
From: Sperske, Shannon
Sent: Friday, September 11, 2020 6:29 PM
To: Public Comments
Subject: Distance learning

I have agreed with a lot of what the school district and board has been doing. I have been standing up and helping my colleagues to see the other side of their complaints and help them understand why some of the decisions that have been made have been made. However today I am at a loss! I agree that Distance Learning teachers should be in the school building during a "normal" school day. However when the district says the air quality is not healthy enough for kids to breathe and since we are pumping the air into the buildings it is not safe for them to go to school but it is safe for teachers? That makes no sense to me. Yes, if we have a medical condition, we can be exempt however to ask us to inform you what said conditions are is a violation of our Hipaa rights. I also understand that some schools are having to use the outside spaces for lunch and other activities. This also makes no sense to me. At this point we do not know when the restrictions will be lifted so if they are not lifted when the weather turns cold are, they going to expect these kids to eat in the wind, rain, snow? Don't they need an alternative plan for inclement weather? Couldn't they use the same guidelines for poor air quality? So really the only argument that has merit is the busses. However, the amount of time that most of the kids spend on the bus is far less than the amount of time I spent in my car driving to work in the same air quality today not to mention the amount of time I spent in my classroom with the smoky air being pumped in. So honestly if you feel we need to cancel a day due to the air quality the teachers should be trusted that we will do what is best for our students and be able to choose if we are going to work from home or go into the building if that is what works best for them. If you feel you really can't trust the teachers then just like we now have to turn in two weeks' worth of plans in case we go full distance then also have us invite our administrators to our zoom or Team meetings and they can pop in and out of the meeting to check up to make sure we are doing our jobs. I guarantee the administrators know what teachers on their staff they will have to check up on and which they can truly trust.

Thank you for your time
Shannon Sperske
Nancy Gomes
3rd grade teacher

From: Karen Roseborough
Sent: Monday, September 14, 2020 6:23 PM
To: Public Comments
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Distance learning due to smoke and bad weather.

I am a parent and former educator .

I have a kindergartener this year. Having a 5 year old sit in front of the computer for the day isn't really productive. He finds school boring because there isn't enough for him to do and interaction with the teacher is minimal.

Making the home a school rules environment doesn't work well. Brain breaks don't meet the purpose when the kids are at home.

Each time you make an all distance learning day it is making it easier for the district but not for families that have 2 parents working in order to survive. Although my work will work with the distance learning it is hard to keep up with deadlines at work. Even with splitting the day between parents for distance learning isn't the best.

Another complaint is the free and reduced meals are to be picked up during the time parents are monitoring their child's learning.

How about having the bus drivers meeting the parents at the bus stop in the morning with the breakfast and lunch?

Jeff and Karen Roseborough

From: Scott Benton
Sent: Thursday, September 17, 2020 1:49 PM
To: Public Comments
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Selection of Trustee A

After seeing the 13 candidates apply for the vacant seat of Trustee A, I would like to forward my support for Lisa Genasci for the appointment of the open seat. I have had the honor to serve with Lisa as she served on the Washoe County School District's School Naming Committee, where she was elected as Chair. She is a proven leader not only in her community but within the volunteer committees of the school district. She leads with empathy, dignity, and pride. She understands the need to make tough decisions and she knows how the decisions that she will be faced with. She will be able to jump into the school board meetings and know what the expectations are, as she has been training for this during her very successful campaign.

Thank you Trustees for your time and I hope to see Lisa sitting next to you all soon!



