow for themselves and for generations to come.

**Our Mission** - We aim to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect. We encourage our students to become active, compassionate and lifelong learners who understand that other people, with their differences, can also be right."

Without an ESL program, you are not acting in congruence with your vision or mission statement and that is a grave offense. "Every single child" includes students who were not taught English at home, students who were born here but lived in another country, and students who have immigrated to this country. "Intercultural understanding" will not occur, without providing all students the tools they need. Peace, compassion and respect for differences will be difficult to cultivate, if students aren't shown a good example of this from their own school.

ESL is fundamental for students who have not learned English as their first language. They will face undue suffering in a class designed for fluent English speakers, feel discouraged and most likely, you will see a negative impact to your graduation rates.

If you truly want to see all students succeed, you should not send the message to ESL students that they are as expendable as their program. To the opposite, you should fight for more funding for the program.

My final argument is that it is particularly appalling that an International Baccalaureate school does not understand the importance of embracing a global community. Privileging your IB students'

education, at the expense of ESL students' is not moral. And, assuming that ESL students don't flourish at Wooster and become IB students themselves is simply incorrect (as I personally know many students who were in both programs). If you care, ask these students if that would have been possible without ESL.

I hope that many of you understand and share my passion for the ESL program. To you, I say thank you. Please keep speaking up for those for us who do not have a seat at the table, and most importantly for the thousands of students to come who will learn to speak up for themselves from taking ESL classes and who will achieve academic success through the continuation of this program.

Please do the right thing in the meeting tomorrow. Please hear our concerns. Please think about the students.

With hope,

Gina

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**From:** Robyn  
**Sent:** Monday, February 8, 2021 6:34 PM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Gate programs

Hello,

I am writing today because I am concerned that the board may decide to make cuts to the Gifted and Talented services via consolidation of programs, reducing staff, and eliminating the Hug High GATE program entirely. Washoe County School District claims to strive to provide an education that supports each student. Gifted and Talented learners are a part of the student body in the district and deserve to have their needs met through appropriate staff and programs.

Our district has many great educators and these educators often explain that gifted students are wired differently and require academic challenges in order to keep them engaged. In order to provide this support, specialized GATE teachers take additional trainings and are certified so that they can meet the needs of these students. Making cuts to this area of the budget will directly harm the education of the gifted student population of Washoe County School District as it will make it hard to provide an appropriate curriculum with adequate specialized support. Without enough specially designed programs for these types of learners, the district could face students leaving the public school system or parents sending their kids back into the general education classroom due to lack of transportation or long commutes. These shifts could ultimately lead to gifted students losing their interest in education and potentially impact their whole trajectory to reach their full potential. Often people think gifted kids will be fine in a general education classroom. Sometimes this statement is true. However, more often than not we fail to recognize that "Because gifted children demonstrate greater maturity in some domains over others, they may be at greater risk for specific kinds of social-emotional difficulties if their needs are not met." (<http://www.nagc.org/resources-publications/resources-parents/social-emotional-issues>)

We should be finding ways to identify more gifted students that may be overlooked in our current identification process and provide appropriate academic options for them. Failing to provide a platform of services to this student group will hinder their development in areas such as having a growth mindset. I understand that times are not easy and education funding is not sufficient for student's needs. However, every child in our district deserves the chance to learn and we need to give all the students the proper tools and the most qualified teachers to guide them. It should be a goal to ensure that the district is not making cuts that decrease the potential of any students that make up the student body.

Robyn Sackrison

Sent from my iPhone



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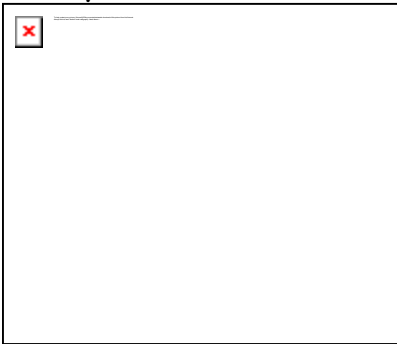
**From:** Randy Boggan  
**Sent:** Monday, February 8, 2021 6:39 PM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] "BOT Meeting 2/9 Agenda Item 5.05 ELD Programming"

"Esteemed Members of the Board, I am writing this email to ask you to please VOTE NO on any proposed cuts to Washoe County's English as a Second Language programs. I understand that we have to make serious sacrifices due to the inevitable budget cuts, but these sacrifices should not have to be made by our most vulnerable students, who will suffer the consequences ten fold. Thank you for your time and consideration of these thoughts."

Thank you for the consideration

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Randy



Washoe County School District Board of Trustees

President Malena Raymond

Clerk – Andrew Caudill

Washoe County School District Superintendent

Dr. Kristen McNeill

2-8-2021

Good afternoon, my name is Farrell Vaughn and I am writing you concerning WCSD Board Resolution 20-011. I have been a Social Studies teacher in the Washoe County School District for twenty years. I am currently teaching US History and Advanced Placement United States Government and Politics at McQueen High School. I have earned a Master of Arts in Teaching History and I am a National Board-Certified Teacher. The Board Resolution 20-011 proclaims that “Discrimination and Harassment will not be tolerated and resolves to create a system-wide commitment to creating an unbiased, inclusive, and anti-racist society through education.”

I consider this an extremely important resolution that should be implemented fully to facilitate the social and emotional growth of our students in the Washoe County School District. I believe the public education system has a very important role in combating racism and discrimination in our community in order to have an impact on reversing systemic inequality in our society at large. Racism and discrimination are learned behaviors, and public schools are the essential component in reteaching the core American values of “liberty and justice for all.” In 1954, the United States Supreme Court ruled unanimously in *Brown v. The Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas*, that segregation and discrimination caused real harm to the United States’ social, political, and economic structures. Since that time the State public school systems have carried-out the burden of educating our students about our Nation’s complicated history. Some states have accepted that responsibility and promoted a more progressive education, while others have held on to the established traditions of bigotry. I commend the Board of Trustees for recognizing the contributions of minorities, and those in the LGBTQ communities, in trying to correct the deficit perspectives that exist in our educational system. Some state school boards have altered their social studies standards to promote a White, Christian, Nationalistic perspective as Texas did recently. Arizona banned teaching ethnic studies in their public-school system because they declared that it favored one group of Americans over another. The State School Board of Colorado challenged the AP US History test because in their opinion it did not promote enough American Exceptionalism. And just days ago, a Public Charter School in Utah was reported to have allowed parents to remove their children from the study of African-American History. Nevada is one of the most diverse states in the Union. It is past time for our educational system to reflect that diversity and promote the contributions of minorities and those in the LGBTQ community to our state and our nation. By doing so, the Washoe County School District can lead the way in delivering a more inclusive, and American, curriculum that will not only increase pride among groups that have historically been marginalized, but reinforce the patriotic American ideals that our public school system was founded on. I thank you for having the courage to speak out and fight for equality and inclusiveness within our school system.

Sincerely, Farrell Vaughn

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**From:** Bianca Beterano  
**Sent:** Monday, February 8, 2021 6:44 PM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] ESL Program

Hello,

I'm Bianca Beterano and I used to take ESL during elementary school. It helped me a lot and I know it helped other kids to the same extent or greater. Continuing the ESL program in Washoe County is necessary for the benefit of other students.

Thank you,  
Bianca Beterano

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**From:** Sam Limerick  
**Sent:** Monday, February 8, 2021 6:53 PM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] BOT Meeting 2/9 Agenda Item 5.05 ELD Programming

Dear Members of the Board of Trustees,

I am a retired geologist and resident of Reno. I was alarmed when I heard about the Board's plans to reduce staff for the EL programs in WC schools. I realize that you have to make very tough budget decisions this year, but this is a very vulnerable group that will suffer greatly and fall far behind the non-EL students with funding cuts.

My main concern for the moment is that the EL students and their families and the EL teachers did not get a voice in the preparation of this plan. This is a critical issue of equity; I urge you to let them have a chance to provide input to your plan.

There is a recent example of a plan for Reno that was announced prematurely without consulting stakeholders (in this case, the public) first. When confronted with many letters of opposition from Reno residents, the proposers did the right thing and put the project on hold while they reformulated their plans in light of the public's comments. The project in question is the proposed conversion of the Steamboat Irrigation Ditch to a concrete canal, as proposed by the National Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and the Steamboat Ditch Canal & Irrigation Co. The project is not canceled, just delayed.

Please do the right thing like the NCRS and take the time to get input from your stakeholders.

Thank you for the opportunity to voice my opinion. And thank you for your service to the students of Washoe County.

Sincerely,

Sam Limerick  
Reno, NV

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**From:** Bailey Vollmer  
**Sent:** Monday, February 8, 2021 7:11 PM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] ESL Program

To whom it may concern,

My name is Bailey Vollmer and I have been made aware of a proposed cut to the ESL program in Washoe County schools. I find this hard to understand and quite concerning. I am a white student and got a decent education at Wooster High School in the IB program. Many students at my high school had English as their second language and counted on the ESL program to aide them in an equal education. Without this program so many students will struggle and not be able to understand or attend school because of a language barrier. Those students who come from another country and are trying to get an education now are set back so far by this removal. I hope there is a reevaluation or another program that can be put into place.

Thank you for your time,

Bailey Vollmer

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**From:** Emily Grable  
**Sent:** Monday, February 8, 2021 7:22 PM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] ESL

Dear WCSD,

Getting rid of the ESL program would be a gross injustice to the non-white communities of Washoe County. This program has helped countless students learn English, and without this program, they would not be able to learn and feel isolated from their peers. Non-white students are already at a disadvantage in a society that highly favors their white peers and the English language. This was an easy and accessible way for non white students to learn the language, and stripping it away is also stripping away and hope WCSD has for full inclusion and access for their students.

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**From:** Liridian Gamboa Sanchez  
**Sent:** Monday, February 8, 2021 7:31 PM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] ESL Program

To whom it may concern,

I am writing in regards to the removal of ESL programs in Washoe County. I believe if these programs are removed, it is placing another big barrier in the lives of non English speakers, aside from other barriers like acculturation. It is difficult enough to blend into a society you don't know, but even more difficult to do so without knowing the language. Removing the ESL programs will place non English speaking students even more behind in their classes, they will not be able to integrate into the schooling system as easily nonetheless be able to understand what they are learning. We all know teachers do not have the time or ability to take each non English speaking student under their wing and provide them more help. It is nearly impossible. The ESL program is proven to help an abundance of students. It would be very unethical to remove this program from the Washoe County School District. It is important that it remains in our schools to better help our students succeed. Please reconsider. This program is extremely beneficial to students integrating into the US society and into the US education system.

Thank you.

Liridian

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Thank you,

Liridian Gamboa Sanchez

Undergraduate Social Work and Spanish

University of Nevada Reno

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**From:** Alex Arciniega  
**Sent:** Monday, February 8, 2021 7:37 PM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] ESL program concerns

Good evening,

It has been brought to my attention that there will be a vote held in the morning determining the fate of the ESL program in our schools.

Although I understand that it is difficult to decide which programs can no longer be supported due to budget and other factors, ELL/ESL programs should not be those sacrificed. In a time when isolation is already a threat to students all over the world, it is crucial that we do not subject them to one more way they can experience this. Please do not take away the opportunity and support for our English language learners to be able to feel like they are welcome in our schools.

I appreciate you taking the time to read our comments and concerns.

Sincerely,

Alex Arciniega



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**From:** Ben Tucker  
**Sent:** Monday, February 8, 2021 7:38 PM  
**To:** Public Comments; Minetto, Ellen  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] ELD Site Facilitators

Good Evening,

Thank-you for your willingness to do what you believe is right for our children. Your time and long hours are greatly appreciated!

Thank-you for your well planned and executed Covid immunization weekends!

My name is Tina Tucker and I would like to express my concern for increasing the number of ELD Site Facilitators in our Washoe County Schools if they are meant to replace EL teachers. Are ELD Site Facilitators to be put in place of EL teachers or in addition to EL teachers?

Title IV of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 states that "...any programs and activities that receive federal financial assistance from the United States Department of Education, including Local Education Agencies (LEAs) are obligated under Title IV. Lau v. Nichols (1974) unanimously ruled that the lack of appropriate **supplemental language instruction** for ELs in public schools violated the Civil Right Act of 1964, ruling that, "There is no equality of treatment merely by providing students with the same facilities, textbooks, teachers and curriculum, for students who do not understand English are effectively foreclosed from any meaningful action." - Just because you give every child the same quality instruction, doesn't mean that an EL child can access that same information.

It is my experience that when ELD Site Facilitators are shared between schools in place of EL teachers, students do NOT receive enough instruction to "eliminate language barriers in EL's access to high-quality instruction". An ELD Site Facilitator goes to 2 to 3 schools every week and trains/supports teachers with scaffolds and strategies to make all classrooms more inclusive for EL students. Because of the realities of life and scheduling, ELD Site Facilitators rarely work with students and have limited training opportunities with teachers because of ALL of the other trainings teachers are required to be a part of all year. The best use of any EL trained professional is to work directly with students.

**I also find it troubling to expect a classroom teacher to be able to give the same meaningful Language Assistance Program knowledge and instruction that an EL teacher can give. The schooling, training, experience, and passion cannot be replaced by a training once a month for classroom teachers.**

My EL teacher duties include but are not limited to:  
Identifying English Language Learning students  
Providing EL students with Language Assistance Programs  
Ensuring all staff that work with ELs are trained/qualified  
Scaffolding Core Curriculum to ensure meaningful access  
Creating inclusive environments and avoiding segregation of EL learners  
Addressing ELs with disabilities  
Serving ELs that opt out of EL programs  
Monitoring EL students who exit out of the program

Evaluating a school's programs and process

Ensuring meaningful communication with limited proficient parents

Testing- The annual WIDA test has 4 parts- every EL student must take a Reading, Listening, Speaking, and Writing test

Can someone who shares three schools do this for all of their students? I have spoken to a few ELD Site Facilitators and principals who have had ELD Site Facilitators who say that there is not enough time to give students and teachers the support they need when they are spread so thin.

With a demographic that is grow rapidly every year, we shouldn't be trying to consolidate instructors to save money, we should be spending money to ensure that materials and practices reach all EL students every day, not once or twice a week if it fits into the schedule.

I greatly appreciate your time,

Tina Tucker

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**From:** iveliz hernandez  
**Sent:** Monday, February 8, 2021 7:38 PM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] ESL Program

To whom it may concern,

There are many ways in which the ESL program is considered beneficial to those who need assistance from it. ESL has taught and helped many students learn a language that they aren't comfortable with and has helped them learn a language to help them navigate here in the States. Many students who will be learning from the ESL will benefit not only now but in their futures. As someone who has had family in ESL programs, i've seen first hand how this program benefits them. They are able to read, write and i stand a language that is not their native tongue. The advantage of them learning a second language will not only benefit them but their families at home who don't have the opportunity to learn the language, they will be able to share the information they have learned in hopes of educating those who cannot attend a program as such. I hope this will make you reconsider getting rid of a program that will benefit many, not only today but always.

Thank You,

- Iveliz Hernandez

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**From:** Anastasia Nekrasova  
**Sent:** Monday, February 8, 2021 7:39 PM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Board of Trustees Meeting. February 9,21. ELD Program - 5.05

Imagine yourself standing in a crowded room full of people and they are all talking on an unknown language and all that you hear is a loud noise. I felt that. I moved to the United States 1 and a half years ago. I remember my first day at school very well. I was thrilled and excited, as well as scared and lost. I didn't know English good enough to join the conversation or ask for help.

When I entered my ESL class, it was a relief for me. I felt that I'm not alone. I felt that there are people in this school who understand me. Together we were growing every day; learning and failing, improving and becoming confident.

This class became a small family for me. There, we discussed lots of topics and issues that each of us was struggling with. Looking back, I feel that this class made me stronger and more capable to italk, write, and to communicate with native speakers.

With all my experience with this program, I want to ask you, please leave this program and do not let students lose themselves and feel that they are not fitting in this country! Thank you!

Sent from my iPhone

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**From:** Asmaa Amimi  
**Sent:** Monday, February 8, 2021 7:45 PM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Please reconsider ESL Program

Hello there,

I'm reaching out because the ESL program has personally affected me. I moved here from Morocco when I was 11 years old with only the world hello as reference. I did not know how to speak to anyone and not even my teacher could help, coming from a country with a completely different alphabet is not only challenging but so stressful for a young person.

The ESL program and the ESL teacher I had were everything to me those few first years. I remember her name, Mrs Harrison and she was the first person that understood what I was trying to say. I made my first friends in the program, people like me.

Please do not get rid of the ESL program. I can't imagine how I could have survived and learned so much without it. I can't imagine how kids with no English could learn without a supporting system like the ESL program. Please reconsider your decision. Thank you very much to whomever this reaches.

Sincerely,  
Asmaa

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**From:** Thi Tran  
**Sent:** Monday, February 8, 2021 7:46 PM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] ESL

Hi there,

I have been made aware of the potential decision of getting rid of the ELS program that is a part of many washer county schools for the underserved/minority community in the area. I would like to strongly encourage that getting rid of this program would do the district a huge disservice and show that Nevada deserve their ranking among the poorest education system in the U.S. I was a student that benefitted from this program with high hopes of attending medical school and would like to think that this contributed to my pathway there. Thank you for taking the time to allow me to voice my concerns and I hope that it persuades the board to keep this vital program in the Washoe County educational system.

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**Thi Tran, CCMA**

B.S. Neuroscience, 2020

University of Nevada, Reno

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**From:** Nolan, Paul  
**Sent:** Monday, February 8, 2021 7:48 PM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** Proposed "Changes to Services for students receiving ELD" - Feb 9 meeting: Item 5.05

Attn: School Board members  
Re: Proposal to change ELD services and programming

Hello Board Members,

My name is Paul Nolan and I am an EL teacher at Hug High School, a newcomer center, where I have worked for the last 11 years. I have been working with EL students in various positions district wide for 19 years.

Please consider giving more time to the decision to cut EL teacher allocations in the district over the next 3 years. This proposal has not had the proper time to be vetted and thought out, much less voted upon. EL students, parents, families, and teachers were completely unaware that this proposal was on the agenda at the last board meeting. Only due to it being postponed to this week, because of bad weather, were the stakeholders given an opportunity to provide thoughts on it. It is still vague, and until the presentation, most students, families, and faculty members will be in the dark about what it means for EL programs at various schools in the district.