Scott Benton

From: Tea Cher
Sent: Thursday, September 17, 2020 3:36 PM
To: Minetto, Ellen; Caudill, Andrew B; Raymond, Malena; Taylor, Angela; Calvert, Jacqueline M; kathryn.holland@washoeschoola.net; Public Comments
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 9/22 Board Meeting Time

Hello,

The start time of 3:00pm for the next the board meeting on 9/22 seems very inappropriate given the contract end time for teachers. Many teachers in the district work contract hours that go later than 3:00. This appears to be a way to keep teachers silent and not allow them to have a voice in person at the board meeting to address all of you. This also keep us parents that have to pick our kids up from school at 3:00 silent in person as well. A public comment by email is not the same as standing up and being able to talk to the board in person. I'm hopeful that is not your intention but with your track record as of lately, I am not sure. This is the perception by not just staff, but also community members. I hope that you are able to change the time to give teachers and community members a chance to continue voicing their concerns.

And maybe this will be under 5.02 but Trustee Simon-Holland asked Dr. McNeill to submit an after-action report on the many issues facing distance learning and hybrid learning and how the beginning of the school year has been nothing but a nightmare for teachers and parents. Is that going to be presented at this meeting?

Sincerely,

Cher Tea
A Concerned Parent and Community Member

From: Campbell, Jessie
Sent: Thursday, September 17, 2020 8:35 PM
To: Public Comments
Subject: communication concern

Hello Dr. McNeill and Board of Trustees,

Numerous emails have been sent to staff indicating that it is entirely safe for employees to be in the buildings working during smoke closures. I am greatly disappointed that HVAC systems have not been addressed.

Every employee knows that outside air is still being pumped into the school because all of us are coughing when the air comes on.

By omitting this very key factor, you have lost trust from your already worn-down and ill-equipped employees. If you had just acknowledged this situation and given reasoning to support your decision, we would have been understanding.

I was also extremely discouraged to read in an email sent to staff that we needed to '*give the perception that teachers do not have a free day of with pay.*' When our district cares more about how they look in the press than they do about the health of their employees, they lose the trust of those employees.

You can ask any parent who is logging their child onto video meetings or receiving support emails at all hours of the night can tell you we are not getting ANY free days off and it is offensive to believe this the case.

This omission has a domino effect. Your teachers cough at school and over video sessions with kids. This is a symptom of COVID so based on your screener, we should all be home isolating. If we lead on to our smoke related difficulties, we end up having to be excluded for 10 days and then there are NO SUBSTITUTES. This is especially true for DL days (Special education does not get to just send a packet for 14 days as our expectations are through the roof). Most importantly, our students receive no instruction. Your omission of the outside air situation still entering the buildings *and* your insistence on us being at school has caused this cycle.

Although there are so many reasons to throw up our hands, we continue to show the flexibility and tolerance you speak of, even though we continue to be unheard, unacknowledged, and taken advantage of. We do this not for you, but for our students and their families. I encourage you to protect your assets; your teachers.

In the future, please consider the health and safety of your staff above all else.

Thank you for your time.

Thank you,

Jessie Campbell M.Ed.
Alyce Taylor E.S.

From: Yvonne Williams
Sent: Thursday, September 17, 2020 9:16 PM
To: Public Comments
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Distance learning days due to smoke

I am very concerned that Teachers and staff are expected to come and work in the schools when smoke is being pumped into the buildings. Even the new schools smell like smoke, and are burning teachers eyes and throats. If the air quality is deemed unhealthy why is it okay to subject your staff to the unhealthy working conditions?

You must be aware many of your staff fall under the “sensitive group” category? The smoke is causing coughing and illness that could then disguise Covid, resulting in mandatory testing in order to get Medical assistance thus lost days of work.

Some Teachers will be fine with coming in, tolerating the smoke by their own choice. But the responsible policy for WCSD is to require staff to work - from school site or home office. Many teachers have already set up home ‘classrooms’ from which they can work. Those with asthma and/or other respiratory conditions should be allowed (and supported) to work from a safe environment!!!

Thank you,

Yvonne Williams

Sent from my iPhone

From: Kleinhenz, Trina
Sent: Sunday, September 20, 2020 9:02 AM
To: Public Comments
Subject: Student and staff safety

At Incline Elementary School we have only had 7 days of instruction where students were in person. We have a positive Covid-19 case. Students and staff that were exposed for 15 minutes at a range that was closer than 6 feet have been excluded, but it is not recommended that they get tested. I am so angry with the lack of concern and policies that would help our families and staff stay safe.

Trina



21ST CENTURY EDUCATOR



From: Cheri Adelman
Sent: Sunday, September 20, 2020 6:33 PM
To: Public Comments; steve@stevesisolak.com
Cc: Cheri Adelman
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PLEASE RESPOND!!!! Re: Lack of healthcare coverage for essential WCSD workers during COVID19 pandemic

I don't understand why you have not responded to my messages.

Is it because you truly DON'T CARE?????

School has now started.

You expect your essential workers to put themselves and their families at risk.

You expect your essential workers to put their lives at risk.

And, it appears you don't care.

Please respond!!
Cheri

On Aug 11, 2020, at 10:19 PM, Cheri Adelman wrote:

I recently learned that new Washoe Co teachers (and other employees) currently do not receive healthcare benefits for 90 days.

While I can understand this policy as a "norm" during "normal" times, **it seems extremely uncaring during this "once in a lifetime" pandemic we are currently living in.**

We desperately need experienced teachers. And one of my experienced family members is starting at a local middle school. He was teaching in another NV county until this year, when he applied for, and received a teaching position closer to his home and family in Washoe County.

He is cautiously excited about starting with his new school, but he and his wife are concerned about COVID19 and the fact that he was **not to receive healthcare benefits (for himself, his wife and two children) for 90 days.**

Because of some miscommunication, the **temporary healthcare coverage they are paying for out-of-pocket is not effective until 9/1.**

He and his family are currently uninsured.

He is already at work, preparing himself and his classroom.

Students are starting in 6 days.

He is an essential county worker.

If you truly value him (and your other new employees) for what they are willing to do for our community during this exceptional period in our history, please consider an exception to provide him (them) with the peace of mind of having **immediately effective healthcare coverage.**

Thank you for your valuable time with this matter,

Cheri Adelman

Sparks, NV 89436

(one of the zip codes mentioned as high in numbers during tonight's WCSB meeting)

From: Steve Janowski
Sent: Monday, September 21, 2020 11:08 AM
To: Public Comments
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Open schools

The plandemic has fizzled out, like everything made in China, it didn't last as long as was hoped. Time to open the schools full time and get back to teaching.

Sent from my iPhone

From: Sarah Dockins
Sent: Monday, September 21, 2020 12:35 PM
To: Public Comments
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Distance learning

Hello,

My children have all been attending school. I have three children, a highschooler, middle Schooler, and an elementary school aged child.

The high school and middle school levels in my opinion have been fairly organized and the teachers are able to teach their classes, and their assignments seem to be going very well. However, from the elementary school level, the teacher is not ready for distance-learning. It seems like it has been very unorganized, and a complete lack of teacher development in the school seems to be lacking. As a parent, I would really like to see some teacher development days so that the teachers can be ready for distance-learning if and when it arises again. In my opinion, the school district rushed into opening schools, and the school district has not prepared them very well.

I would really like to see some teacher development days so that these teachers can be taught and know how to do distance-learning.

Lastly, I received an email from the elementary school principal saying that my child will not be learning any science or social studies subjects this year. This really makes me very sad and disheartened to know that my child is not being educated. He emailed the standards and basically told us we were on our own. If I would've known this, I would've been rolled my child in a charter school. I really feel like the school is letting us down. My child attends Pleasant Valley elementary school.

Thank you.

Concerned parent

Sent from my iPhone
Sarah Dockins

From: Ramirez, Andrea A
Sent: Monday, September 21, 2020 7:58 PM
To: Public Comments
Subject: Support needed

As a teacher, I am thankful that I can see my students in person, even if it is only 1/2 as often as I normally would. However, since they are outside of the classroom for at least half of their learning time, I have struggled creating engaging and content appropriate work that can be done digitally, especially on short notice due to smoky conditions. As a result, I spend most days in class, reviewing the information that some students missed due non-participation (for a variety of reasons), while students who completed the work get to cover it a second time. I know that access to technology continues to be an obstacle, but so does a lack of training in distance learning lesson creation and adaptation. If the district is truly committed to keeping the educational standards high and rigorous, there needs be better professional development for teachers in distance education.