EL students are one of the district's most vulnerable populations. I work with students every day, that are brand new to the United States, and brand new to our educational system. We have newcomers arrive every month that range in age from 15 to 18 years old, having limited, or, in many cases, no English at all. They come with a wealth of background skills, just need explicit English instruction to put those skills to work. Many district sites may only need the services of an "ELD Facilitator," but many others need explicit language programs to best address the students' needs. Cutting the EL budget by 50% will only do harm, especially to those most recently arriving students. It will lower the morale of all teachers in the district, wondering what's next, and of the students themselves, seeing the programs they desperately need being cut.

We graduate students across the district every year that come to us with limited English skills. Most of those students have had an EL class, or an EL teacher that made the difference for them. Yes, these students are the responsibility of all their teachers, not just the EL teachers. Instead of cutting funding and eliminating positions, more professional development and training needs to occur so that all teachers are better prepared to work with those with English learning needs. That will require more funding, not less. And less funding may lead to English Learners not having that one group of teachers that are experts in identifying what they need most regarding English instruction. The teachers that build personal relationships with them and see all they have to offer.

Please consider giving more time, thought, and research, to the idea of taking funding away from our EL students: a diverse and essential asset to our school district and community.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Paul Nolan

EL teacher  
Hug High School



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**From:** Gentner, Jonathan M  
**Sent:** Monday, February 8, 2021 7:48 PM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Cc:** Thigpen, Kurt L  
**Subject:** Donald Abbot, Chuy Gutierrez, & EL say no to budget cuts

Good evening,

I hope that you all review the following video before voting on proposed cuts to the EL program.

<https://youtu.be/-auFIJGBpzs>

Thanks,  
Jonathan Gentner  
SHS English Department

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**From:** Rolfe Barbosa  
**Sent:** Monday, February 8, 2021 8:00 PM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Hello

Hi,

As a previous Washoe County student please do not remove the ESL program. The non-white communities are already underserved and these resources are very necessary for our K-12 kids.

Kindly,  
Rolfe Nicholas Barbosa

Sent from my iPhone

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**From:** alexandra rosas  
**Sent:** Monday, February 8, 2021 8:01 PM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] ESL Program

Dear Washoe County School System,

I am reaching out to express my concern about defunding the ESL program we currently have in our schools. This program has made the impossible possible for so many students and families. It's so hard to grow up in a Non-English speaking household and have to attend school and not understand anything no matter how hard you try and pick up the language. Through the years these programs have encouraged and helped Non- English speaking students continue with their education and excel. Specially now during this pandemic many kids are being kept at home attending virtual classes that are pushing them back due to not understanding the material being taught. When these kids are able to attend school like normal they will be found struggling and feeling helpless. The ESL program is such a relief to so many people in our communities. We need this support to continue. Do not take away from our kids future and development. They are our future and need all the support possible.

Sincerely,  
Betsy Rosas

Sent from my iPhone

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**From:** Zach Petersen  
**Sent:** Monday, February 8, 2021 8:14 PM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Board Of Trustees Meeting Regarding ESL Program

To The Washoe County School District Board Of Trustees:

As a fairly new resident of, I have become been extremely proud to call Washoe County my home. However, after learning that English as a second language, such a basic and beneficial program to public education, might be reduced or eradicated, I do not feel the same.

A decision to stop offering ESL blatantly strips access to education for many individuals and is overtly racist.

Please stand with your community and keep ESL.

Sent from my iPhone

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**From:** Charles Meredith  
**Sent:** Monday, February 8, 2021 8:30 PM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] ESL Program

DO NOT get rid of the ESL program in Washoe county!!!!!! Our non-white communities are already underserved, let's not take away the opportunity for them to learn English too.

-C

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**From:**  
**Sent:** Monday, February 8, 2021 8:31 PM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] BOT meeting 2/9 agenda item 5.05 ELD programming

Esteemed Members of the Board, I am writing this email to ask you to please VOTE NO on any proposed cuts to Washoe County's English as a Second Language programs. I understand that we have to make serious sacrifices due to the inevitable budget cuts, but these sacrifices should not have to be made by our most vulnerable students, who will suffer the consequences ten fold. Thank for your time and consideration of these thoughts.

Thank You,  
Branden Hinen

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**From:** Jamie Matthews  
**Sent:** Monday, February 8, 2021 8:37 PM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Concerns about Changes to ESL Programing

To Whom It May Concern,

It has been brought to my attention that the Washoe County School District is considering changes to their English as a Second Language programming that would disadvantage a large portion of their students who are already struggling amidst the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. I find the decisions being considered to be incredibly concerning and am quite frankly disheartened that you would choose to overlook a group of students who need you now more than ever.

As educators I am sure you are already well aware that children who speak English as a second language already have to work twice as hard as their peers who are raised in households that communicate primarily in English. Some of your former alumni from Wooster High School are dear to my heart and relied on the resources provided through ESL programming in your schools to achieve much of the success they have today.

These programs are lifelines and build important foundations for your students. To take away from these programs would be making a statement about which students you deem worthy of your time and support. I hope you do not choose to make a statement rooted in xenophobia that further isolates and targets students who are already fighting for their right to education in a virtual landscape that makes learning even more difficult.

Please be considerate of extending fairness to ALL students and do not remove funding from vital programs that truly make a world of difference in the lives of the students who use them.

Thank you for your time,  
Jamie Matthews

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**From:** Alyssa Serrano  
**Sent:** Monday, February 8, 2021 8:42 PM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL]

To Whom It May Concern,

It has been brought to my attention that the Washoe County School District is considering changes to their English as a Second Language programming that would disadvantage a large portion of their students who are already struggling amidst the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. I find the decisions being considered to be incredibly concerning and am quite frankly disheartened that you would choose to overlook a group of students who need you now more than ever.

As educators I am sure you are already well aware that children who speak English as a second language already have to work twice as hard as their peers who are raised in households that communicate primarily in English. Some of your former alumni from Wooster High School are dear to my heart and relied on the resources provided through ESL programming in your schools to achieve much of the success they have today.

These programs are lifelines and build important foundations for your students. To take away from these programs would be making a statement about which students you deem worthy of your time and support. I hope you do not choose to make a statement rooted in xenophobia that further isolates and targets students who are already fighting for their right to education in a virtual landscape that makes learning even more difficult.

Please be considerate of extending fairness to ALL students and do not remove funding from vital programs that truly make a world of difference in the lives of the students who use them.

Thank you for your time,  
Alyssa Serrano

Enviado desde mi iPhone



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**From:** Marjorie Jordan  
**Sent:** Monday, February 8, 2021 9:09 PM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] ESL

To get rid of the ESL program is to get rid of a child's right to learn and thrive in this world! think of their future. think of how much more fortunate they will be with the ability to speak 2 languages. Think twice before you ruin innocent children's lives!

sincerely,  
an immigrant girl from twitter

Sent from my iPhone

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**From:** Otto Andrés Noack  
**Sent:** Monday, February 8, 2021 9:13 PM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] ESL, it's necessary

To whom it may concern,

My name is Otto Andrés Noack Sierra, I immigrated from Guatemala to Las Vegas NV. when I was about 15 years old, so roughly about 6 years ago. I was unlucky enough to be assigned to a high school where they didn't have the program ESL or nothing close to it. Centennial High School in Clark County. My mom tried to file in for a transfer for another school that was a bit farther that did have the program, but they denied. My first two years of high school, were the most miserable and frustrating years of my life, knowing 0 English, I was completely lost. Being that there wasn't any sort of program for non English speaking kids, I had no one to go to, when I tried to go to my counselor, there was no way for me to communicate. This caused me to fail a lot of my classes and set me back, and set me up for failure in the future. While thank God I'm doing better now I'm still recovering from the huge set back that it was for me to not know what to do and what was going on and that no one around me seemed to care. But I was fortunate, many people who were also immigrants dropped out of high school because they were sure it just was not going to happen.

I believe an ESL program is not only fair but definitely necessary to make foreign students feel like they have someone to go to, and they're not alone, to help them understand how schools work here in the US and how the system works (which is drastically different in foreign countries) and it is a way to set them up for success and to graduate. Remember, they are not only learning the material, but they are learning a whole new language, and without ESL, graduation rates within communities such as the Latino community would drastically drop.

Thank you for your time

Sincerely, Otto Noack

Sent from my iPhone

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**From:** Armando Chang  
**Sent:** Monday, February 8, 2021 9:15 PM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Good evening, I am writing this email to express my disagreement with the closure of the ESL program. It would be depriving many people of their right to learn, and would in this way affect so many lives. Without being able to speak and wr...

Enviado desde mi iPhone

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**From:** Krista Wahnefried  
**Sent:** Monday, February 8, 2021 9:17 PM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] In favor for item 5.02 - Feb 9, 2021

Good evening,

I am writing to you as a resident of Washoe County and someone who values the teaching of equality and equity. I am in favor of the development of a formal plan to create a system-wide commitment to creating an unbiased, inclusive, and specifically anti-racist society through education per item 5.02 of the agenda.

5.02 DISCUSSION, UPDATE, AND POSSIBLE ACTION TO PROVIDE DIRECTION ON THE DRAFT ACTION PLAN DEVELOPED IN SUPPORT OF WASHOE COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD RESOLUTION 20-011, A RESOLUTION STATING DISCRIMINATION AND HARASSMENT WILL NOT BE TOLERATED AND RESOLVING TO CREATE A SYSTEM- WIDE COMMITMENT TO CREATING AN UNBIASED, INCLUSIVE, AND ANTI-RACIST SOCIETY THROUGH EDUCATION, AS ADOPTED ON OCTOBER 27, 2020 (FOR POSSIBLE ACTION)

**Krista Wahnefried**  
**Ward 1**  
**Reno, Nevada**

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**From:** Yareydi Valdovinos-Ibarra  
**Sent:** Monday, February 8, 2021 9:29 PM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] IMPORTANTE

Good Evening,

I am very displeased with the idea of Washoe County getting rid of its ESL program. This affects me personally because my sister whom just recently moved here from Mexico will be unserved by this school district by not being taught the language she deserves.

Best Regards,  
Yareydi

Sent from my iPhone

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**From:** Taylor Sawyer  
**Sent:** Monday, February 8, 2021 10:26 PM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] ESL

To Whom It May Concern,

It would be detrimental to the ESL community to remove ESL programs from Washoe County Schools. This is an extremely important resource and we have a responsibility to help our ESL neighbors and family in whichever ways we can. Thank you for your consideration.

TEFL Certified Teacher,  
Taylor Sawyer

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**From:** Becky Kellett  
**Sent:** Monday, February 8, 2021 10:52 PM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Item 5.02 Resolution 20-011

To Whom It May Concern,

Today, I learned that there were many residents pushing back against Item 5.02 Resolution 20-011. Honestly, there is no way to change the minds of people who believe that culture, their race, their values, religion is superior to all others. With that in mind, I will speak to why it is important to push forward with protecting those who are oppressed, discriminated against, and marginalized in our school system.

1. People who are treated as “the other” have been killed. Matthew Shepard story comes to mind.
2. Students commit suicide due to bullying or harassment.
3. Student’s opportunities/success can be diminished by being excluded.
4. Students experience trauma at school when they are not protected.
5. One culture/historical perspective should not dominate any system. If it does, it supports one group and not all.

I am in FULL a support of Item 5.02, 20-011. If there were not issues within the district, there would be no need for this. However, there are countless examples district wide to show why this is necessary.

Respectfully,  
Rebecca Kellett

To Whom it May Concern:

I am writing in opposition to the continued transition to the English Language Site Facilitator Model Agenda item 5.05.

First off, I believe this solution doesn't align with laws that are set in place to protect the rights of all our children. The purpose of ESSA is to make sure public schools provide a quality education for all kids. This includes the achievement of disadvantaged students like the following:

- Students in poverty
- Minorities
- Students who receive special education services
- Those with limited English language skills
- 

Under this law, students who are limited in English should receive a rigorous quality education like students who receive special education. With the ELD Site Facilitator Model, EL students will receive less support. There will be less teachers at our at-risk schools to provide the targeted language instruction they were trained to provide. How can this district justify taking away teachers/support for our EL students when they are protected under this law to receive a quality education like all other students? If we can dismantle a program of supporting EL students so easily, why not address our Special education services model.

Additionally, the site facilitator model states that these trained coaches will provide support to the staff at the schools they are assigned to. Who is training these facilitators to train classroom teachers? Classroom teachers don't need colleagues to tell them what to do, rather they want a professional colleague to deliver targeted small-group instruction. Classroom teachers typically know what needs to be done, they just need the time to plan and time to instruct. Classroom teachers are bound to district adopted ELA and Math programs where the language is largely assumed. The pacing for each of these lessons doesn't have the flexibility needed to meet the needs of our vulnerable EL students.

Lastly, how was the data gathered for the EL Exit rate data? I believe there are some important factors left out. In the Non-ELD Model schools, the lower exit rates starting in 2018-19, was more than likely due in large part to the entire rearranging of the non-ELD model schools. During those years, the ratio of EL students to teacher was increased which left fewer teachers at these non-ELD model schools. I would like to see the ELD model exit rates compared to non-ELD model schools exit rates prior to 2018. I also recall the ELD department trying out a co-teaching model in some schools not too long ago. How were the exit rates at those schools compared to the non-co-teaching model schools?

In summary, it seems the district is implementing this site facilitator model as a way to save money rather than doing what is right for the students. EL teachers at the non-ELD schools already perform the duties that the site facilitators provide by:

- \*Building teacher capacity in language development



- \*Providing teachers with data for planning for student language needs
- Engaging teacher with modeling, coaching, co-teaching and professional learning
- Providing teachers with tools and strategies to meet demands of language in content and design explicit language instruction through content

I urge you to reconsider this move to the site facilitator model. The most pressing concern is the simple fact that our classroom teachers and students need more direct help with the students. Our classrooms are at capacity and our classroom teachers need the consistency of an EL teacher who can provide targeted language instruction.

Thank you for considering my request.

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**From:** Em Grifall-Sabo  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 9, 2021 1:04 AM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Regarding WCSD ESL Program

Good evening,

I'm writing to express my concern about plans to potentially remove the ESL program from WCSD curricula. The ESL program exists to serve, in particular, the non-white community in Washoe County—its absence would eliminate a crucial opportunity for an already underserved community. As a Wooster High School alum and as a current NSHE educator, I urge you to continue to fund the ESL program in Washoe County.

Best,  
E. Grifall-Sabo  
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Em Grifall-Sabo  
She/her/hers  
University of Nevada, Reno

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**From:** Molly Moser  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 9, 2021 6:33 AM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] BOT Meeting 2/9 Agenda Item 5.05 ELD Programming

To the Esteemed Members of the Board:

My name is Molly Moser and I'm the Lead ELA Instructor at Northern Nevada Literacy Council. We may not officially be a part of the school district, but I would like to speak on behalf of the district's ESL teachers as I am shocked to hear you are considering cutting ESL programs.

Those who speak English, and speak it well, may never even realize the importance of ESL programs. With the number and power of countries that DO speak English, English has become the language that is the "international business language".

I am writing this email to ask you to please **VOTE NO** on any proposed cuts to ESL programs. Here's why:

- English is generally the language used by those in business and the workforce, as many language-learners in this area are trying to land jobs. I am also a career coach at the NNLC and I help many students apply for jobs as ESL courses PREPARE individuals for work and enhance computer literacy skills. **Mastering English is important to anyone trying to keep pace with our shifting society.**
- Additionally, hiring somebody who is bilingual will add more value to the Reno workforce as we attract many visitors throughout the country and worldwide.
- ESL classes help individuals improve in a few different areas, mainly writing, speaking, and reading comprehension. These programs also can help individuals with accents, pronunciation, and speaking which will help them be sure others understand them.
- With that, many also need to learn English in order to do better in schools/universities, where a large number of papers published in scientific journals are written in English, for example.
- Individuals studying English grow more fluent and learn more about the culture and societal values of English-speaking countries, a vital advantage in the modern, global economy.

I understand we have to make serious sacrifices due to the inevitable budget cuts, but these sacrifices should not have to be made by our most vulnerable students. It is important to note there are many individuals in Reno that are not only trying to improve their lives but are trying to learn English as well to better support their cause to improve their future in this city and country.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

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**From:** Rachel Fisher  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 9, 2021 7:58 AM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Approve Resolution 20-2011

Dear Superintendent McNeill and Washoe School Board Trustees,

I am a first grade teacher in WCSD and I am writing my public comment today to urge you to approve the proposed anti-racism resolution that has been the result of months of collaboration with student groups, the Equity and Diversity task force, and other district departments.

Our diverse staff and student population in WCSD should be represented and protected from discrimination and it is vital that the district includes policy language specifically stating a mission statement of enacting anti-racist policies. I commend you in recognizing the need to reaffirm a commitment of reevaluating hiring practices, having anti-racism representatives in every school, and continually auditing curriculum to value diversity.

The Board Resolution 20-011 proclaims that “Discrimination and Harassment will not be tolerated and resolves to create a system-wide commitment to creating an unbiased, inclusive, and anti-racist society through education.” Though inequities in our society have always existed, they have been greatly magnified by the global pandemic. One of the most important and first steps to working towards a more equitable future and creating a more inclusive society is addressing the need within public education in recognizing and addressing that these inequities exist, the history that created them, the current environment and how they manifest in modern times, and ensuring that our marginalized students know that they are seen and valued. Adopting this action plan will provide the tools our students, families, and staff need to create a better Nevada—and contribute to a more just nation.

In addition to adopting the anti-racism resolution, I am also asking for you to reexamine the transition of moving from full time school ELL educators that serve at a specific school site to instead having facilitators that serve multiple schools. Nevada, Washoe County in particular, has a large population of families and students where English is their second language. Prior to the facilitator model, our school had a dedicated ELL teacher who worked daily with students and fostered a relationship with students and families over years and students moving up multiple grade levels. She was able to visit classrooms and work with ELL students on a consistent daily and weekly basis. She was able to identify and address student needs and immediately adapt instruction as those needs changed and developed. Our ELL facilitators are working to the best of their ability with the role that they are given, but I feel that our schools and diverse student population is being underserved without having individual schools with a dedicated full-time specialist to serve these populations on school site every day. Continuing with the facilitator model puts these students in the very real danger of being pushed farther behind as specific needs and essential skills are missed. Every school in Washoe County in order to serve their English Language Learners need at least one dedicated full-time specialized ELL educator in their building every day.

Thank you for your time and attention to these agenda items.

Thank you,

Rachel Fisher

1<sup>st</sup> Grade Teacher  
Lena Juniper Elementary

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**From:** Erika Carpio  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 9, 2021 8:05 AM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] ESL

Hello, Please allow me to I to introduce myself, my name is Erika and I went to Wooster ESL classes. Learning a new language was hard but not impossible with the help I got from the ESL program. I was intimidated coming to a country where I didn't speak English. I love the USA and I really, really wanted to be a good citizen and learn the language. Well, I got my high school diploma and I'm also a US citizen now 😊 Please, kept the ESL teachers, thank you 🙏

[Sent from AT&T Yahoo Mail for iPhone](#)

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**From:** Rikard Bergquist  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 9, 2021 8:08 AM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] ESL Program

Dear Honorable Board of Trustees,

I am writing to you today to express my concern regarding the closing/ changing of the Washoe county ESL program. This program is essential to English learning and should be funded, not closed down.