Andrea Ramirez
Cold Springs Middle School
7th Grade Science

From: Jenny Snaza
Sent: Monday, September 21, 2020 8:17 PM
To: Public Comments
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Distance Learning Teachers with Multiple Grade-Levels

Thank you for taking the time to review my comment.

I am a parent of a Kindergartner in the WCSD. We chose to pursue the full-distance learning option through our local elementary school. Your distance learning students, families, and teachers are suffering.

- Teachers CAN NOT effectively teach multiple grade levels via distance learning. Please treat distance learning like a normal class - especially at the elementary level where there is no support curriculum.

- Teachers CAN NOT address student learning and social and emotional needs if they have enormous classes. Distance learning classes should respect the 2015 legislation dictating class size ratios. Effective distance learning requires that teachers take even more time getting to know their students...how can they conference and do what they need if they have ridiculous class sizes?

- Please consider a variance from Microsoft teams for the remainder of the school year. Since nothing can be integrated with teams, it is frustrating parents, students, and teachers having to jump around from platform to platform. Parents can not work and manage distance learning if they have to jump from platform to platform every 15 minutes. It is NOT a good educational platform. The reason cited was security, but there are significant security issues with Teams.

- Please do everything in your power to keep specials like music, art, library, and PE for distance learning students. These are exactly the activities these students need to connect with peers and make them want to log-on everyday...not to mention they are essential for their growth and development. We have been told that distance learning students will not receive some specials because the teachers have too much duty/have to cover other teachers. This is unacceptable.

These are unprecedented times. Thank you for working closely with your on-the-ground staff and listening to teacher and community voices.

Thank you!

Best,

Jenny

From: Harper, Will
Sent: Tuesday, September 22, 2020 7:45 AM
To: Public Comments
Subject: Public Comments

BOT Members and Superintendent McNeill,

I write this today as SSHS received word of our SIXTH confirmed positive COVID case. Those are just the ones we know of. I am wondering how many cases it will take before we admit that the advice of the WCHD, head epidemiologist and multiple Unions to wait on in person schooling should have been heeded??? It is very hard to tell what your priorities are or what you are thinking since you keep moving the goal post on metrics.

I chose to write rather than come speak because I don't think you are really listening to anyone and don't want to waste my time. I would like to focus on rhetoric vs reality of what is going on in our schools.

I want to be clear that your rhetoric is not matching reality. So, what do I mean? You used the same hammers to hit us over the head that many in the general public use to justify reopening. You told us schools and educators, rightful so, provide safety, socialization, social emotional well-being, food, etc and oh yeah education. What you didn't do was provide the planning, resources, and support to provide all these things in a way students deserve or that is keeping us safe.

Funding is at the heart of our challenges as educators and I am wondering where you are all at in the fight to provide our students with the funding and the support we need as educators to do all the things that are asked of us??? Would go a long way if we saw you all at rallies and heard you using your platforms to fight for funding and resources for our students and staff, rather than trying to use that platform to paint lipstick on this educational pig.

Stop treating the phrase "do more with less" as a message of pride and the norm. Start treating it as an unacceptable way of doing education and fight with us.

"All hands on deck," just means that us, the same people who have been bailing out the state, WCSD, and board forever are the hands on deck making anything happen. Sure, you may make the occasional brief appearances in the real trenches but then you go back to your offices and don't have to deal with the direct consequences of your dictated decisions. We do.

I have spoken with many teachers from all departments in my school. I have also talked with many colleagues from around the district. The participation levels of students on virtual rotation is being reported at roughly 10-15%. Then factor in the once a week we see most students in person, I can tell you, this is not a good system of delivering education. It is nice to have small class sizes but not sure it is worth the risk of exposure and spreading of COVID virus.