As a father and resident of Washoe county, the news of the possible closing of the ESL program in our county's schools greatly saddens me. I have one daughter who is currently attending Roy Gomm Elementary school and another daughter who graduated from Wooster high school in 2016 as an International Baccalaureate diploma student who went on to graduate from UNR with a double major in International Affairs and Spanish. While at Wooster both my daughter and I were able to see how impactful and important the ESL program truly is. She has many friends who were able to excel and accomplish their goals with help from this program. They would not have had the same opportunities if the ESL program had not existed.

The ESL program offers such crucial knowledge and support to international students and instead of discontinuing the ESL program, it should receive more funding so that it can work jointly with the IB program in offering international students support in academic excellence.

I ask the Board and Washoe county educators to reconsider the closing of the ESL program as it is critical to our schools.

All the best,  
Rikard Palmer Bergquist

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**From:** Calen Evans  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 9, 2021 8:29 AM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Public Comment- Resolution 20-011

Dear WCSD Trustees,

I'd like to commend the efforts of individuals of this board to start taking a more active role in addressing the issues of racism and inequality in our society. It is the responsibility of community leaders such as yourselves to be leaders in social change. I believe that resolution 20-011 is a great step in the right direction. It provides a framework in which we can build a better school system that supports all of the students in our community. We have a beautifully diverse student population and we need to make sure that all of our practices and overall mission as a School District reflect this beauty. I appreciate all of you for taking the time to address and discuss these issues. They can be difficult conversations for us to have but they are absolutely essential for us to move forward in a more positive direction. As a member of this community and a parent of children in the Washoe County school District I urge you to vote yes on resolution 20-011.

Thank you for your time,  
Calen Evans

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**From:** Erwin, Elena  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 9, 2021 8:30 AM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** ELD Services

Good day,

I am writing to voice my concern to continue funding/increase funding to the EL Department. We as educators are always advocating for our students. While any services given to groups of student is more than welcomed, providing support for English Language Learners is crucial to our community, cities, and the great state of Nevada.

These students are not only having to learn our curriculum, but also the language – all at the same time. To be able to support these hardworking individuals means we should look at how they are serviced and keep in mind that they are underrepresented, often to do not speak up, and add to the dropout rates when they feel they have failed. We need to provide support in as many different ways that are beneficial. Students that come into Washoe County School District need our assistance to reach a level of proficiency and when budgets are discussed, we often eliminate areas that are in the greatest need. We need to think long term and consistency for these students to thrive and become productive citizens in our country.

While the ELD Site Facilitator model is showing success, we cannot emphasize enough the importance of addressing the needs based on the school population, projected growth, and special needs required. We need to look closely at the students that are not making growth, stay in the program longer because they do not receive the support they need, and how we can best address the issues they face so that they too can graduate with a diploma that not only shows they met the requirements to earn the certificate, but are not in need of remediation should they chose to go onto college.

If we have done all we can from kindergarten to 12<sup>th</sup> grade to support, advocate, and create an environment for success only then, can we say we truly advocated for our students.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

*Elena Erwin, M. Ed. Curriculum & Instruction*

*ELD Site Facilitator*

*Peavine ES & Whitehead ES*

*“There are 2 educations. One should teach you how to make a living and the other how to live.” John Adams*



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**From:** Diana Rivera  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 9, 2021 8:38 AM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] No ESL cuts in Washoe!

Dear valued members of the Board,

I write this email to ask you to please vote no on any proposed cuts to Washoe County's English as a Second Language programs. Despite the difficult and unprecedented times that we are experiencing, it is crucial for the community to continue supporting its students. As an alumna of Vaughn Middle School, Earl Wooster High School and the University of Nevada, Reno and currently a Certified Public Accountant of Nevada, I can attest to the impact that these programs had in my education. I was part of Pine's Newcomer's program and subsequently transferred to Vaughn's ESL and ELL programs and I cannot emphasize the importance of these programs to the kids in our community. Not only do they provide them with the resources to achieve their goals, but also provide them with a network of students and teachers/professors with similar backgrounds that make us feel welcome.

Again, I please vote no on any proposed cuts to Washoe!

Thank you for your time and consideration.

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**From:** Nelson, Jenny  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 9, 2021 9:37 AM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** FW: ELL Proposal

Hi, I found a mistake in my previous email, please use this one, thank you so much! Jenny

Dear WCSD board members:

Hope this email finds you all safe and well. My name is Jenny Nelson. I am the ELL teacher at McQueen High School. Last Thursday, I received an email from our district ELL office informing us that there will be a change in our ELL programs starting the 2021-2022 school year. I was not shocked to hear this news; with the pandemic, budget shrinking is unavoidable. However, as an ELL teacher and also as an educator and mother, I strongly believe cutting ELL programs with facilitators replacing teachers is inadvisable and unwise.

Many years ago, when I took a class on Educational Laws, I could not agree more with what the supreme court judges wrote about the case of Lau V Nichols. I still remember the core of the argument: if our school systems couldn't provide nonnative English speakers students' opportunities to study English, then we are not providing them with equal access to the adequate education. Now, my first question to this change would be, who are the site facilitators? Do they have state license in teaching ELL? I'm afraid to say, if our district is willing to hire any facilitators with no license in ELL teaching background to replace our current ELL teachers, that's going to be a huge mistake. The law has mandated us to provide instruction on English to our ELL kids not just to facilitate them in learning English.

Please be aware of these 2 different concepts here. As a licensed ELL teacher, I teach my ELL students English. YES, I teach them the structure of the English language, I teach them strategies to decode the structure of English, not just to facilitate them to learn English. I work with them to build their vocabulary capacity, then to use these words to write a complete and grammatically correct sentence. I also teach them how to write an essay from scratch. To start with using punctuations, cohesive transitions, to form an idea and to develop an idea into a paragraph, and then to a five-paragraph essay. Moreover, I teach them how to be an effective reader and to be a lifelong English learner, so they can be successful in today's American schools, and on and on. I minimize the gaps they have between their native language and English and build the bridge to help them connect with their mainstream English classes. Without our ELL English classes, without our ELL teachers, it is like we are just letting our ELL students jump and swim into our mainstream English classes without a lifejacket.

I try to understand the purpose of this change, yes, we're trying to save money! But we need to be smarter on the changes we're going to make. Are the changes lawful? Are the changes helping students learning? Please don't forget everything we do at school is to help our students learn, we like them to be better learners, effective learners, and stronger learners, I just can't see this new model will help our student's learning. Also do we have any data to support this idea? Anyhow, at this point, I have to say, this idea is not wise and thoughtful at all! It will not only hurt our ELL students' opportunities to receive higher quality instruction delivered by licensed and experienced ELL teachers, but also, it might cause our district into a potential litigation of not providing an equal and adequate education to our ELL students. Please let us have more

research done on this, and have more discussions with our ELL kids, their parents and ELL teachers before any decision should be made on this.

Respectfully, Jenny Nelson

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**From:** Nelson, Jenny  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 9, 2021 8:52 AM  
**To:** Public Comments <PublicComments@WashoeSchools.net>  
**Subject:** ELL Proposal

Dear WCSD board members:

Hope this email finds you all safe and well. My name is Jenny Nelson. I am the ELL teacher at McQueen High School. Last Thursday, I received an email from our district ELL office informing us that there will be a change in our ELL programs starting the 2021-2022 school year. I was not shocked to hear this news; with the pandemic, budget shrinking is unavoidable. However, as an ELL teacher and also as an educator and mother, I strongly believe cutting ELL programs with facilitators replacing teachers is inadvisable and unwise.

Many years ago, when I took a class on Educational Laws, I could not agree more with what the supreme court judges wrote about the case of Lau V Nichols. I still remember the core of the argument: if our school systems couldn't provide nonnative English speakers students' opportunities to study English, then we are not providing them with equal access to the adequate education. Now, my first question to this change would be, who are the site facilities? Do they have state license in teaching ELL? I'm afraid to say, if our district is willing to hire any facilitators with no license in ELL teaching background to replace our current ELL teachers, that's going to be a huge mistake. The law has mandated us to provide instruction on English to our ELL kids not just to facilitate them in learning English.

Please be aware of these 2 different concepts here. As a licensed ELL teacher, I teach my ELL students English. YES, I teach them the structure of the English language, I teach them strategies to decode the structure of English, not just to facilitate them to learn English. I work with them to build their vocabulary capacity, then to use these words to write a complete and grammatically correct sentence. I also teach them how to write an essay from scratch. To start with using punctuations, cohesive transitions, to form an idea and to develop an idea into a paragraph, and then to a five-paragraph essay. Moreover, I teach them how to be an effective reader and to be a lifelong English learner, so they can be successful in today's American schools, and on and on. I minimize the gaps they have between their native language and English and build the bridge to help them connect with their mainstream English classes. Without our ELL English classes, without our ELL teachers, it is like we are just letting our ELL students jump and swim into our mainstream English classes without a lifejacket.

I try to understand the purpose of this change, yes, we're trying to save money! But we need to be smarter on the changes we're going to make. Are the changes lawful? Are the changes helping students learning? Please don't forget everything we do at school is to help our students learn, we like them to be better learners, effective learners, and stronger learners, I just can't see this new model will help our student's learning. Also do we have any data to support this idea? Anyhow, at this point, I have to say, this idea is not wise and thoughtful at all! It will not only hurt our ELL students' opportunities to receive higher quality instruction delivered by licensed and experienced ELL teachers, but also, it might cause our district into a potential litigation of not providing an equal and adequate education to our ELL students. Please let us have more

research done on this, and have more discussions with our ELL kids, their parents and ELL teachers before any decision should be made on this.

Respectfully, Jenny Nelson

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**From:** Sharon Boersma  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 9, 2021 8:54 AM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] BOT Meeting 2/9 Agenda Item 5.05 ELD Programming

Dear Members of the Board,

I am a retired teacher, having taught in various places and positions across the United States. I have most recently volunteered with Special Education Pre-K at Natchez Elementary School here in Washoe County.

Please further investigate and reconsider our options with respect to funding for English Learners.

English learners and their families have limited English language skills, limited access to communication technology, considered caution with respect to authority, erratic working hours, high intergenerational responsibilities, and thus limited ability to contribute to public meetings. Also we have not provided them with the federally mandated Family Advisory Committee which could convey their concerns to the Board during public meetings.

Tax revenues are down, and various budget concessions will be necessary. However, the reductions in services for this vital community among us seems dire. To make these decisions without input from these learners, their families and teachers, is unfair, unjust, and unworthy of us as citizens.

Respectfully, Sharon Boersma

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**From:** Karen Chavez  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 9, 2021 9:06 AM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] DON'T CANCEL ESL

ESL is the reason why my English is so fluent, please don't cancel. That would be leaving a child behind. Having a language barrier in the United States is so TOUGH. Elementary education is responsible for so much as the seeds are planted.

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**From:** Real-Zepeda, Marco  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 9, 2021 9:24 AM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** Concern about ELD classes

To whom it may concern,

The reason for this email is to express my concern about the proposed cuts to the ELD classes. As a former ESL student and current high school teacher, I oppose to these cuts. In my experience, when I came to the United States, my ESL classes were my safe zone as I always had teachers who supported me and understood my situation. I am happy that I was part of the ESL Newcomers Center at Earl Wooster HS because this program helped me to learn English and adapt to a new culture. I truly believe that students who recently come to this country really benefit from taking ELD classes. Students find the support and guidance from their ELD teachers to not only adjust to a new education system, but also to this country. In addition, I also believe that minority groups should have the right to learn English to help them better be involved and be active participants in this country. Lastly, we must also think about our future immigrant students and the negative consequences that these cuts will have on their education and future. I hope future immigrant students have the same opportunities that I had when I came to this beautiful country.

Thank you very much,

Marco Real Zepeda

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**From:**  
**Sent:** Monday, February 8, 2021 10:08 AM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Equity action plan-equity training February 9th meeting

Dear Board of Trustees:

In regard to your February 9 meeting at Sky Ranch Middle School in Sparks; on the topic of "equity training-Anti-Racism Resolution"; here are my comments:

Critical Race Theory is rooted in cultural Marxism. Black Lives Matter co-founder Patrisse Cullors admits that she and her fellow organizers are "trained Marxists". I think most parents would be against teaching Marxism to their children. The idea that we are groups of 'oppressors' and 'victims' and we as a society are going to do something sounds appealing. Actually 'Critical Race Theory' will serve to divide people groups, encourage disunity, encourage the idea that 'we' are victims and we need restitution.

Why don't schools teach the dangers of "communism"? America's history is just that.....we can't change it. Teaching truth that America made mistakes but, also teaching the benefits and the freedoms and liberty our country stands for. Please don't take up an agenda that will cause much division among all our great diverse students.

Sincerely,

Susan Villasenor  
Carson City



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**From:** Jessie Segoviano  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 9, 2021 9:32 AM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] ESL Program

Hello

I hope this message finds everyone in good health and standing, this email is being written in hopes to not cancel the ESL program. It is highly unethical and unprofessional of schools to not have this program, as a second generation Hispanic-American, as an kid who's first language was Spanish and barely scratching the surface on English, when I was introduced in a program like this in my original Elementary it saved and speeded up my process of learning English. Learning to communicate with my fellow classmates, teachers, principals, I ask you to reconsider this program as we are already facing hard times with COVID-19.

-Jessie Segoviano

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**From:** Valencia, Regina  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 9, 2021 10:06 AM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** BOT Meeting 2/9/2021 Agenda Item 5.05 ELD Programming

Esteemed Board of Trustees,

Read our Washoe County School District motto. Take it to heart as you ponder the decision to decimate the EL program over the next three years.



Our common goal is to get EVERY child to graduation, not just the most gifted and fortunate. Are our 9000 plus EL students being considered in the cold equation that eliminates the vital role of the trained EL teacher in their path to academic success and social integration? We talk about relationships all the time as a key to success. Every student should have at least one responsible adult that they can count on to guide them through the achievement of their goals. ELs, both recent immigrants and those who were born in the United States, benefit immensely from daily interaction with EL teachers who are trained in language acquisition theory and strategy and can help them navigate the often rough waters of learning a new language and a new culture. Will a lone site facilitator be able to meaningfully connect with all the EL students on their roster with the same level of care and expertise? I think not.

The devastating impact of the proposed Site Facilitator model on our EL students should be obvious. The impact on our already overworked faculty is equally devastating. My colleagues, over my 18-year career in WCSD, have always shown the utmost concern for "my ELs". I consider ELs "my kids" and I spend much of my day explaining the subtle nuances of language and culture as well as concepts as basic as the conjugation of the verb "to be". As well-meaning as they are, non-EL trained teachers will not have the time nor resources to adequately address the language and cultural issues that need to be clarified for an EL student on a daily basis. And they shouldn't be expected to take on this additional responsibility. I agree that all teachers are teachers of ELs, and every teacher should avail themselves of the opportunity to participate in professional development which will give them greater insight into the needs of ELs, but it should not be the primary responsibility of the math teacher, for instance, to teach the use of past tense verbs. Designated EL teachers fulfill that function.

With the growing influx of recent immigrant families and the establishment of long-term ELs (those have been in the U.S. for more than 5 years) who have not fully mastered English in order to succeed academically and socially, we need more EL teachers, not fewer.

Look at our WCSD mission again. Ask yourselves, are you really giving our ELs a fair shot at graduation and career success if you implement the Site Facilitator model? Remember, ELs have names and faces and they deserve the best education we can offer them. Do not cut back the EL program.

Sincerely,

*Regina Valencia*

EL Teacher Sparks High School

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**From:** JOHN P PATTON  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 9, 2021 10:09 AM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Class of 2021 Seniors

Hello! I am writing to you as a parent of a senior, a sophomore, a 1st grader, and a full time in person Washoe County teacher. I know that our district has worked hard to ensure the safety of our students and staff. But I am wondering why more has not been done for our 2021 seniors?? These kids have had NOTHING this year. Why is that?? Why hasn't more been done to lift them up and celebrate them?? Every time you turn around something else is being taken away.

A big frustration is the sports situation. If these kids can go to school, work, engage in other sports programs outside of school, and travel for sports tournaments..... why are we not allowing them to play sports at school??? I have a senior who worked her tail off all off season to improve herself for her senior basketball season. She is not the star player, just a girl who looked forward to playing more and having a senior season. I understand that the district has to follow the governor's guidelines, but why not offer something?? Is it not possible to set up an unofficial tournament later on spring? All these kids want to do is play!

Lastly, a parade graduation?? Why can't they have a socially distanced graduation the football field?? There has got to be more thought into making this a better year for the class of 2021 seniors. No senior sunrise, no sports, no prom, and no graduation?? Please tell me you can come up with better options!!

Thank you for your time! Gabrielle Patton

Sent from my iPhone

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**From:** Katie Long  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 9, 2021 10:15 AM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] BOT Meeting 2/9 Agenda Item 5.05 ELD Programming

Dear Members of the Board,

My name is Katie McDowell and I am speaking to you regarding Agenda Item 5.05: ELD Programming.

A value you consistently share with the public and pride yourself on maintaining is “do no harm.” Cutting 18 EL positions in our district would directly harm our most vulnerable students. Our newcomers deserve quality instruction. Although all teachers are language teachers, there is a divide between being a facilitator of language and being a trained facilitator of English as a second language. As an English Language Arts teacher, I have not received proper training, education, nor have I been certified in teaching morphology, conventions, syntax, register, and culture. The hardworking professionals in the EL program specialize in second language acquisition theories, and directly impact children who will become key members of our community.

Cutting those positions would not only be a disservice to our most vulnerable students, but it would diminish the likelihood of these children having the tools they need to be successful in school, and the world outside of school. The EL teachers at my school are loving, selfless, passionate, dedicated educators, and the thought of schools moving forward with fewer EL teachers is devastating. Simply replacing them with “language enrichment” support via site facilitators is not the answer, and it would send the message to our community—educators, students, and parents—that our most vulnerable populations are the least important in the eyes of the school board and the district at large. Simply put: it’s wrong.

Enough is enough. It is time to start prioritizing the things that matter in the district: our children. All children. Children of color. Children in poverty. We need to give them the opportunities to rise up, and contribute to our great city through their passions and talents. Language is the key to success, and ripping those resources away from our students is unconscionable, inequitable, and unethical. Do not cut these EL positions. Our students, and our community at large need them.

Thank you for taking the time to read my letter,

Katie McDowell  
ELA Teacher  
Sparks, Nevada

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**From:** Kyla Ganchan-Romero  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 9, 2021 10:26 AM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] ESL program

To whom it may concern,

My name is Kyla Ganchan-Romero. I graduated from Wooster High School in 2016. Wooster, among other schools, has a high rate of students whose first language is not English. As a native English speaker, I can tell you that many of my fellow classmates at Wooster were already at a disadvantage to me, even with the ESL program in place. These students are already forced to learn in a language they are less familiar with, or do not understand at all. Many of my classmates only knew the minimal English that the ESL program provided them with, but it was the only reason they stood a fighting chance in the classroom. The ESL program is absolutely critical if you hope to keep second language English speakers from dropping out. Any act otherwise is a direct act of discrimination towards students whose first language is not English.

The system already favors students whose first language is English. Please do not remove one of the only resources that English second-language students have. Removing the ESL program is an act of discrimination.

Thank you for your time,  
Kyla Ganchan-Romero

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**From:** Vicky Linares  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 9, 2021 10:21 AM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] ESL Program

To whom this may concern,

I am writing in regards of the ESL program, asking for this program to still be involved in schools. I personally went through this program as my first language was Spanish I knew nothing of English with the amazing support this program has and how it helped me speak the English language. If it was not for this program I would not be where I am today and achieving my goals. I would like everyone to get an opportunity to fly and achieve those dreams to learn English and getting that extra time away from other to get more support. I tested out of this program when I was a freshman in High school, I now receive complainants that I speak English quite well. So please keep this program and let other get that extra help one needs to learn English with some amazing educators.

Thank you,

Vicky Linares

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**From:** Jennifer Lagreca  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 9, 2021 10:30 AM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Our seniors

To Whom it may concern,

First, I have tremendous respect for our principals and teachers in our community. My concern doesn't lay with them, what keeps me up at night, is my concern for the emotional and mental state of our seniors. Last year it was all about our seniors missing out on this and that.....however, they had 2/3 of a year. Our seniors this year have had absolutely nothing and the constant disappointment they are feeling from everything being taken away, has depleted their spirits. I see it, I hear it and I know there are better options out there for our students. A football field graduation (there's more students in school daily, than there would be in our graduating class so why wouldn't that work?), .....there are safer options to explore that allow these kids to come together for the first time all year and gather (with masks on of course) as a class one last time.

Thank you for your time.  
Jen (a concerned parent)



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**From:** Bishop, Jan  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 9, 2021 11:01 AM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** Support ELL funding

Please prioritize ELL funding. ELL staff have a huge workload to test and teach our students. They are extremely professional and much needed to do the fantastic job that they manage to accomplish each year.

Sincerely,  
Jan Bishop  
Interventions  
Agnes Risley

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**From:** Miguel Martinez  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 9, 2021 11:03 AM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Agenda Item 5.02

Hello!

I am writing today to affirm my support of Agenda Item 5.02 regarding the Anti-Racism Resolution Action Plan.

I support the work of the Equity and Diversity Department, Equity and Diversity Task Force, and District Leadership. It is pivotal that we spread the message of "All are Welcome" to our students and our communities. The need for inclusivity for all of our students is integral to their development. We need Brave Spaces and faculty trained to support our most underserved populations.

Opponents of inclusivity may try to cloud this equity lens; but it is needed and you can make it clear to them.

I appreciate your support on this action plan. Here's to continued collaborations as we strive for anti-racism practices and inclusive learning environments.

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Best regards,  
Miguel Martinez

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**From:** Eakjot Sekhon  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 9, 2021 11:18 AM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] ESL PROGRAM

Hello.

I am a student of the Washoe county school district system. I've been a part of the district since I was in kindergarten.

I have seen that you are trying to take away ESL from schools, and if you do that you will be under serving non- white and non- English speaking communities. Taking away ESL is completely unjust and wrong, this is a service and opportunity that so many can take advantage of. Taking it away won't help those that are underserved.

Best regards,  
Concerned Student: Eakjot Sekhon

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**From:** Martino, John  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 9, 2021 11:42 AM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** ELD Facilitator Model Proposal

My name is John Martino. I teach English learners at Wooster High School. I've been lucky enough to teach English to students from all parts of the world; Mexico, Afghanistan, El Salvador, Guatemala, Syria, Pakistan, China, Thailand, Bangladesh, Honduras, the Philippines, Tonga, Turkey, Costa Rica, Russia Samoa and Vietnam are some of the places that come to mind when I think back on my students. I'm writing in response to the proposal to continue the transition to the ELD site facilitator model.

I feel for the difficult situation in which you, the trustees, as well as the district leadership find yourselves. Many of you would probably agree with the sentiment that our schools in normal years are underfunded and all of you joined the school board because you care about young people and want to see them thrive. Yet, we are not in a normal year, and the reality is that you are being asked to make some very difficult decisions about funding for school programs. These decisions will obviously influence student learning, so I would like to say a few things that I think should be kept in mind while making this decision.

One: This proposal does not represent a "win-win".

The facilitator position is an important position to have for a strong ELD program, but a facilitator WILL NOT replace the work that an ELD teacher does with students in a classroom. While the training that a facilitator can provide staff is valuable, and necessary, the strategies and methods given in this proposal have been around and in place for years. As tempting as it might be to think that faculty can receive extra training and they will then be able make up for eliminating ELD curriculum and courses, I don't see it happening because I have not seen it already.

Ask yourself this question; "How well would I do if I were dropped into a social studies class in Mexico and didn't have a class that taught me Spanish?" You would be an exceptional student to find success in this situation. It is just as likely that you would grow frustrated and disheartened. How would you feel as the parent of a child in this situation?

Students who need to learn English need access to courses and curriculum that focus on teaching English. I am worried that after hearing this proposal, people will believe that the facilitator model saves money AND teaches students more English-it does not.

Two: A strong ELD program sends the right message to ALL of our community.

Some of the hardest working, most entrepreneurial, and appreciative people in our community were born outside of the United States. They sacrifice so much to come here, and they enrich our communities enormously. A strong ELD program that is valued by the school district sends a powerful message to these community members. It says, "We value you and your family, and we are invested in your success." Let us remember that we are supposed to be the land of opportunity. For English learners, the opportunity to learn English is that first opportunity that unlocks so many other opportunities. Former English learners from Wooster have gone on to be university graduates, medical field workers, skilled workers, army soldiers, navy sailors, small business owners, musicians, and essential workers-wonderful assets to

our country and community. They think fondly of the support that they received from the instruction and community that their ELD courses provided, and I would like to think that this commitment to them is at least partially reflected in the contributions they make in the world.

Three: Why do budget cuts always result in a “do more with less” burden on students and staff who are going about the demanding business of educating and becoming educated yet they don’t seem to affect those who aren’t as committed?

Every student deserves our best, but since we are in such a sad situation where we are looking at budget cuts that will affect students, I think it’s only responsible to look at the time and effort put forth by all levels of school faculty on students with either chronic absenteeism and chronic behavioral issues. I would wager that a survey taken during a “normal” year would reveal a shocking amount of time is spent serving this population of students. Even worse, in the case of chronic behavior issues, the time spent includes instructional time that should be spent on student learning.

Phone calls home, parent conferences, verbal warnings, private talks and written referrals, and contracts all take time away from students, teachers, counselors and administrators. There is an educational cost when so much effort is put into student attendance and behavior. I suspect there is also a monetary cost as well.

Keeping kids in school is important and noble, but when resources are so limited that, does it make so much sense to spend the amount of time that we do in this pursuit? Would we be able to save any amount of money promoting attendance and behavior policies that require more of students and student families and less of schools? It seems like it might be a good time to rethink the expectations that we have for students in our school system.

Thank you,

John Martino

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**From:** Josemanuel Cruz  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 9, 2021 11:52 AM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] BOT Meeting 2/9 Agenda Item 5.05 ELD Programming

Esteemed members of the Board, I am writing this email to ask you to VOTE NO on any proposed cuts to Washoe County's English as a Second Language programs, I understand that we have to make serious sacrifices due to the inevitable budget cuts, but these sacrifices should not have to be made to our most vulnerable students and population who will suffer the consequences ten fold.

We are only as strong as our weakest members of society and by putting non english speakers at another disadvantage, we are not helping them become members of the community. We would hold them further back.

Thank you for your time and consideration of these thoughts.

Josemanuel Cruz  
University of Nevada, Reno  
Office of Financial Services  
Budget Analyst

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**From:** Carolyn Dolan  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 9, 2021 12:26 PM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] PLAY STRUCTURE USE FOR ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

Board of Trustees,

Thank you for your continued efforts to maintain student and teacher safety at all levels of the public school system. We, as parents, can understand the challenges of balancing infection control, learning and mental health at least in our small family and appreciate additional challenges on a larger scale.

Recently, our daughter, Allison, a 5th grader at Lenz Elementary wrote this essay independently (with assistance from her tutor and teacher) in hopes to help sway school administrators to allow use of the play structure during recess. While I am not suggesting the need to do exactly as she describes in the email, she does make a very good point that outside play on the structure would be both fun, physically and emotionally beneficial and most important, low risk of transmission. Essentially, the benefits outweigh the risks.

It was brought to my attention that our school has had to shorten recess because of boredom and other challenges. Interesting, as inside shared air is where the highest risk of transmission occurs. We have discussed this issue with Dr John Hess MD who is on the forefront of this pandemic and agrees that outside play with masks is not of concern and should be allowed to promote physical and mental wellness. I have attached an article to review Dr Hess shared with me. While it is focused on high school sports, it can be translated to outside sports/play of all ages.  
<https://www.medrxiv.org/content/10.1101/2021.01.19.21250116v1?fbclid=IwAR1PHoQ7JEHH0Qofdf3xsI5MhYGCBBtaNvFwJqPnfaVkeUIBJBFGtFNX2Q>

I have been told that this may be a Governor issue, yet other public schools in Carson City and even local private and charter schools are allowed to use the play structures during recess. This would indicate that it isn't actually a Governor's directive, but a WCSD decision.

As a physical therapist, the benefit of movement can not be understated as health promoting including mental health as a means of stress release, connection with friends, and simply fun and joy. Without a doubt, our younger kids desperately need this and we believe it is a simple and safe addition to public education.

For someone like my daughter who has been conscientious in infection control including avoiding gathering inside for activities like soccer in the private area to maintain safety, she deserves to be able to play on her playground at school. Her body needs it. Her mental health needs it. And more than that, all of these children deserve a little reward and freedom after showing such dedication to maintaining the infection control standards!

Thank you again for your time and effort during these pandemic times. We as a family truly appreciate the long hours you endure to make the best decisions possible.

Sincerely,  
Drs Chris and Carolyn Dolan, and Allison Dolan



By Allison Dolan

At school, we should be allowed to play on the playground because we can be safer by using hand sanitizer, washing hands, using disinfectant, or wearing gloves. We can make it safer to play on playgrounds by using hand sanitizer before playing on play structures and use hand sanitizer after we play on them. Another way we can make them safer is by spraying the play structures with disinfectant to kill the germs on the play structure. Being able to play on the playground would be more fun for kids so they could have something to do, other than standing around, at recess. We could also wear gloves when we play on the play structures so we don't spread as many germs. These are the reasons that kids should be able to play on the playground.



Kids should be allowed to play on the playground during this time because it is more fun and there is more exercise. One reason kids should be allowed to play on the playground is because if they are running around and playing they will be less jittery in class. This could lead to kids paying better attention in class and having less jitterbugs and energy. Also, if we could play on the playground it might improve grades by helping kids focus better on the schoolwork. Another reason being able to play on the playground would be good is because kids would have more fun at recess instead of standing around. Then if kids could play on the playground and exercise so they get their heart up and get their blood running. This would help them stay focused in class because their brain is cleared out and their blood is pumping. These are some of the reasons that kids should be able to play on the playground at recess.

We should be allowed to play on the playground if we use hand sanitizer. If we use hand sanitizer then it kills 99.9% of the germs on your hand and this would help prevent the germs from spreading. Also, if we use hand sanitizer afterwards it will be disinfecting the germs on the swings so our hands would be clean. A way this would help is if we hand sanitize between each piece of playground equipment this would help from spreading germs around. For example: hand sanitizing your hands before you go on the swings and then when you get off the swings to go to the monkey bars you hand sanitize before you get on the monkey bars. Each playground equipment would need a hand sanitizer stand near it so kids could use it before they get on the equipment.

At recess we should be able to play on the playground if we spray it down with disinfectant spray. If we did this then it would disinfect the germs on the playground from the kids before us so we would not be spreading germs. We could do this by having the recess teacher spray down the equipment with disinfectant spray but this would take more time so recess would be a little shorter. Another way we could do this is by having a disinfectant bottle near every piece equipment so it would take less time. If we set the disinfectant spray bottles near the equipment then the kids could be responsible for spraying down

ear gloves which would prevent germs from spreading. One reason this would help is because kids wouldn't be touching something and then having their hands and from spreading them. This would prevent the germs from getting on their structure it would allow kids to have fun and not get more germs stuck on their hands. After playing at recess with the gloves on you could take them off and your hands would be clean. These are reasons why we should play on their playground if we had gloves.

We should be able to play on the playground if we sanitize before and after we use the playground, wearing gloves, or spraying the playground down with disinfectant spray. Playing on the playground would help kids because they would have less energy and it would help them focus more in class. For example, if we used gloves it would help from spreading germs and would keep your hands clean when you take the gloves off. Sanitizing your hands before and after you play on the playground would help kill most of the germs and stop the spread of the germs. Another example is spraying the playground down with disinfectant spray before the kids comes out to play and slow the spread of germs. This is why kids should be able to play on the playground at recess.



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**From:** Tina Wu  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 9, 2021 12:38 PM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] BOT Meeting 2/9 Agenda Item 5.05 ELD Programming

Esteemed member of the Board, I am writing this email to ask you to VOTE NO on any proposed cut to Washoe County's English as a Second Language (ESL) programs. I understand that we must make serious sacrifices due to the inevitable budget cuts, but we should not cut important programs such as ESL because these students are from the most vulnerable communities and lack of these programs will hurt their academic careers ten folds. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Tina Wu

Sparks, NV 89436

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**From:** Liana Jennifer  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 9, 2021 12:39 PM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] ESL

Please do not remove esl assistance. You are pretty much removing the ability for bilingual children to succeed. You are setting them up for failure and leaving only the liner English speakers the ability to thrive. This is racism at its finest. How horribly inconsiderate for this to even be considered. Very biased. What happened to NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND!!!

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**From:** Jhana-Marie Fry  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 9, 2021 12:43 PM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] BOT Meeting 2/9 Agenda Item 5.05 ELD Programming

Esteemed members of the board,

I am writing this email to ask you to please vote NO on any proposed cuts to Washoe County's English as a Second Language programs. These sacrifices should not have to be made to our most vulnerable students and populations, who will suffer the consequences the most.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

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**From:** Maria Recinos Carpio  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 9, 2021 12:26 PM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] ESL classes allowed me to achieve my dreams!

Distinguished members of the Washoe County School District Board of Trustees:

Due to the recently proposed changes to the EL/ESL program, I have decided to share my experience and how my small intimate ESL class changed my life.

I immigrated from Guatemala when I was 16 years old. It is almost impossible to express all the changes I went through when I arrived to the United States. I was in a new country, facing a new culture and a new language; I was supposed to face the challenges of continuing my education in a new environment all by myself. Although scared and afraid, I decided to enroll in Wooster High School with only one motivation: I was informed that English as second language classes were offered. Skeptical of the outcome I decided to give it a try. During my first semester in High school, I was put in ESL classes where people who like me, understood the challenges of learning a new language. These classes provided me with a safe and intimate space where learning English was a feasible possibility. As time passed by, I found myself engaging in conversations with many of my classmates that did not share my first language, faculty staff, and other classmates from different courses. I was able to make friends, build relationships, and most importantly, advanced in my education. My perspective changed and for the first time, I felt capable of pursuing a higher education. With the mentorship of my ESL teachers, I enrolled in different classes that awakened my thirst for knowledge. I was able to do this because I knew that at the end of the day, I had the safety net of my ESL teachers who dedicated more than a class period to my success and guidance. As a result, I was able to graduate from high school in 2016 and pursue a college degree at Truckee Meadows Community College.(TMCC) I graduated from TMCC in May of 2019 and transfer to the University of Nevada, Reno (UNR). Now, I am a senior finishing my last semester of undergraduate with a Bachelor's of Science in Veterinary Medicine. I am in the process of applying to graduate school for veterinary medicine. My ultimate goal is to become a veterinarian as it has been my dream since I was 5 years old. I plan on continuing to cultivate my knowledge even after becoming a doctor as I want to pursue a specialty in forensic medicine. I cannot fathom a life without education and I truly believe this is also how many of my ESL peers feel. Throughout the years, I have also seen the success that ESL classes can bring not only to myself but also to many of my peers who have gone into disciplines such as nursing school, medicine, biology, criminal justice, law enforcement, just to mention a few. ESL classes truly changed my life and gave me the courage to follow my dreams.

Please, allow students, who like me, have a dream and need the amazing opportunity to learn English in a safe environment. These individuals (myself included) have the potential to serve this beautiful country by following their dreams and I truly believe that learning English is the door to OUR success.

Best regards,  
Maria Recinos

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**From:** Austria, Michael  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 9, 2021 1:21 PM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** Do not make cuts to the ELD program

To whom it may concern,

The proposed changes to the ELD program will put more strain on mainstream education teachers as well as do a disservice to those in underserved communities. This is a program, if cut, will affect all facets of our education system. When will the mainstream classroom teacher have the time to teach students the alphabet? When will the mainstream classroom teacher have the time to teach them how to read? There are many kinks in the system if you make the proposed changes to this program.

What happens to the immigrants? What happens to the refugees? ELD classrooms are a safe space for students who do not speak the English language, the students know that and every ELD teacher knows that.

We serve our newcomers and our long-term students living in the United States. Consider the challenges that they face as they enter the United States for the first time. We teach them the skills that they need to succeed. I am here to speak out for the people who need it most, our students.

Michael Austria  
**English Language Development**  
**Earl Wooster High School**

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**From:** Rain  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 9, 2021 1:26 PM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] BOT Meeting 2/9 Agenda Item 5.05 ELD Programming

Esteemed Members of the Board:

I invite you to think like a "wolf pack" and center those most vulnerable to falling through the cracks as you decide on which programs to cut. I have heard "Speak English" so many times as either an invitation and more unfortunately a demand towards non-native English speakers. Maybe you have even thought of this yourself towards someone at the store or someone you couldn't quite understand. The solution, obviously, is to NOT cut funding on English as a Second Language program. Why? Because if we want our residents to speak fluent English then we need to do our part to keep these programs funded.