Finally, my favorite, DO NO HARM. Every day I enter SSHS, I am in harm's way. We have barely been in school and SSHS already has 6 confirmed cases. Those are just the ones we know of. I have prepped subbed 7 times already this year because we don't have positions filled or enough subs. Although you did tell the public that we had many teachers just waiting to join the WCSD and subs for every school. Simply not true. Prep subbing increases my exposure to more potentially positive students because we really don't have all hands-on deck. Everyone in a school building is in harm's way. Much more so than you that are sitting in offices or making the occasional brief appearance in a building.

In an email exchange with Ms. McNeill, she told me about the importance of contact tracing and how I needed to put the number of cases in perspective. Well here is some perspective for you. On 8/31 I worked for 30-40

minutes shoulder to shoulder with a student who told me he was starting to feel a little weird and we both joked about not having COVID-19. By 9/4 he was excluded and by 9/13, we were alerted he was indeed positive. Yet somehow, I was not contacted by the health department contact tracers. Luckily, I feel fine. Luck and the hard work of people in the building continue to be the only real hope we have of pulling this year off.

I don't expect you to change your behavior or responses. I hope you don't expect us to stop holding you accountable. It is not too late to join us in the fight to truly affect change in education funding. It is not too late to make data driven decisions on how this year should look. It is not too late to come up with a better model of education in response to this deadly and active pandemic.

It is not too late to start making better decisions for our students and staff. It is too late for you to convince many of us in the trenches that the reopening plan has been and is anything but a colossal failure.

Best of luck. We will all need it,

Will Harper

EL Teacher/WEA Building Rep/Mountain Bike Team Coach

Spanish Springs High School



From: Devlin, Karen
Sent: Tuesday, September 22, 2020 10:44 AM
To: Public Comments
Subject: New Common Assessments

The Washoe County School District has only added more work and stress to teachers and students during this unprecedented time rather than seeking to mitigate it. The WCSD assessment coordinator sent out an email two days before the start of school about implementing new online common assessments for the Elementary math curriculum, and after school started we were informed about the Elementary ELA curriculum Benchmark Advanced assessments. The world is in the middle of a pandemic, but the WCSD testing coordinator and the administration want to move forward with 6 new math tests and 7+ new ELA tests for elementary students? The whole class hand washing alone has reduced my instructional time by 30 minutes (6x a day multiplied by 17 students washing their hand at one sink for at least 20 seconds each!) I believe these assessments may take up to 10% of my 90 minute ELA instructional block and 75 minute Math instructional blocks over the course of the year. The entire test must be taken after the end of each 15-day ELA unit and three 2-week units of Math. The students are expected to sign on to the school city testing platform and take the online version of the end of unit test. (Is this what Benchmark Advance intended? I thought we weren't teaching for mastery, but any test where the district and my principal can see my test scores implies summative mastery). The district anticipates that this test is going to take students 45 minutes according to the email from the testing coordinator. Since the email also recommended that educators look at the test for backwards planning purposes, I sat down at my table one morning and took the unit one ELA test. I wanted to better understand what needed to be learned. Logging in and downloading the file took 10 minutes - this would also be the standard amount of transition time needed for students to get to a computer and access it. To select my answers, I used the same strategies that I teach my students such as rereading the questions and searching the passages to find specific evidence. The two writing prompts required paragraph organization and evidence from two different passages. On paper, this test is 12 pages long and it took me, a person with a Masters degree, 35 minutes. I am concerned that my students will be overwhelmed as I have established a class climate that effort equals success. I anticipate will take many of them over two hours to complete (based on the 4th grades at my school needing two computer blocks). If we are expected to teach a 90 minute reading block over 15 days and the test takes about 2 hours, that's 10% of their instructional day. That time could be used to reteach students content and strategies they missed in the 4th quarter last year because the district decided not to teach new content.