The Washoe area has been fortunate enough to weather this pandemic better than Clark county and other heavily casino-based areas due to the diversified economic opportunities. We must invest in our children's capability to communicate in English so we can continue to have a viable workforce to supply qualified employees to the variety of businesses that have decided to call Northern Nevada their home too.

Please VOTE NO! As a prior Senior Budget Analyst, I would like to volunteer my skills and experience to assist you with navigating these budget reduction scenarios that will minimize impact to our most vulnerable community members.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

**Rain Fernandez**

**Community builder, Advocate, Resource navigator, Excel ninja**

*Mental Health Recovery Specialist, Mental Health America Fellow*

**[Support Washoe County businesses! || SparksJoy.Biz](#)**

*"There is no force more powerful than an idea whose time has come" - MDS*

*If you received this email outside of your usual response hours, please know that I will patiently await your reply until your next availability. Thank you! :)*



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**From:** Elena De La Paz  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 9, 2021 1:37 PM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Anti-Racism

My name is Elena De La Paz, and as a future educator in Nevada I support the implementation of anti racism by reevaluating hiring practices, anti racism representatives, and curriculum to value diversity. We are all well aware that our students come from different experiences, and we need to be ready to support than with more than language but also action. Specifically the action of reevaluating who we bring into classrooms with students is most relevant in this conversation. Preventing 1-on-1 experiences with teachers who do not allow students to grow to their fullest potential is much needed. This increases knowledge but also quality of life. We need teachers that make our students feel beautiful and wanted. Education and systemic violence is at the root of so many we have lost, and starting in our classrooms is vital for our society to evolve . Education is a social network, and until we have faculty who will do the work to understand the realities of their student's, there is no justice and therefore no peace.

I urge you to do the work and stop claiming you support students without action. Thankyou.

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**From:** Roney, Michelle  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 9, 2021 1:38 PM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** 5.02 Resolution 20-011

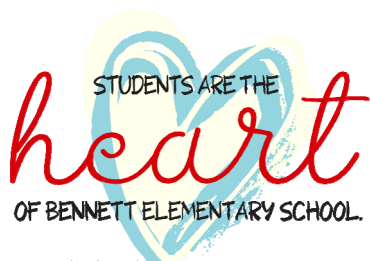
Dear WCSD Board of Trustees,

I am writing in favor of the proposed Anti-Racism Resolution because I believe that a, “system-wide commitment to creating an unbiased, inclusive, and anti-racist society through education” is necessary. It is imperative that we, as a collective entity, are actively and diligently *Intolerant* of discrimination, harassment, and racism. A failure to address topics or events that are uncomfortable – or, a pointed effort to mute communications relating thereto does not make us tolerant or sensitive to the issues in our community – rather, it silences already marginalized, historically disadvantaged communities and sets the tone that colorblindness is the same as equity. It is not.

The past year has been devastating for our local community and country. Racism and intolerance of differences have been fueled by hate-filled propaganda, deceit, and an unwillingness to address systemic problems that disadvantage some while privileging others. An active voice that stands in direct opposition to these divisive and detrimental practices and instead, serves to unify our communities - regardless of race, ethnicity, county of origin, or other demographics of the inhabitants therein - is required if we are to embody the posturing of equity and respect that we purport to hold sacred.

Sincerely,

*Michelle Roney, MSW, LSW*  
(She/Her/Hers)  
School Social Worker  
Esther Bennett ES



**Our mission is to help ALL students  
reach their fullest potential  
academically, socially, and emotionally.**

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**From:** Steevy Yarborough  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 9, 2021 1:43 PM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] item 5.02

WCSD Board of Trustees and Superintendent Kristen McNeil,

I am writing you today concerning the Anti-Racism Resolution. Of course, on the surface, this seems to be a virtuous plan of action that any moral person could get behind. In fact, I personally love the celebration and embracing of diversity. I wonder, though, how many parents have actually had the opportunity to investigate the concepts behind this ‘resolution’? After hearing several rumors, I wanted to know more about what could potentially be implemented. So, I explored the links at WCSD’s Equity and Diversity website. The very first link, “teaching tolerance”, brought me to a resource in which the very first line read “White Supremacy in Education.” This threw me off a little bit, so after exploring the site a bit more, I started searching the internet about “white supremacy in education”. This search brought up several search hits of Marxism and Critical Race Theory... which perpetuates the idea that white people are “inherently racist”. I also read the story of a high school boy in Las Vegas, William (for reference... son of Gabrielle Clark, if you would like to search and read about this situation). William, who is biracial, participated in a required Sociology class that integrated Critical Race Theory concepts. William and his mother state that assignments and discussions regularly required students to proclaim racial, sexual, gender, and religious identities and label their own (and their fellow classmates’) identities as “oppressed” or “oppressor”.

This got me thinking about the impact this curriculum would have on my own children. My beautiful, kind-hearted (who also happens to be biracial) daughter could potentially face a situation similar to that of William’s, being forced to metaphorically “check” a box of oppressed or oppressor to label herself. What an offensive, humiliating, confusing, and mentally traumatizing situation to put a child in. Moreover, what about my precious (full white) son, who in all his little life has never even used someone’s skin color as an adjective to describe who he was talking about, but rather chooses to describe them in other ways (my friend with the red shirt, that lady with the pretty shoes, etc.) regardless of their race? Will he be painted the villain of this day? Because he is not only white but also a male, which is two “checks” for the metaphorical “oppressor” box. If these are among the concepts that will be taught through this Anti-Racism Resolution, then there is nothing anti-racist about it at all... in fact, this is actually racist in itself. It is harmful to our children. It is divisive. If these are really the type of concepts that will be taught to our children, then half of our children will end up hating their fellow classmates while half of our children will end up hating themselves. This is not healthy or good for anyone. I realize that racism is very real. I feel, however, that this approach will only bring more harm.

Please let me make perfectly clear that I, and the majority of parents, *want* our children to attend inclusive schools and have experiences in diverse classrooms. We *want* our children to understand that people are people, and that skin color does not determine a person’s worth or ability. We *want* our children to grow up with the tools to be able to recognize racist behaviors so that they can stand up for what’s right... making the world better, closer to the annihilation of racism, with each passing generation. However, teaching our children that their fellow classmates, their teachers, their neighbors, or themselves are inherently racist because of their skin color is not the way to do it. In fact, it is contradicting to *true* anti-racism ideals.

So please, for the love of our children, teach them about inclusiveness in a manner that does not repeat history. Please, teach them about the horrible, disgusting events that have transpired throughout history because

of racism. Teach them about the unthinkable experiences that people have endured just because of their race, ethnicity, etc. Teach them that because of courageous and wonderful people, changes have happened. Teach them about *these* morals and values. Teach them how to **love** one another. Teach them how to celebrate one another. Teach them that they *need* each other. Teach them to stand up for one another. But please, do not let them be subjected to harmful conceptions that suggest certain groups of people are racist and oppressive just because of their skin color. This is hurtful, counterproductive, and flat out contradictory. We trust you with the well being of our babies.

“Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that.”  
– the great Martin Luther King, Jr.

Respectfully,

(not the only) Concerned Parent

February 9, 2021

Dear Washoe County School Board,

I'm writing regarding the proposed changes to the District's ELD program. After reviewing the presentation slides and comments made by Superintendent Dr. McNeil, I have serious concerns and many questions about the plan. Being a Secondary ELD teacher in the District for 16 years, I have a professional and ethical responsibility to voice my concerns. Before addressing my worries, I want to state that I whole-heartedly agree with the Board's recognition of the following:

- Academic success of ELs is a shared responsibility
- All teachers are teachers of English learners
- All EL students have equitable access to content and attain language proficiency

I've advocated and collaborated with Principals and fellow EL teachers for the shared responsibility of the academic success of ELs and that all teachers are English language teachers. It's a strenuous, uphill battle trying to get fellow teachers to understand and embrace this within their secondary classrooms. I'm not opposed to an improvement of the EL program; however, I am opposed to why and how the change is being presented to the community.

Superintendent Dr. McNeil's Pathway to Positive Progress states, "We will track the reduction or removal of the introduction of system-wide changes without employee/stakeholder input." For the EL Program proposal, where is the "stakeholder input"? I'm appalled at the lack of transparency for this change prior to introducing it during a Board meeting. Is there parent, student, and teacher input regarding this huge change? The years of working with ELs and their families have shown me that parents and guardians of ELs do not feel comfortable coming into a school and asking questions, they don't feel a sense of belonging within the school system. It's appalling to know that leaders in our School district would take advantage of this disenfranchisement and move forward without getting parent and student feedback.

In the presentation, there's one slide with bar graphs demonstrating the "success" of the program. Where does that data come from? The EL student population is extremely diverse with diverse needs. Those "EL" students presented in the graph, who are they? What's their age? Were they Short-term ELs, Long-term ELs, what's their linguistic background? Unfortunately, I was not aware of this "successful program" within the District and Department that I work for. What schools have used this program? Elementary? Secondary? If this is a "successful" program, why haven't I (and many other EL teachers) heard of it?

Again, Superintendent McNeil's Pathway to Positive Progress states, "We will transition from a crisis mentality to a stability message, demonstrated in Interim Superintendent communications, Board of Trustees communications, Board of Trustees Meetings, Leadership Team meetings, and other districtwide and school-based meetings." The timing and delivery of the proposed EL program change looks to have been made with a "crisis mentality;" the "crisis" being District's budget deficit. Is this what's best for the students or what's best for the District budget?

The mission of the board is “to create an education system where all students achieve academic success, develop personal and civic responsibility, and achieve college- and career readiness for the 21st century.” How does reduced funding for a historically marginalized population of students create a “system where all students achieve academic success?” ELs have and continue to be a population of students who suffer from low graduation rates, cultural misconceptions that lead to low expectations, and insufficient funding. In addition, EL Departments within secondary schools are marginalized: we’re expected to teach in quasi-classrooms near the “boiler room”, in outdated mobiles, or any available space in a commons area, such as a hallway. How is this equitable?

When I worked at a middle school that receives Zoom funding, that funding wasn’t always guaranteed. According to the presentation, the funding for the program is dependent upon the State Legislature. If you take away General funding, and the federal funds are not guaranteed from year to year, where does that leave the EL program in terms on funding? The proposed funding changes don’t seem to lend itself to stability.

Finally, according to the proposal, the Site Facilitator will do the following:

- Builds teacher capacity in language development
- Provides teachers with data for planning for student language needs
- Engages teacher with modeling, coaching, coteaching and professional learning
- Provides teachers with tools and strategies to meet demands of language in content and design explicit language instruction through content

These are lofty goals for one Site Facilitator. Even more so if that person has more than one school to attend to. It’s what a previous principal and I strived for at a middle school. The Principal valued the EL teachers: we were welcomed into the Department Lead meetings (any meeting for that matter) , she hired more EL teachers (because the above cannot be done with 1 EL Site Facilitator), she sought out professional development for the teachers, and made sure all involved were aware of the linguistic and content goals for our students. The four bullets above are ideal, however, it’s a systemic, philosophical mindset change for all parties involved. The goals of the model must be embraced by all the administrators and teachers. Additionally, there must be continuous professional learning. What on-going professional development will be guaranteed for the Site Facilitator and other teachers at a site? And at what cost?

I hope the Board will put serious consideration into what I’ve mentioned. I urge you to hold off on making any sweeping changes to the District’s EL program. Please take the time to create a plan that incorporates all stakeholder’s voices to research and implement program changes. Thank you for your time.

Respectfully,

Marcie Villacorta  
ELD Teacher  
Washoe County School District

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**From:** Navas, Adriana  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 9, 2021 1:45 PM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** ELL TEACHERS ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT FOR INMIGRANTS STUDENTS IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL.

The importance of English as a second language (ELL) teachers. Teachers who spend their time teaching English as a second language to students coming from other countries in my case from a Spanish-speaking country Colombia, are very important because only they can see where the great deficiencies in language of these students are, not only in the English language in their native language too. My son came from Colombia and did not speak English unfortunately for him but he found a teacher ELL in his Elementary school, who dedicated himself to reinforcing all the parts of the language that my son lacks of knowledge and in six months my son spoke English better than I learned in one of the best universities out of the USA. She was a miracle in his life, that's what ELLs Teachers are for students who immigrate from other countries and who need to learn as quickly and efficiently as possible the strategies to be able to communicate in a new country in English. Another very important point is that students, having this support from the ELL teacher, can feel accompanied during a process of cultural and language change which makes them very frustrated at first, because the inability to express themselves in another language makes them feel very sad but having this opportunity give to them hope because they have the support by their side and the frustration becomes manageable for them. My son was fortunate, the help of his ELL Teacher helped him to achieve some of his goals in life, he is now graduating from high school with excellent grades that has allowed him to simultaneously take some college courses, due to his good level of English, this would not have been achieved if he had not had the help of an ELL teacher by his side when he arrived in the USA. Adriana N.



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**From:** Daniela Reyes  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 9, 2021 2:20 PM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Do Not Dispel ESL

To whoever it may concern:

I have lived in Reno, Nevada my whole life. I have met many people from different walks of life, and this program was their only way to learn English. We should not be working against young people and setting them up to fail! Without this program, how else will they learn English? ESL helps to assimilate immigrants! That's should be the goal and without this program. Dispelling the program would display callousness from our country and we should strive for inclusion!

A local Nevadan

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**From:** Cady Stanton  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 9, 2021 2:33 PM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Proposed cuts to the English Language Development Program

To whom it may concern,

As a resident and small business owner here in Reno, I am disheartened to hear that the school district is considering cuts to the English Language Development Program. Cutting students off from this necessary resource will hamper their ability to ever move forward in their education and subsequently in careers. So many of the students who are depending on this program absolutely need the dedicated time to focus on their English so they can actually absorb info from other classes. I know you're struggling due to COVID - we all are - but taking our most vulnerable residents and essentially ensuring they stay in that position is absolutely antithetical to not only the American value of inclusion but the well-being of our local area and country as a whole.

Sincerely,  
Cady Stanton  
Reno, NV

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Cady M. Stanton, M.S. (she/her)

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**From:** Lailarae Espina  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 9, 2021 2:39 PM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] EDL PROGRAM

Hello to whom it may concern,

I would just like to state my concern about the budget cuts from the school district. I think the EDL programs for underserved communities and immigrant communities is an essential part of our school system. I think we need this program and it should not be taken out.

Sent from my iPhone

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**From:** Ring, Joan  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 9, 2021 2:40 PM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** Changes to the EL Program

To the Washoe County School Board and Dr. Kristen McNeill, Superintendent,

I have taught as an English as a Second Language teacher for WCS D for 14 years. In this role my job description and duties have changed continuously. However, the most important aspect of my job, which was working with and for students has not changed. I am very concerned that the ELD facilitator position takes a dedicated teacher away from a school site and deploys them amongst a number of sites. We do not need more teachers training our teachers how to serve students, we need teachers actually serving our students. The trust and relationships that are built by the EL teacher on site with the students, families and teachers cannot be replaced by an itinerant teacher. Many of the site facilitators do not have an EL endorsement. If you really want to create a lasting change for our EL students, require all new hires to have an EL endorsement for each and every position. UNR should be working closely with our district and preparing our new teachers to be able to teach all students.

In the meantime, the roll of the EL teacher evolves daily. We are reading teachers, language teachers, instructional coaches, MTSS mentors, parent outreach participants and advocates and most often, seasoned teachers who can apply experience to any situation. Before changing the current program please investigate the role of the ELD site facilitator more closely and I think you will find it is flawed in many aspects. The facilitator, being required to serve too many schools, and the reality of teachers' schedules makes the expectations of coaching teachers, teaching small student groups, identifying (testing) all new EL's at multiple sites, WIDA testing all identified EL's, monitoring EL's that have passed the program for 5 years, leaves no time to then be an advocate and mentor for our students, teachers and families. Please leave teachers in the schools and refrain from making another layer in our overburdened bureaucracy.

Joan Matan-Ring  
English as a New Language Teacher  
Agnes Risley Elementary School  
Washoe County School District

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**From:** Allison Records  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 9, 2021 2:49 PM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] WCSD ESL Program

Dear Board of Trustees,

I am writing to you today to express my concern regarding the closing/changing of the Washoe County School District's English as a Second Language program. This program is essential to English language learning for one of our most vulnerable and expanding populations and should be funded, not eradicated.

As a resident of Washoe county, the news of the possible closing of the ESL program in our county's schools greatly concerns me. The ESL program supports the success of two different types of language learners at different levels of achievement. First, it supports the language success of students who have been exposed to academics in their first language, and second, it supports the fundamental growth for English language learners who have never been part of an education system.

It is essential for these students to have this resource available as all high-stakes testing is done solely in English. This affects not only student placement in secondary coursework, but also affects WCSD growth and success rates. Additionally, this discrepancy between test scores and language barriers could mistakenly place students into Special Education programs that aren't actually suited for their needs.

The ESL program is impactful and important, and offers the support English language learners need in order to excel and accomplish their goals. It is unreasonable and irresponsible to eliminate a program that offers such crucial knowledge and support to international students.

Washoe County School District's vision is "Every child, by name and face, to graduation." How can this be achieved by depriving students of necessary resources? Our school district has emphasized the importance of an equitable education for all learners. Which means not that all students get an equal education, but that all students are given the specific tools and resources to meet students where they are. The ESL program is essential in the equitable success of all students.

I urge the Board and Washoe county educators to reconsider the closing of the ESL program as it is critical to our schools.

Thank you for your kind consideration.

Sincerely,

Allison Records

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**From:** Isabel Peralta  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 9, 2021 2:52 PM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Anti-Racism Resolution Action Plan and ESL Changes

To the Board of Trustees,

My name is Isabel Peralta, Galena High School graduating class of 2020, and I stand in solidarity with Washoe County Students for Change as I urge the adoption of the drafted action plan that came with Resolution 20-011. Adoption of inclusive and anti-racist practices and curriculum will be a step towards removing the systemic pressures that leave marginalized students in Washoe County behind.

Dr. Charles Lawrence, in his publication "If He Hollers Let Him Go" articulates that one of impacts being made in Brown v. Board of Education was that disparities in education perpetuated by segregation were unlawful in that they made the educational environment difficult and unproductive. His argument connected this interpretation of Brown v. Board to the injury caused by racist insults and language, but I'd like to point to the importance of dignified educational environments to how we can move forward. Not only do we want to ensure students are protected from racist language in order to protect from injury, but a truly dignified educational environment uplifts the issues pertinent to marginalized students. That means education that highlights the history of Black, Indigenous, people of color. That means programs that focus on equity. And that means preparing students to be critical thinkers and empathetic citizens. I am very supportive of the methods of expanding the curriculum and the efforts to have teachers and staff more attentive to and reflective of the needs of a broad range of students.

In order to commit to these values, I also urge the Board to reconsider some potential actions surrounding the GT program and ESL. As a former student of the GT program, I cannot emphasize enough how much it has helped me find fulfillment in my education. I know that accelerated programs are not perfect, but when it comes to being a relatively accessible way for accelerated students to find a classroom more comfortable for their type of learning, MAGNET programs are incredibly important. Without SWAS or MAGNET, many students have little other way of finding a comfortable classroom without turning to inaccessible, costly options.

I would like to urge you, in your consideration of restructuring ESL, to see this program for its importance in keeping up with the current curriculum and as a program for career success and readiness. Language is a tool and a skill that does not start and end in the students in the program right now but contributes towards connecting and sustaining our communities. In many cases, one's skills in English are a tool of economic mobility. Studies of the 2000 census note graduating salary levels that directly correspond with a person's skill level in English\*. While helping develop language skills rests on teachers as a whole, it is important to give students the time and resources they require to strongly develop this skill. In the commitment to anti-racism and equity, I hope that keeping ESL a secure program is within your priorities.

Thank you for reading,  
Isabel Peralta

\*<https://www.census.gov/content/dam/Census/library/working-papers/2005/demo/2005-Day-Shin.pdf>

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**From:** Sid  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 9, 2021 2:54 PM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] ESL Program

To Whom It May Concern,

It has been brought to my attention that the Washoe County School District is considering changes to their English as a Second Language programming that would disadvantage a large portion of their students who are already struggling amidst the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. I find the decisions being considered to be incredibly concerning and am quite frankly disheartened that you would choose to overlook a group of students who need you now more than ever.

As educators I am sure you are already well aware that children who speak English as a second language already have to work twice as hard as their peers who are raised in households that communicate primarily in English. Some of your former alumni from Wooster High School are dear to my heart and relied on the resources provided through ESL programming in your schools to achieve much of the success they have today.

These programs are lifelines and build important foundations for your students. To take away from these programs would be making a statement about which students you deem worthy of your time and support. I hope you do not choose to make a statement rooted in xenophobia that further isolates and targets students who are already fighting for their right to education in a virtual landscape that makes learning even more difficult.

Please be considerate of extending fairness to ALL students and do not remove funding from vital programs that truly make a world of difference in the lives of the students who use them.

Thank you for your time,  
Sidney Keise

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**From:** Marquez-Neimeyer, Anita  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 9, 2021 2:55 PM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** Volley ball shorts for the girls

They need to be longer. Some of the girls who are a little more muscular (get wedgies)!!  
I do not need to see, every thing.



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**From:** Ryan Falke  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 9, 2021 2:57 PM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] ESL Program

Dear Board of Trustees,

I am writing to you today to express my concern regarding the closing/ changing of the Washoe county English as a Second Language program. This program is essential to English learning and should be funded, not eradicated.

As a parent and resident of Washoe county, the news of the possible closing of the ESL program in our schools greatly saddens me. I have children who are currently attending Washoe county public schools and it is my hope that the ESL program stays intact for their classmates and future students. The ESL program is impactful and important, and offers the support students with English as a second language need in order to excel and accomplish their goals. It is unreasonable to eliminate a program that offers such crucial knowledge and support to international students.

I urge the Board and Washoe county educators to reconsider the closing of the ESL program as it is critical to our schools.

Sincerely,

Ryan Falke

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**From:** McGrath, Janet  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 9, 2021 3:03 PM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** BOT Meeting 2/9 Agenda Item 5.05 ELD Programming

Esteemed Trustees,

Thank you for taking time to do your due diligence by researching a shift from English Language Learner teachers to a Site Facilitator model for the WCSD ELD program. I often speak to others of how fortunate we are in WCSD to have a school board that critically analyzes all sides of an issue and takes their roles as advocates for our students seriously. For that I thank you.

I apologize for the length of this comment, however your decision regarding the ELD program will have a lasting impact on the lives and livelihood of our new language learners; for many, it will determine the trajectory of their lives.

My name is Janet McGrath and I am a National Board Certified educator with master's degrees in both Reading/Curriculum & Instruction and Special Education. I currently am an ELD teacher at Galena High School. For 20 years I have been working with at-risk students in the capacity of an ELD teacher and/or Reading Specialist.

I believe it is imperative to understand the risks a student takes when learning a new language and the challenges they face. These students are often extremely uncertain of their abilities to learn not only a new language, but new content, often with incorrect assumptions regarding their background knowledge and skills.

Learning a new language is not simply learning new vocabulary, but rather myriads of figures of speech, the difference between "write" and "right", inferences, intricacies of prepositions, syntax ... the list goes on and on.

When a student is uprooted from their native home in their teens (a season fraught with enough angst as it is) and moved to an entirely new world, their EL teacher is one of their only lifelines, often the only teacher with whom they communicate and reach out to for help, motivation, and to learn self-advocacy during their 5-7 year (minimum) journey to learn Academic English.

Their EL teacher is the person that teaches them a new language, much as a Spanish or French teacher teaches a second language.

However, we do not ask World Language teachers to teach content classes such as math, in Spanish or French and call that a students' math class AND Spanish or French class.

Why would we do this to our non-native English speakers? To have a site facilitator teach content area teachers how to teach English to non-native speakers is asking just that.

I urge you to watch this short video clip featured on the WIDA website (WIDA is the model and assessment tool we model in WCSD). The video shows a secondary EL teacher teaching Shakespeare in her class. As you watch the video and see the time, planning, and scaffolding which goes into the lesson, please ask yourself: Can a regular Language Arts class operate in this manner on a daily basis? Would the regular education teacher be able to cover their curriculum at this pace? In what depth? What would the other students in the class be doing while non-native speakers are learning the intricacies of the English language? Would the English Learners even participate in such a lesson in front of native speakers?

<https://wida.wisc.edu/resources/enl-new-arrival-high-school-students-encouraging-communication-new-language>

Additionally, I urge to read the following meta-analysis:

[https://scholar.harvard.edu/files/mkraft/files/kraft\\_blazar\\_hogan\\_2018\\_teacher\\_coaching.pdf](https://scholar.harvard.edu/files/mkraft/files/kraft_blazar_hogan_2018_teacher_coaching.pdf)

"The Effect of Teacher Coaching on Instruction and Achievement: A Meta-Analysis of the Causal Evidence"

Matthew A. Kraft Brown University David Blazar Harvard University Dylan Hogan Brown University

This meta-analysis of 60 studies of teacher coaching models compares the effects of the model as a replacement or supplement to established professional development, not as a replacement for intervention/targeted classes. Other topics and findings include the reality of scalability of such models, the impact of individual school cultures, the relationship between improved teaching and student achievement, and the validity of many of the studies based on their non-random sampling of schools.

While we should definitely empower our teachers with all the tools we can, we should not hope that a possible trickle down effect of coaches impacting content teachers has a substantially positive impact on students, especially in a large scale system.

WCSD has highly qualified and very knowledgeable ELD Program Facilitators at the elementary and secondary levels that are willing and able to work with content teachers to facilitate their abilities to work effectively with English Learners. Furthermore, I believe that most of our ELD teachers do serve as informal site facilitators at their buildings. Content teachers, I believe, have a good deal of support.

To switch to a model that puts the bulk of ELD resources into coaching teachers rather than teaching students is not only unsupported by any research I can find, but a disservice to our students.

If there is research-based evidence of the efficacy of this model, I would ask that it be presented prior to a decision being made to move forward with the Facilitator Site model -

It is IMPERATIVE that we consider the long-lasting, life-changing impact this decision will have on a vulnerable population.

Again, THANK YOU for your hard work and dedication to all of our students.

Janet McGrath

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**From:** Joseph Garton  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 9, 2021 3:16 PM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Comment regarding article 5.05 ELD

To The Washoe County School District Board of Trustees, Superintendent McNeill, and guests:

I am writing today as a community member, English Language Arts teacher, English Language and ELA Department Leader, and as a member of the Washoe County School District Equity and Diversity committee. I would like to voice my concern over the district's move to a site facilitator model for EL students. This move is being presented under the guise that we are all teachers of EL students, and while this is true, I would not be able to perform my job without the backbone, structure, and support of EL teachers and EL programs.

EL teachers function in a capacity that support the whole student: caregiver, family and parent engagement facilitator, translator, explicit language instructor, test administrator, federal data tracker, friend, mentor, and home. This proposed change would essentially eliminate eighteen EL positions from high schools and replace them with site facilitators. This move is not only counterintuitive to current research on EL instruction, but it severs a lifeline that EL students and their families have to the overwhelming bureaucracy and incomprehensible hurdle of public education.

Over the last five years, the state and local districts have continually attempted to solve massive problems in education by placing more and more weight on teachers. This is just that—a way to recalibrate resources to save money by exploiting teachers' can-do attitude. Please say no to this move and yes to a community in need; please say no to the continual overlooking of our most vulnerable populations and yes to providing equitable access to learning; please say no. Say no, so our EL students have a voice to say yes to tomorrow.

Thank you,

Joseph Garton

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**From:** Katy McPherson  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 9, 2021 3:17 PM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] RE: AGENDA ITEM 5.02

To the Washoe County School District Board of Trustees,

I am sure you are aware that members of the community can be quick to criticize the decisions you make regarding our district's children's education without having all of the facts. It is my goal as a WCSD Mom to only praise or criticize your decisions after learning the facts. So, I write to you requesting facts.

It has come to my attention that the WCSD has in its employ an Equity and Diversity Department. I request that the Board consider creating an Agenda Item for the next Board Meeting in which this department will present its vision, goals, and objectives to our community and answer questions such as, how many are employed in this department? What percent of the district budget goes to this department? Where is the department's office? How can this department be reached? Who does the community address its inquiries to in the department? Where can the community access documents created by this department in order to learn more about the department's work?

In addition, it has come to my attention that members of the community would like to learn more about Superintendent Dr. Kristen McNeill's Equity Task Force. Is this task force associated with the district's Equity and Diversity Department? Is it made up of the same people, or different people? Who are they? How many are they? What qualifies them to be appointed to the task force? Are these individuals employed by the district, or are they volunteers? Does the task force share the Equity and Diversity Department's mission and objectives, or are they different?

Although I do not know any of the trustees personally, I frequently observe board meetings and I can see that every one of you cares about truth, facts, and fairness, and that you are not afraid of the hard work and patience it requires of you to honor these values in our discourse.

In this attitude of shared values, I invite you to consider some facts.

The facts are these: Many students are truly struggling to learn in distance learning and in schools with stringent COVID protocols. Some students have disappeared off the grid. A good number are failing. Even before COVID, our students struggled to demonstrate proficiency in basic subjects like reading and math. I know no one likes to talk about it, but Nevada is among the least educated states, ranking 43rd overall, with the quality of education ranked 39th and educational attainment at 44th, with Nevada schools consistently ranking among the worst in the nation, with only 28% of eighth-grade students ranked as proficient or better in both reading and math.

In light of these pressing matters, I can assure you that I am not alone in my concern that over the course of the last four months, trustees' time, board meetings, district departments, personnel, task forces, and district man hours have been focused on ancillary concerns over the "a second enduring social injustice pandemic," as the Equity Task Force writes in their purpose statement for Agenda Item 5.02—a dubious claim, at best.

Clearly, the facts show that a "second enduring pandemic" does indeed afflict our school district, to borrow language from the Equity Task Force. However, **it is a lack of sufficient education, NOT a lack of social justice activism** that threatens our students' futures.

Regarding Agenda Item 5.02, in which the Board will be tasked with providing direction on the draft action plan developed in support of Washoe County School District Board Resolution 20-011, the "Anti-Racism Resolution" approved on October 27, 2020, WCSD parents ask the Board to give priority to our direction rather than that of Superintendent McNeill's Equity Task Force and the Department of Equity and Diversity. Students' parents and families have no agenda but desiring that our children receive a cutting-edge education that equips them to participate in the global marketplace. The Equity Task Force, on the other hand, believes and perpetuates a social/political activist narrative that uses adolescent passion to achieve its own end of social reform and will distract students rather than set them up for success in life.

I am joined by many other Washoe County School District parents who reject the action plan developed by the Equity Task Force. We do not want district dollars spent on "equity training" for our teachers. We are skeptical of any new curriculum which revises history, focuses on inequity, and teaches

the popular injustice narrative rather than which presents true history, individual achievement regardless of group identity, and the exceptionalism of Western Civilization values such as liberty, government by the people, and E Pluribus Unum.

The Anti-Racism Resolution adopted by the school district declared a system-wide commitment to creating an “unbiased, inclusive, anti-racist society through education.” We believe there is no greater anti-racist act than implementing teaching standards and practices which cultivate critical thinking utilizing academic rigor and exacting standards.

The Equity Task Force’s stated purpose is to end “social injustices which disproportionately impact segments of our community.” We believe there is no better way to mend disparities in our district than by equipping all “segments of our community” to succeed with knowledge and skills that will propel them into the global marketplace— not into the streets to riot and topple statues.

Given that Nevada is among the least educated states, ranking 43rd overall, with the quality of education ranked 39th and educational attainment at 44th, we would venture to say the pleas the Board continues to receive from supposed “student groups” like WCSD Students for Change and Diversify Our Narrative must be met with an emphatic NO.

It’s time for the Board to be the grown-ups here. Based on the facts of student performance, it could not be more clear that less coddling, safe space activism, and political alliance using “inclusive, equity and diversity” language with students is needed, and more critical thinking, academic rigor, and exacting standards are called for.

We know for a fact that the revisionist, ideology-focused type of instruction the Equity Task Force is ready to inject into WCSD instruction with the Board of Trustees’ approval will not help to mitigate the next generation’s woeful ignorance about historical events. In fact, such instruction will exacerbate it.

The kind of curricula found at [BlackLivesMatterAtSchool.com](https://www.BlackLivesMatterAtSchool.com), [FacingHistory.org](https://www.FacingHistory.org), and [LearningForJustice.org](https://www.LearningForJustice.org) devalues individual achievement and personal responsibility, condemns the exceptionalism of Western Civilization as “Whiteness” and expressions of thanksgiving for its accomplishments as “white supremacy.”



The spread of individual liberty thanks in large part to the United States' founding, the global impact of the Declaration of Independence, an appreciation of humanity's progress, and hope for a freer future for more of the world's occupants are absent. A laser-focus on racial justice and social reform in our schools serves only to ignite adolescent passions about non-existent problems and to create an army of political activists ready for their marching orders.

This is not cutting-edge education. This is activism, breeding activism, for the sake of activism.

WCSD parents will not stand for it.

The WCSD Board of Trustees needs to know that we are not, in fact, a racist nation. We are a nation that wars against racism, and surely it is our duty to demonstrate this by equipping students of every color with exceptional knowledge and skills to compete and succeed. After all, there really is no greater "anti-racist" message than giving the world graduates who are well prepared to succeed.

I thank you for your consideration.

For the kids,

Mrs. Katy McPherson  
WCSD Mom

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**From:** Abraham Meza  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 9, 2021 3:19 PM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Washoe County ESL Program

Hello,

I was recently informed that Washoe County is currently considering dropping the ESL program. I strongly disagree with this idea, as a Washoe County employee and as a former student in an ESL program. I was incredibly saddened to hear this information as I believe Washoe County has so much potential to be a progressive and inclusive area. By taking away this program we would be setting the county back.

Taking this program away Washoe County would be hurting the futures of not only the children eligible for this program but the families as well. I do understand that there are more pressing matters at hand but these families are already underserved and disenfranchised, removing this program would compound that and make the future of the students that need this program all the more difficult than it already is.

If there is a petition or any other way that I can let WCSD know that I am firmly against this ,please, let me know. Thank you for your time and have a wonderful day.

Best regards,

Abraham Meza

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**From:** Rosalie Mahler  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 9, 2021 3:24 PM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] BOT Meeting 2/9 Agenda Item 5.05 ELD Programming

Esteemed Members of the Board, I am writing this email to ask you to please VOTE NO on any proposed cuts to Washoe County's English as a Second Language programs.

I understand that we have to make serious sacrifices due to the inevitable budget cuts, but these sacrifices should not have to be made by our most vulnerable students, who will suffer the consequences ten fold.

Thank you for your time and consideration of these thoughts.

Rosalie Mahler

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**From:** Tara Hartman  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 9, 2021 3:26 PM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Public Comment

Dear WCSD Board of Trustees,

My name is Tara Hartman, I graduated from Galena High School last spring, and I am a member of Washoe County Students for Change. I stand in solidarity with Washoe County Students for Change in supporting the Board of Trustees proposed adoption of the draft action plan and next steps related to Washoe County School District Board Resolution 20-011, as adopted on October 27, 2020. Growing up in Washoe County I witnessed kids getting slurs yelled at them in hallways, and I remember the complete lack of LGBT+ history, and minimal BIPOC history taught in our schools. Implementing the board resolution is a great step in the right direction for students and teachers alike. It is important to remember that respect and empathy are not political topics. We look forward to continued collaboration with the WCSD to support equity progress.

I also urge you to please consider the need and importance of the ELL program, and its significance to many non-English speaking students and parents.

Respectfully,  
Tara Hartman

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**From:** Roberto Bejarano  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 9, 2021 3:32 PM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Public Comment - Agenda Item 2.04, AWARD OF BID #21-34-B-12-AA PLAYGROUND IMPROVEMENTS AT MARVIN PICOLLO SCHOOL TO GARDEN SHOP NURSERY LANDSCAPING DIVISION, INC. FOR \$294,267.00

Dear Trustees,

I am writing to voice concern regarding Agenda Items 2.04 which involves spending \$300k on replacing the playground at Marvin Picollo Elementary School.

I urge the Board of Trustees to postpone replacement of said playground and instead reallocate those funds to areas where the community can achieve a greater return on academic investment during the pandemic.

It would make more sense to relocate these funds to projects that can improve learning conditions while at the same time making schools safer/healthier. Some of our teachers and students attend schools which are in condition that would not be tolerated in private industry. For example:

- How many of the trustees come into work every morning and have to clean rat/mouse feces and urine off their desk? This is a reality for some of our teachers. I wish I was exaggerating.
- How many of the trustees work in a building whose HVAC system forms condensation and leaks? Imagine having to put out buckets -during class- to catch the drip while fighting to captivate the attention of a teenage class. This is a reality for some of our teachers.

These are just a few examples of many.