Furthermore, I am concerned about the unintended consequences of this new testing expectation. Out of testing stress and anxiety, my students may adopt inappropriate test-taking skills because they'll be tired of having to look back in the text for information and agonize over questions with 2 possible right answers (I'm pretty sure that both could be proved correct on two of my questions). Also, my school has limited technology to share (not like the 1:1 model at other schools) so my students don't access typing as often as they need to. We know this slows down and unintentionally shortens their written response.

I have worked at schools that used common formative assessments to encourage constructive PLC discussions and improve instruction. I believe that under the right circumstances with educator and student buy-in, common assessments have the power to improve learning. This is similar to the A4I or Assessment for Learning described in Jo Boaler's book. However, due to the district's roll out to teachers and staff, the nature of this assessment is a mandate and teachers are anticipating inquiry's from others outside the grade level PLC. I imagine justifying students' test scores as..."uhh, we didn't have enough practice time and the student/teacher instructional technology was not adequate during the smoke days to replicate normal classroom instruction." This all adds to the impending testing stress because the SBAC is still scheduled for this April. So my students need to grow by 1 and a quarter grade levels in only three quarters of instructional time. All of this in the middle of a pandemic and distance learning days. The mathematical Growth Mindset research published by Stanford PhD Professor Jo Boaler states that in our educational culture in America, students are tested too much, and in the countries that have higher mathematical test

scores the students are tested much less (Boaler, Mathematical Mindsets; Ch 3) As of this writing, we have only had 20 days of school and my class has had more than half of those days on Zoom distance learning. Yet according to traditional pacing guides and report cards, we should be finishing the 6th week of school. How many more ways can we be expected to do more with less? Wait, don't answer that.

However teachers are observers and problem solvers by nature, so I have a few questions and suggestions.

I would like to know whether the all parts of the ELA tests will be enforced? I'd like to give them the recommended 45 minute time limit and score it based on what they completed with their best effort.

How can we make these common assessments feel less like high-stakes tests?

When will there be investments to technology in elementary schools? When my students go to computers every week it will be to take a math school city assessment, a benchmark school city assessment, or a progress monitoring AimesWeb probe for the MTSS Tiered students. My students will not be able to practice the skills they need in computers because they will be testing. And those students that do not finish in an hour will have to find other time to complete their assessments. Why are we implementing these new assessments during the time of the Covid pandemic and smoke digital learning? I love my students and I love teaching. This is not going to help them make up a year of progress.

Update:

Just yesterday we were told in a staff meeting that we could adjust the ELA Benchmark tests amongst our grade levels, but at my school it still seems to be coming from the district as a mandate. Only now we don't have to use School City.

Thank you for your consideration of this,
Karen Devlin

From: Isabel Peralta
Sent: Tuesday, September 22, 2020 11:20 AM
To: McNeill, Kristen; Public Comments
Subject: [EXTERNAL] In Preparation for Today's School Board Meeting

Hello,

Thank you for valuing the voices of WCSD Students for Change. We really love and care about our school district, and are thankful that you've welcomed us into the broader discussion about equity in our district.

We have had some important discussions with our school and community leaders, and are really grateful for the time we were given to speak at the Equity Task Force meeting. Already, the anti-racism resolution shows the intent of progress. We hope to grow together as students, staff, administrators and board to a more inclusive district for our students. We believe this progress depends on the implementation of several action items which we've described to you before. We've found these actions to have broad community support; for that reason we present you a formal petition asking you to value Black lives in our district (link:<https://www.change.org/p/dr-kristen-mcneill-value-black-lives-in-the-washoe-county-school-district>).

The goal of this petition is to uplift the many students, teachers, future educators, and alumni who are committed to building a more inclusive structure in our schools.. Some students and I will also be at today's board meeting to share these goals with the broader community. Thank you for your consideration.