Please postpone spending \$300k on a playground or other frivolous infrastructure items until after the pandemic is over and the budget stabilizes.

**PS:** Putting aside the ethics or morality of spending so much on a playground during a pandemic, doesn't \$300k for replacement of a playground seem like an exorbitant amount of money for such a project?

I'm a licensed engineer and was curious as to the scope of the project and the justification for such a high cost. Unfortunately, the Public Work Solicitation is extremely vague. The scope of work simply states: *Remove and replace existing playground equipment and surfacing including concrete, landscape and irrigation repairs as drawn and specified.* The drawings are not readily available to the public for review.

For transparency and accountability, all drawings should be made available for the public without prior district approval. As of right now, someone seeking to look at these drawings or specifications needs to create an account and that account must be approved by the district. A process that can take up to 24 hrs.

Regards,  
Roberto Bejarano

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**From:** Robert E Delcarlo  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 9, 2021 3:31 PM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Opposing cuts to English As a Second Language Program

Dear Washoe County School District Board of Trustees,

I am emailing as a constituent of Washoe County who supports our efforts to maintain English language learning programs. The United States imposes a powerful English-language bias that forces many qualified, capable and aspiring workers out of the labor force due to undernourished English Language proficiency.

Nevada, and Washoe County in particular, are heavily reliant on bilingual citizens to do the work of community stewardship. In a time when we are most at risk of underserving constituents during a global pandemic, it is reprehensible to even contemplate removing resources. Bilingual and learning-in-progress students are frequently not heard simply because their first language falls on deaf ears. It is therefore incumbent upon our educational leadership to meet this bare minimum task of maintaining our English Language education to give these students a voice in a system that would otherwise not hear them.

As a neuroscientist and a bilingual educator, I have taught in Washoe County schools and am continually impressed by the nuance and brilliance our bilingual students demonstrate if only given the resources. Learning more than one language fundamentally improves thinking and cognition. By reducing resources to the English as a Second Language program, the WCSD Board of Trustees is betraying the best interests of our community. At its best, reducing these resources chips away at potential personal and economic growth for thousands of students in our community. At its worst, removing these resources places those same students under increased socioeconomic burden in an English-biased society which will further widen already unacceptable gaps in the continuity of our social fabric.

I am therefore opposed to Washoe County School District Board of Trustees voting to cut any positions from the English as a Second Language Program.

Sincerely,  
Robert Eugene del Carlo, Ph.D.

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**From:** Loyd, Kimber  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 9, 2021 3:34 PM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** English Language Development (ELD) Site Facilitator Model.

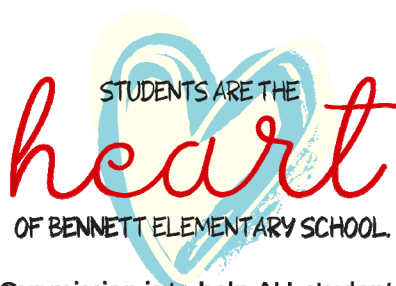
Hello,

I implore you to look at the new proposed overview of the District's continued transition to the English Language Development (ELD) Site Facilitator Model. As a general education teacher it is clear I will be asked to do MORE, become even more STRESSED with focusing on writing out the language strands for all of my lessons and becoming an expert on those instead of spending my time working with students and supporting their individual needs. The proposed plan will generate expensive positions where the people in them will tell other professionals "what do to" instead of actually supporting them and the students. These professionals should be WITH students and supporting them. This proposed plan STEALS valuable time students receive with an expert teacher. For example, my EL students have two reading groups (one with me and the EL teacher). Now they will LOSE their second teacher and time spent. There is NO WAY for me to provide that time back to the student. We need EL teachers to support newcomers, modify lessons, conduct ACCESS testing, and countless of other tasks. Finally, this will lead with lower testing scores, less support to students, and teacher leaving their position as more work is piled on them with zero compensation and a huge lack of time.

Kindly,  
Kimber

*Kimber Loyd*  
*2nd Grade Teacher*  
*Esther Bennett ES*

Sun Valley, NV 89433



**Our mission is to help ALL students  
reach their fullest potential  
academically, socially, and emotionally.**

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**From:** Ashley Wade  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 9, 2021 3:37 PM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] 2/9/21 BoT Item 5.02

I write today in favor of the proposed action plan to support resolution 20-011. This action plan will help inform the board and other district committees and departments doing the important work of creating and identifying equitable practices, policies, and practices in WCSD.

Please stand with the students and teachers who have shared their lived and ongoing experiences in Washoe County schools. Please support a more inclusive environment for our families.

Please vote in favor of the proposed action plan in item 5.02 today.

Thank you,

Ashley Wade  
WCSD Parent and Teacher



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**From:** Ivet Contreras  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 9, 2021 3:46 PM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] NO on ESL changes

Dear School District Board Members,

I am writing to you to express my opposition to the changes in the ESL Program. I am a former Washoe County School District student and also a parent of a student.

We should be fortifying the ESL program instead of dismantling it. We cannot allow children to fall through the cracks of the education system because their first language is other than english. We should not be adding more work to teachers who are already struggling with classrooms over 30 students. A dedicated ESL teacher is valuable. Adding one more thing to the long to do list to all the teachers is counterproductive. Why do you think people that take on too many tasks or roles are unsuccessful?

I was an ESL student. A very bright ESL student, who just needed a little help learning English. I was even the first latina at my school in Incline Village to be recommended to the Gifted and Talented program at my elementary school. I am now an award-winning journalist and local business owner.

I could have fell through the cracks if it wasn't for the ESL Program.

From Kinder until the third grade, myself and a small group of kids were separated from our classmates to participate in the ESL Program. To be around other students like myself was empowering. To have a teacher, with an expertise in teaching ELL, was noticeable. She knew why I messed up on the order of the adjectives in english and why I pronounced the "e" like if it were an "i". (If you know Spanish, you'll understand why.) Most importantly, the ESL teacher created a safe space for us. I wasn't afraid to read outloud or ask why something was said a certain way. We had the full attention of the teacher.

My son is not an ESL student, but he has a speech delay. He reminds me a lot of myself. He is such a brilliant little boy but just needs that little push. That's why I continue to be passionate about preserving programs that help children succeed.

In Washoe we move forward, not backwards.

Thank you for your time. I apologize for any typos or grammatical errors as I quickly sent this out in the hope of making it on time.

Ivet Contreras

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**From:** Samantha Ham  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 9, 2021 3:54 PM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Agenda Item 5.05 (ELD)

Dear Members of the Board,

I've been an educator for 9 years and have been employed with Washoe County for the last 5.

"Nothing about us without us is for us." As an issue of equity, no policy should ever be decided by any representative body without the full and direct participation of members of the group(s) most affected by that policy. I state emphatically, any decision made about English Learners (ELs) without the full and direct participation of ELs and their families is not a decision made in the best interests of ELs. While I greatly appreciated the conversation about equity and diversity, and student and family voice that took place in the last board meeting, I want to point out that EL student voice and family involvement has been noticeably absent from this particular discussion. It's apparent that you are counting on there being no opposition.

- The slide addressing federal law does not include section 1112 e3c under Title III which governs the participation of parents of English Learners and requires Local Education Agencies to implement REGULAR MEETINGS. "Implementing an effective means of outreach to parents ... shall include holding, and sending notice of opportunities for, regular meetings for the purpose of formulating and responding to recommendations from parents of students assisted under title III."
- Questions for the Board and ELD Department: Has there been instituted an EL parent advisory council/committee? Or an EL student voice committee? If not, in what ways have we deliberately sought to cultivate the leadership and advocacy of EL parents and students in this district? What opportunities do we give EL students and parents to participate directly in the decisions that impact themselves and their kids?
- More specifically, how have EL students and parents been involved in the formulation of this proposal? Have they even been polled or surveyed for their input on any item? There is zero indication that any student voice or family involvement has occurred in the process of developing this model.

It should be entirely unconscionable to implement a programmatic change of this magnitude without an ounce of participation or representation of the group most impacted by it—English Learners and their families. I implore the board to reject the proposal or at least delay a vote until EL families have had the dignity of their perspectives and voices upheld.

Additionally, the research is abundantly clear that student engagement and success is highly dependent on having at least one strong positive connection to a teacher. For English Learners, EL teachers most often play this vital role. Replacing EL teachers with Site Facilitators is essentially stripping this critical lifeline from this group of students.

Lastly, there have been comments made to those of us advocating for ELs that the program is not changing, but rather that you are proposing to enhance instruction for ELs and not eliminating any current programming. The content and tone of these comments have suggested that those of us here to speak on behalf of our students and their families have completely misunderstood what is actually being proposed and taking place. A few points on this matter:

- How have all of us misread so gravely this proposal and specifically the last two slides of the presentation where **it clearly states that positions will be eliminated and transition to the Site Facilitator model will continue**? If families, teachers, and students are to have the ability to come before the board and share concerns, expertise, etc, a presentation should be comprehensible and responses from Superintendent McNeil and the ELD department stating we have all misread and misunderstood this presentation is concerning.

- I spent 6 hours waiting to give public comment on this issue at the 1.26 board meeting only to have it wiped from the agenda and rescheduled. Over the last 2 weeks, the first presentation from the originally scheduled meeting on 1.26 was changed by the time the 2.9 presentation was posted. This process feels very frustrating, dishonest, and hurtful.
- The new presentation from 2.9 that was publicly posted on 2.6 clearly states that the model will transition from what it currently is to the Site Facilitator model. Stating that nothing is being eliminated when clearly teaching positions are being eliminated is a blatant misrepresentation of the truth.  
**Eliminating EL Teacher positions will result in the elimination of courses that are designed to provide explicit language instruction.** This is only a natural connection to make based on the slide content and almost explicitly stated in this presentation by the ELD Site Facilitator Model Slide.

It appears that your strategy is to make it look like a bunch of English Teachers you hired and English Learners you've educated don't know how to read. It should be obvious how insulting and humiliating that is and I hope you will reconsider this approach.

Thank you.  
Samantha Ham

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**From:** Nicole Davis  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 9, 2021 3:55 PM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] EDL program cuts

I am disheartened to hear that the school district is considering cuts to the English Language Development Program. Cutting students off from this necessary resource will hamper their ability to ever move forward in their education and subsequently in careers. So many of the students who are depending on this program absolutely need the dedicated time to focus on their English so they can actually absorb info from other classes. I know you're struggling due to COVID - we all are - but taking our most vulnerable residents and essentially ensuring they stay in that position is absolutely antithetical to not only the American value of inclusion but the well-being of our local area and country as a whole.

Nicole Davis

Sent from my iPhone

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**From:** Deanna Fine  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 9, 2021 3:55 PM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] RE: Agenda Item 5.02

I am writing in support of Resolution 20-011 to confirm for the WCSD that "discrimination and harassment will not be tolerated and resolving to create a systemwide commitment to creating an unbiased, inclusive, and anti-racist society through education". With this in mind, I continue to urge you to bring the naming of the former Hug High back to the agenda in order to name the school after the long-time community activist Dolores Feemster. Delores Feemster most certainly represents advocacy for Black and Brown people through and service she dedicated her life towards in both the Reno community at large and Hug High School specifically. From her involvement with the Reno-Sparks NAACP, to addressing civil rights issues impacting Native American, African American, Asian and Latino cultures in Northern Nevada, to her dedication as a counselor in support of students, to her advocacy to reduce racial discrimination and increase diversity and cultural training to teachers. All of these instances prove that Dolores Feemster is undeniably the best candidate to represent inclusion, as stated in the resolution above. Currently, there is not one high school in Reno named after a person of color. This void must be addressed. The time is now for you to put ideology into action by first of all approving Resolution 20-011 to create equity and inclusion in WCSD, and then following this commitment by naming the new CTE Center after the individual who rightly deserves the recognition: Delores Feemster. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,  
Deanna Fine

Good afternoon WCSD Board of Trustees’,

I am Amy Nguyen, a junior from Reed High School as well as a member of Diversify Our Narrative, an organization working towards implementing anti-racist and inclusive texts in schools. I stand in solidarity with Washoe County Students for Change in supporting the Board of Trustees proposed adoption of the draft action plan and next steps related to Washoe County School District Board Resolution 20-011, as adopted on October 27, 2020. This would be beneficial towards WCSD and the students of color that make up the school district. We should work to protect and give voices to one of the most important groups in WCSD, and it’ll enable WCSD to grow alongside its community.

I am an Asian girl, and I do not recall a single moment where I was represented growing up. Not in elementary, not in middle school, not even in high school currently. I felt like such an outsider, that I didn’t belong, and it caused me to distance myself from my identity which is something I regret now. I’ve had countless racist jokes made against me, because no one knows how harmful they actually are to the group that is being affected. I’ve seen other people of color experience the things I do because everyone else calls them harmless jokes, but it is actually very harmful. I have never seen Asian representation in history books. When we would talk about things like the Japanese internment camps and Chinese Exclusion Act, we would look over it briefly for a day and then move on to white history for days on end. I wish I could see more Asian achievement in history books, and more Asian history is being taught to me. I truly feel like that would have positively impacted me. We can still create impact for the future of Washoe County students.

Respect and empathy are not political subjects, everyone has a right to being respected and myself and others definitely wish we had this.

We look forward to continued collaboration with the WCSD to support equity progress.

Thank you for your time,

**Amy Nguyen**

Hello WCSD Board of Trustees',

My name is Adam Jackson and I'm a Sophomore at Earl Wooster high school as well as a member of Diversify Our Narrative, an organization working towards implementing anti-racist and inclusive texts in schools. I stand in solidarity with Washoe County Students for Change in supporting the Board of Trustees' proposed adoption of the draft action plan and next steps related to Washoe County School District Board Resolution 20-011, as adopted on October 27, 2020. In Portland, Oregon Schools have been implementing BLM in their curriculum and teaching students about the racial injustice that is found in America. Racial inclusion matters to me because in my childhood I would be made fun of because of the different aspect of our culture that we would display as well as stereotypes that have been placed on my ethnic group. I have witnessed discrimination happen to people all the time especially now that we live in a digital age where social media is very prevalent. I have not seen my culture be displayed in any textbook that I have read about American history, nor have I ever seen representation at my teachings in school. This needs to change.

Respect and empathy are not political topics

We look forward to continuing collaboration with the WCSD to support equity progress

Thank you for your time,

**Adam Jackson**



Good evening Superintendent Kristin Mcneill and the Washoe County Board of Trustees,

My name is Chantal Gabrielle Ebonia, and I am a sophomore at Earl Wooster High School, and the district co-lead of the Washoe County chapter Diversify Our Narrative. I stand in solidarity with the Washoe County Students for Change in supporting the Board of Trustees proposed adoption of the draft action plan and next steps related to Washoe County School District Board Resolution 20-011, as adopted on October 27, 2020.

The evidence shows that this will be an action that benefits WCSD in addition to its students. Using data from 2018, Washoe County has a 62.5% white population, a 23% Hispanic population, a 5% Asian population, a 3% multiracial population and a 2% Black population. This has now evolved to about 57% of your students being students of color. Therefore, it is essential for our large minority population to feel included in our district. As you stated in the draft, “we will better understand the circumstances of a student and their family, enabling us to provide more support for all students, equitably;” By passing this resolution you will appeal to the larger minority population in the district.

The situation calls to mind of a similar resolution passed by the large corporation and brand, Starbucks. Starbucks passed a resolution saying that, “As a company, we firmly believe that Black lives matter...we are committed to being allies and doing whatever we can to stand up against racial injustice.” Then they proceeded to ban all wearing of Black Lives Matter merchandise by their employees while working. This hypocritical action was repealed once there was major backlash by both the employees and the media. The Washoe County School District has put out plenty of statements claiming that you support Black Lives Matter, that you support our black, indigenous, students and families of color, and that you support LGBTQIA+ students yet your actions say differently. The only difference between Starbucks and the school district in

situations is that Starbucks eventually took that step of becoming a more inclusive, better company at the risk of some people being upset with them. If you were to pass this resolution, you would be taking that step in the right direction to becoming a better role model for growth within the district, and to support the students in the best way possible. You can no longer be tethered by fear of those who will be upset with you; for if you continue to live in fear you will forever be restricted from the place where you stand, a place that you cannot move forward from in spite of the rest of the world already moving forward.

Respect and empathy are not political topics.

We look forward to continued collaboration with the Washoe County School District to support equity progress.

Thank you for your time,

**Chantal Ebonia**

Dear WCSD Board of Trustees',

Hello, my name is Angeleen Lumbao and I attend Damonte Ranch High School as a senior. I am also a member of Diversify Our Narrative, an organization working towards adding anti-racist and inclusive texts to WCSD curriculum.

I stand in solidarity with Washoe County Students for Change in supporting the Board of Trustees' proposed adoption of the draft action plan and next steps related to Washoe County School District Board Resolution 20-011, as adopted on October 27, 2020.

Inclusion matters to me because it is vital. As an Asian-American, I have seen how my parents have been treated differently by others in the workforce, solely because of their race. My brother and I have also experienced various forms of bullying throughout our time in school. "Eww what is that?" Some of my own friends would shriek in disgust towards the Filipino lunch my parents prepared for me to take to school. For a while, I was ashamed of my own culture. I hated how I looked, dressed, and pronounced certain things differently than my peers. Microaggressions like these affect many others. But working towards reducing similar incidents by educating others will be the start of this lengthy but forever valuable journey.

Respect and empathy are not political topics

We look forward to continued collaboration with the WCSD to support equity progress.

Thank you for your time,

**Angeleen Lumbao**

Good evening board of Trustees’,

My name is Kyla Loong, I am a senior at Damonte Ranch High School and a member of Diversify Our Narrative, an organization working towards implementing anti-racist and inclusive texts in WCSD curriculum.

I stand in solidarity with Washoe County Students for Change in supporting the Board of Trustees’ proposed adoption of the draft action plan and next steps related to Washoe County School District Board Resolution 20-011, as adopted on October 27, 2020.

I have experienced discrimination directly and indirectly. When I moved to Reno in 5th grade, there was a line of first graders rushing their way to recess and lunch. A boy darted at me and smirked while slanting both of his eyes with his index fingers. The first graders in line did not notice his gesture, though my friend and I sat by ourselves in silence, not processing what had just happened. I felt belittled for the first time by someone who was just an innocent boy, younger, and tiny in size compared to me. At the same time, I felt bad for him. Children should not be taught of others as less because of the shape of their eyes or the color of their skin. Unfortunately at the time, I was voiceless and had no heart to confront the boy. I realized that racism was probably taught to him, and I hope that another person if not me at the time, was able to show him that others may look different, but we’re all humans who are meant to love. Predominantly in elementary and middle school, the squinting stares, the sharp whispers, even those shameless enough to make assumptions of “Ching Chongs” and “dog-eaters,” I ignored all of them despite the degrading slurs. What seemed cool to them meant dishonoring our culture.