Best,
Isabel Peralta

From: Judith Miller
Sent: Tuesday, September 22, 2020 12:01 PM
To: Public Comments
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Agenda Item 5.02 Selecting candidates to interview

Dear Trustees,

You are faced with a decision very similar to the one considered by the Washoe County Board of Commissioners last year when they were tasked with appointing a Trustee to a vacant seat on the IVGID Board. Candidates came out of the woodwork who had never attended meetings and had not run for Trustee at the previous election.

The BOCC made a wise decision by selecting the person who had only missed being elected by a few votes at the previous election.

The primary election for the Distract A trustee was held just a few months ago. The votes were fairly close for Mr. Church and Ms. Genasco who placed second and third after the now resigned Mr. Kelley..

I support interviewing only Mr. Church and Ms. Genasco since they have so recently received a clear lead over other candidates in the primary, and did not just decide to apply for this position on a whim.

Thank you for considering my request.

Best regards,

Judith Miller

From: katania taylor
Sent: Tuesday, September 22, 2020 1:18 PM
To: Public Comments
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Public comments for meeting today, 9/22/20

I would like to say that I know there are a lot of unhappy people and it is hard to please everyone. However, the children should be the MOST important factors in your decisions. If the Governor heard from you that these kids need to go back to school full time and that the state should do all in their to make that happen, I believe it would happen. You need to demand that the social distancing guidelines for schools be removed so that our children, who are suffering greatly, can go back full time. In your hands is the mental and long term health of these kids, and at this point, their mental health is deteriorating dramatically. Education is suffering too, but mental health is of utmost importance and you as a board need to stand up to those putting barriers in place to perpetuate the suffering of our kids.

Please get our children back in Full Time school, with sports. This will also take the burden off the teachers who are struggling most with the hybrid model.

Enough is enough. Demand an end to these crazy, arbitrary guidelines.

Katania Taylor

From: Smith, Kasey
Sent: Tuesday, September 22, 2020 1:19 PM
To: Public Comments
Subject: Pride Flag Prohibition

Dear Washoe County School District Board of Trustees,

By prohibiting the Pride flag in classrooms, you are sending a damaging message. You are marginalizing staff, parents, and students. You are telling them that they are not worthy to show who they are to others. You are telling them that their lives do not matter.

I have had many experiences of being ostracized for who I am. I have been kicked out of college for being gay. I have been asked to leave a restaurant because I put my arm around my wife. I have even had gay slurs yelled at me while walking down the street. And now my employer is sending the same message: Who I am, who I love, my identity, does not matter.

Even if you don't care about the staff, you should care about the students. LGBTQ students need our support. A very easy way to show support is to display a Pride flag in one's classroom. Here are some statistics from GLAAD.org that demonstrate the importance of supporting LGBTQ students:

70.1% of LGBTQ students report being verbally harassed

71% of LGBTQ students report hearing homophobic remarks from teachers and/or school staff because of their gender expression

53.3% of LGBTQ students did not report experiences of bullying because they doubted an intervention

59.5% of LGBTQ students feel unsafe at school because of their sexual orientation

48.7% of LGBTQ students have experienced cyberbullying

60.4% of LGBTQ students who did report an incident said that school staff did nothing in response or told the student to ignore it

You are putting the lives of students at risk by prohibiting a sign of identity and inclusion in the classroom.

I am urging the board to reverse their directives regarding the Pride flag.

Sincerely,

Kasey Smith

Music Teacher

From: Ed Adkins
Sent: Tuesday, September 22, 2020 2:57 PM
To: Public Comments
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Edgenuity and Advanced Placement Classes

My daughter signed up to use the Edgenuity online learning platform through Reno Highschool this semester and was advised that she could take Advanced Placement classes.

The entire Edgenuity system so far seems woefully inadequate, from late books to having "teachers" who don't seem to have an actual function and don't answer emails.

Her textbooks have been late. AP World History textbook arrived last week and the AP Biology textbook arrived the second week of September. Anyone with experience in AP classes knows that falling behind is incredibly hard to catch up and they were basically made to fall behind a full month.