The Asian culture is sacred, yet we Asians ourselves are sometimes hesitant to embrace it. It should never be this way.

I have also witnessed my friends, family, and even strangers on social media receive insults like name-calling and racism. Last year on Halloween season, my siblings and I went to the pumpkin patch to take some family pictures and senior pictures. My younger sister and I came back from a corn maze, with our hands touching the sidebars of the dirt bridge. Two teenagers passed our way and whispered “ching chong Chinese” as they exchanged grins at each other. My sister could not almost hold her composure when she heard them, while I was clueless not knowing they had made racist jokes towards us. We wanted to confront the pair but they had left off, afar, as the wind justled our faces with the October dirt. We were boiling inside, yet nothing came out outside. Another instance was when my friends were shopping at a store for Christmas and a man decided to do the infamous “Look at em Chinese” quote. Despite all this, I could not even imagine how much hate people receive from social media. Especially ever since the rise of the pandemic, Asians have been receiving threats from every crevice of the media to a point that it’s normalized. The stories we tell on racism are endless, which is why efforts to end it must start from us and we talk to people, teach them, and allow for growth and knowledge on anti-discrimination.

I have rarely seen myself in textbooks. History books mostly consist of proud white men who conquered lands, boosted the economy, or advanced our country. Although Asians are in history books, like the Transcontinental Railroad, immigration, and Pearl Harbor, there’s always an issue revolving around discrimination against Asians and minorities. Throughout my K-12 learning in Social Studies, there would often be DBQ packets to reflect our learning from our textbooks. The typical question is is it ethical that the US did to \*insert country\*? This is the

chance to justify our reasoning, to stand up for the criticisms other cultures have faced in hands of discrimination. Still, this is not sufficient as to why there is still a lack of BIPOC recognition be it authors, characters, or historical figures that are not BIPOC.

Respect and empathy are not political topics.

We look forward to continued collaboration with the WCSD to support equity progress.

Thank you for your time,

**Kyla Loong**

Dear Board of Trustees,

My name is Vanessa Medina and I am a junior at Reed High School and a member of Diversify Our Narrative WCSD, an organization working to implement anti-racist and inclusive texts in WCSD curriculum. I stand in solidarity with Washoe County Students for Change in supporting the Board of Trustees' proposed adoption of the draft action plan and next steps related to Washoe County School District Board Resolution 20-011, as adopted on October 27, 2020.

I deeply care for this issue as I am a Hispanic student and I do not see our culture in our teachings other than the famous Treaty of Guadeloupe Hidalgo. I understand that a lot of people do not see why a class of more diverse studies would be beneficial to the student body or community but it is dramatically needed. We live in a place and a time that has more than enough differences in cultures and ethnicities to realize that not learning about them is pure ignorance. If you don't see this as a necessity, you obviously haven't looked at your students and you definitely are not listening to them.

Respect and empathy are not political.

We look forward to continued collaboration with the WCSD to support equity progress.

Thank you for your time,

**Vanessa Medina**

*Student lead of the Ethnic Class Push at Reed HS*

*Student Voice Director of WCSD Diversify Our Narrative*

*Chairwoman of the Cultural Advisory Board RHS*

Good Evening Washoe County School Board,

My name is Ana Inukai, I am a sophomore at Damonte Ranch High School. I am the current co-lead of Diversify Our Narrative, an organization working towards implementing anti-racist and inclusive texts in schools. I write this letter to you today in regards to Item 5.02. I stand in solidarity with Washoe County Students for Change and Diversify Our Narrative in supporting the Board of Trustees' proposed adoption of the draft action plan and next steps related to Washoe County School District Board Resolution 20-011, as adopted on October 27, 2020. About 51-57% of your students are students of color, and yet only 13% of your teachers are teachers of color? Along with not seeing representation in their teachers, students also don't see themselves in daily lessons. Students know about people like George Washington and James Watson and they know about events like the Industrial Revolution and the founding of our nation. They know WHITE history, not BIPOC's (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) history. Never once did I learn about the Tulsa Race Massacre, or de facto segregation, or Hispanic Lynchings, or the REAL truth behind 'Thanksgiving', or Yellow Peril. I learned "Hey, racism started with slavery and ended with desegregation. Every single ethnicity and race has had equal opportunity in this country since the day desegregation ended!" This is a lie. I did not know the extent to which my own people suffered. I do know how my people came to make lives here, despite the barriers of racism and ignorance. But I do know that Abe Lincoln saved Black people from their terrible, terrible lives and that 'all men shall be created equal'. That is what your students, especially your BIPOC students, will always remember. When concepts like systemic racism and the model minority myth are taught, students are truly EDUCATED. In all honesty, 99% of your students are not educated. Which is not their fault, because the responsibility is carried by YOU. Respect, empathy, and the discarding of pure ignorance are not



political topics. You are playing with your students' sense of identity; their degree of comfort and pride in their skin, culture, and history.

The district has let fear dictate how they mold students' identities. If you continuously do this, what kind of role models are you for your students? The fear I speak of is not only present here. It's seen all across the country in every aspect of BIPOC's lives that are controlled by a higher/legal power. It's seen in healthcare, the workplace, housing, SCHOOL, grocery stores, the prison industrial complex, the police force, etc. It is the fear of the 'other side', aka racist white people who like holding control over BIPOC lives. Do you know what we students see when you embrace that fear, when you welcome it as if it's routine and put BIPOC student's education on the backburner? We see a board we do not trust whatsoever. We see a board of 'leaders' whom we do not expect anything of. Most students have given up on your ability to put them first, and it's not just on racial issues. Inclusivity in all areas is an issue. Across all our schools, every student knows that the district will never make them a priority. Some of us, those who write you letters, hold meetings with you, and attend board meetings believe differently. We believe we can convince you to take a step in the right direction. WCS D Students for Change, the students you will hear speak today, have been imploring you to do this for almost 8 months. They, unlike others, have not given up on your ability to serve them dutifully.

If you do pass this new plan and take the next steps, we look forward to continued collaboration with the WCS D to support equity progress.

If you do not, we will continue to write you letters, hold meetings with you, and attend board meetings.

Thank you for your time,

**Ana Inukai**

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**From:** Darla A. Lee  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 9, 2021 4:39 PM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Item 5.02

Washoe School Board Members,

The action plan for Resolution 20-011 is seeking to find a solution to "discrimination and harassment" by creating a system wide commitment to unbiased, inclusive and anti-racist society through education. I read through the presentation, which was peppered with words like "equity" and "diversity" and teachers educating only through the "lens of equity and diversity". These words, in our current "woke" climate have become twisted and meaningless outside of virtual signaling.

Everyone discriminates to one degree or another, that is just life, but if "discrimination" leads to harassment of an individual student, no matter what color and whatever reason, it must be addressed individually, not make every student a potential victim or teach that one can only "celebrate" one's uniqueness in a "Safe space". This is not preparing students for real life-where everything is not fair!

As trustees of public education who, I would hope, desire the best for ALL students, I would strongly urge you to dispense with Resolution 20-011 and instead, establish a committee for better education, tasked with investigating how to better educate students in actual academic subjects, not social justice.

Perhaps then Nevada would not always be near last in the nation in K-12 education.

Sincerely,

Darla A. Lee  
Sparks, NV

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**From:**  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 9, 2021 4:44 PM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Extra school days added

Hello,

I am inquiring In regards to the 3 additional days of school that were added today, due to our two snow days, and one day due to the fires. I don't understand why we need to add an additional 3 days to our school year? Being as we have been on distance learning on and off for almost a year now, why could the Superintendent have not placed these days on full distance learning rather than full no school days?

Our students and teachers are already going through so much, and I think adding to the school year by 3 additional days is ridiculous, and a very poor decision on the School Board's part. We get snow every winter. This is not anything new, so why do we not take that into account, and plan for a certain amount of snow days? I thought that has always been the case?

I very much disagree with this decision. This needs to be changed, and school needs to finish as originally planned on June 4, 2021.

Thank you, Julie Cortez

Sent from my iPhone

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**From:** Luz Estrada  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 9, 2021 4:52 PM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] ELL program agenda 5.5

The ELL program is a key to success for all the students who have English as a second language, it is imperative that this program continues with its purpose and with most or even more budget. For its goal. These programs help students to develop skills and knowledge on English language ... I have a kindergarten student and I know she needs this program to be able to succeed during her school life ... I was an ELL student and I know that I want to see her going to college as I did but also I don't want her to struggle during her entire college years because of the language barrier.. The ELL program can give her a better opportunity and many easy ways to succeed... so I want you the board to consider this program as essential for all the students who need extra help with the language .. I know that it is hard for regular students to graduate from High School but imagine how hard it is for those who don't feel confident on passing their classes because of the language barrier.. please do not abandon all of the students who really need this program and depend on it to be successful in life and be able to go to college

Please consider to keep the program as it is .. many students depend on it ....

Thank you !!!

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**From:** Sabo, Kelsey  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 9, 2021 4:53 PM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** 5.05 ELD Services 2/9

To the Members of the Board,

The proposed changes to services for students receiving English Language Development services have me greatly concerned. While the site facilitator model has some strengths and advantages, it does not adequately meet needs of language learners in our schools.

It is true that all teachers are teachers of language. Teachers of math, science, language arts, and social studies should be teaching the specialized language of their content area. For example, a math teacher may teach the transition words of sequential steps. Science teachers may emphasize phrases that show cause and effect. A language arts teacher may teach a wide range of deliciously descriptive adjectives. And all students benefit from this emphasis on language. But the language which students learn in these content areas is directed and decided by the content-- the lesson of that day— rather than the language learning needs of our most vulnerable English Learning students. And that is as it should be, because science and math and social studies teachers should be focused on the concepts within their curriculum.

However, as anyone who has learned a second language understands, many of the skills which enhance math, science, and social studies lessons are acquired well down the path of language development. An entire group of our English Language Learners in Secondary schools, “short-term” EL students, are taking their first steps on this path. Our existing program provides Beginning, Intermediate, and Advanced classes to build a language foundation to teach a logical sequence of language. Students in these classes learn new skills targeted to their language level, and instruction is designed to meet their specific needs. Without these classes, the Washoe County School District cannot guarantee that each language learner is receiving adequate language instruction to progress in English and access the curriculum.

So as you consider this decision which may-- no will--decrease access to language instruction for at-risk immigrant students, I hope you thoroughly explore the answers to these questions:

How will WCSD guarantee that language learners are receiving instruction on the language skills they need?

How will additional time for practicing language and providing targeted skill feedback be provided in already squeezed content pacing of content classrooms?

How much time will Facilitators be testing students, rather than working with students and teachers, if they are responsible for implementing ACCESS at multiple schools? How will Facilitators pull-out students in a secondary class-period schedule model?

How many of WSCD secondary teachers have an endorsement which qualifies them to take on the responsibility of designing instruction for English Language Learners?

How much staff training time will be committed to training teachers to be language teachers? Will this amount of time be adequate?

Is the data you’ve seen measuring the success of the facilitator model? Or is it reflecting that younger elementary students tend to have more language growth than older students?

How much time can each facilitator dedicate to supporting individual teachers who are taking on a new and very serious responsibility of guaranteeing access to adequate language instruction?

I hope you consider all of these questions. And imagine yourself in the shoes of an adolescent who has just moved to the United States. Would this model provide what you need?

Thank you for your time,

Kelsey Sabo, M.Ed. English Language Teaching  
English Language Development  
Clayton Pre-AP Academy

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**From:** Gauvain, Alex  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 9, 2021 5:03 PM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** Item 5.05 Public Comment 2/9/21

Dear Board Of Trustees,

I was alarmed to hear from our EL Specialist that the EL Dept. was on verge of being restructured. It is my understanding that our 2 EL Specialists positions at our school would be reduced to 1 site coordinator/coach/what have you. Given the population we serve at my school, I can't believe this is a conversation we are having. I understand that there are wide-spread cuts expected, and that is a reality. However, the reality is that our 2 EL teachers serve more than just our designated EL students. The strategies and coaching our upper grade EL Specialist has provided has been invaluable to me and has proved incredibly valuable to my entire class. Having 2 dedicated ELL teachers allows them the opportunity to be in our classrooms more, teaching, modeling, and collaborating with grade level teams. Making our teachers into coaches will reduce their opportunities to service our deserving population, as they will then be mostly working with teachers during planning time. There will be some opportunities to do some modeling, but I can already see how this will go. Furthermore, once out of the classroom they will be inevitably pulled into other tasks and duties that supersede their "specialized role". Right now our literacy coach acts more as a pseudo-administrator and technology tracker rather than the reading specialist. This is how it happens. There aren't enough "souls to fill the holes". They're going to continue to be pulled away from the job they were hired to do. This is the first step in that direction for our EL Dept. Do not allow this to happen. Do not allow them to be taken out of the classroom. There aren't many ways we can get farther behind in academic growth, but touching this dept. certainly is one. The Equal Educational Opportunities Act (EEOA) of 1974 prohibits discrimination against students. It also requires school districts and states' departments of education to take action to ensure equal participation for everyone, **including removing language barriers for ELL students**. If you cut this department you aren't removing barriers you are building them.

Sincerely,  
Alexander Gauvain  
5<sup>th</sup> Grade

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**From:** Billy La  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 9, 2021 5:25 PM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] ELD program in the Washoe County School District.

Good evening,

Making cuts to this program is not a good idea. English Development is a necessary program that will help students who need it in the long run.

Best,  
Billy



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**From:** Karla Guzman Lopez  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 9, 2021 5:26 PM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] ESL PROGRAM PLEASE READ

Hello,

This email is in regards to the ESL Program that the Washoe County offers. I am now a student at Truckee Meadows Community College and without the help of the ESL program all throughout my elementary school years I wouldn't be here today continuing my education. Kids used to shame us for our accents or language as kids now if you end up removing the ESL program then that would make the situation worse for kids who are currently struggling with English not being their first language. This program supports those kids and helps them navigate through their new country, culture, and language. Please re-think this choice on removing this program and how kids who need support the most will have nothing to help them build their future!!!!

Sincerely,  
Karla Guzman

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**From:** Lesley Izquierdo  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 9, 2021 5:34 PM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] KEEP THE ESL PROGRAM

Hello,

My name is Lesley Izquierdo, I've lived in Reno most of my life and I graduated high school back in 2016.

I know I speak for many and the 9,267 ESL Students in the WCSD when I say that getting rid of the ESL program would be detrimental. The only outcome this decision would have is negative.

What happened to treating everyone as equals? Not only would you be allowing these kids's self esteem to be lowered but you would also be making a huge, negative impact in their educational development.

With Spanish being my first language, I went into elementary school not knowing how to say "please" or "thank you". I felt like it would be impossible to make friends or even learn anything. Some of the most fond memories I have from grade school are of when I'd get pulled out of class to learn this new language. I'd learn with flash cards, videos, ect.

I'm forever grateful for the ESL teachers and the program as a whole for being there for me. For being patient, caring, and understanding.

This is an opportunity any student deserves the right to, so please do not take it away.

Best regards,

Lesley Izquierdo

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**From:** Lizbeth Vega Lopez  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 9, 2021 6:13 PM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Great Concerns

Hello,

My name is Lizbeth Vega. I was born and raised in Reno and have been a part of the washoe county school district my entire life. I even decided to stay in Reno and pursue UNR because of the community and support that the washoe county school district has provided me with, and I am now a senior at UNR. I am emailing you in regards to the ESL program. As stated on your website <https://www.washoeschools.net/domain/485> one of your missions is to promote, develop, and support an inclusive school community system. By getting rid of the ESL program, you are not only inhibiting equity and diversity in the system but you are going back on your promise that every student is provided with the support and resources they need to accomplish the school district's goal for their students: graduation and college and career readiness. If this is truly your mission, then getting rid of the ESL program would not only prevent students from diverse backgrounds from accomplishing the same goals as a white or english-speaking only student, but you would be held responsible for setting them up for failure. As someone who has family and friends that would be greatly affected by this, I ask that you reconsider your decision. I understand that budgeting includes getting rid of programs however, I ask that you put in a greater effort into saving this program. Morally and ethically, this decision is not right and I hope whoever is reading this email can see and understand why.

All my best,  
Lizbeth Vega

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**From:**  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 9, 2021 7:00 PM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] ELD Program

To whom it may concern,

Please do not cut the ELD program. This program is part of our history and living in the "American Dream". I believe this is vital to educating our children who's first language is not English and is a stepping stone to create a diverse and successful culture for our community.

Thank you for your time,

Marinnelle Espina

[Sent from Yahoo Mail for iPhone](#)

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**From:** Leticia Ochoa  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 9, 2021 7:53 PM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] ESL Program

Please do not get rid of the ESL program. If you do you are taking away an opportunity from someone to be their best. The ESL program gives these students an opportunity to learn at the same pace as the others because they are getting what they need. These students are more talented and know more than others because they are learning a second language.

If it wasn't for the ESL program, I myself, WOULD NOT be where I am now. I completed my associates degree at the age of 18 years old getting a dual honors diploma from high school. I went on and received my Bachelor's in Business Administration/Management this past December. As of today I am an Assistant Store Manager, a business owner, and entrepreneur.

Do not take this opportunity for these kids to fly. If your child speaks English, hears English, communicates in English and at the age of 6 Forced to learn Spanish to be able to receive an education would you want them to get all the support that they can get....? These kids are TALENTED. Can all kids in your family speak another language? We're not all the same but we are all Americans who deserve an education in our own country!!

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**From:** Robert Green  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 9, 2021 7:58 AM  
**To:** Public Comments  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Full Time School for Quarter 4 this Spring

Good morning,

Is the WCSD considering offering families and students the ability to go to school five days a week for the last quarter of the year? With the declining Covid cases in Washoe County and the continued recognition from the CDC, the American Academy of Pediatrics and other leading organizations of how important it is for the students to be in school full time for their academic and social development it is time to provide this option for families.

In Section 5.07 of the Board Meeting Agenda this evening I am hopeful that this will be reviewed. Section 5.07 text-THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES WILL CONSIDER RELEVANT ACTIONS THAT MAY INCLUDE CHANGES TO IN-PERSON, HYBRID, AND FULL-DISTANCE LEARNING MODELS (FOR POSSIBLE ACTION).

Please give families the choice to send their middle school and high school students back to school full time. WCSD Elementary schools have successfully had students in the classroom for the entire year and I am confident that the middle schools and high schools can have students in class full time just as successfully.

Robert Green  
Principal  
MSS Marketing

Reno, NV 89511