One month into using the Edgenuity system it is obvious that this will not prepare our students for Advanced Placement classes.

She has worked incredibly hard at school for 9 years and in her tenth year she's being failed by the Edgenuity platform and her school.

Her distance learning "teachers" can't answer any of her questions and don't even return emails. They aren't even knowledgeable in the class subjects.

In August we were told not to worry. Now we're definitely worrying.

Since you are aware of the dire situation these students are finding themselves in, what is your solution?

Was the District made aware of the failings of Edgenuity for AP classes when you decided to tell students you could provide them?

Are you going to just let these students fail?

They need either an extension on the testing dates or to be allowed to join their fellow students back in in-person class immediately.

Our daughter feels betrayed by the Washoe County School District and is terrified that her chance at a successful future is slipping away.

Ed Adkins

From: Nicole Grose
Sent: Tuesday, September 22, 2020 3:13 PM
To: Public Comments
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Trustee Seat for District A

To Whom it May Concern,

I would like to voice my support for candidate Heather Parkyn, who has submitted herself for consideration for the vacant Trustee Seat for District A. Ms. Parkyn is a dedicated educator who has worked for the Washoe County School District for almost 20 years. She is currently working with adult learners in another county, making her eligible for the seat. Ms. Parkyn is also pursuing her doctoral degree in education, showing not only her interest in becoming a better educator but also her support of life-long learning. Please consider Ms. Parkyn for this position as I believe it is critical that more educators have a voice on the Washoe County School District Board in order to provide decision making based on a career in the classroom.

Sincerely,

Nicole Grose, Ph.D., Educational Leadership

From: Moler, Dino
Sent: Tuesday, September 22, 2020 3:22 PM
To: Public Comments
Subject: Covid 19 discussion

I am not sure my email sent on Explorer. As a parent of a high school football player and coach, I truly hope that part of the school board discussion regarding Covid-19 is allowing fall sport athletes to AT LEAST participate in conditioning and drills like they did this summer, under social distancing guidelines. There were very few incidents that occurred at that time and these student-athletes need to be involved in some activity FOR THEIR PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH! 38 states have figured out how to play football, we can at least allow our athletes to get out there and do something!

Thank you for your time.

From: Debra Harris
Sent: Tuesday, September 22, 2020 3:25 PM
To: Public Comments
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Letter of support for selection of Heather Parkyn

I am contacting you to voice my support of Heather Parkyn to fill the vacant seat on the board. I believe her over 20 years of educational experience in a variety of settings will provide an informed voice on the board. Her service and dedication to this community has been a lifelong commitment. The fact that she continues to inform herself, she is currently a doctoral candidate focusing on distance education, of the issues facing public education demonstrates her desire to continue this her lifelong work. Finally, the fact that she is bilingual makes her more accessible to the broadest spectrum of our families here in Washoe County. Please vote for Heather Parkyn to join your ranks for the remainder of this term.

Sincerely,
Debra Harris
Resident and taxpayer of Washoe County

From: Kennedy, Erika
Sent: Tuesday, September 22, 2020 3:35 PM
To: Public Comments
Subject: candidate support

I support Heather Parkyns's candidacy to the Board of Trustees for the Washoe County School District. Heather is an experienced educator, and served as a classroom teacher in Reno for many years. It is about time to have a real educator with first hand experience of our community's issues advocating for teachers and students within this organization.

Sincerely,

Erika Kennedy

From: Rayelle Porter
Sent: Tuesday, September 22, 2020 4:02 PM
To: Public Comments
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Is my job at risk

I am a worker 1 at nutrition services
Do I need to worry about my job??????
Sent from my iPhone

From: Michaela Tonking
Sent: Tuesday, September 22, 2020 4:02 PM
To: Public Comments
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Trustee Candidate Vacancy - Section 5.03

I am hoping this can be entered in the record in the public comment closest to this presentation.

Dear Board Members,

I fully urge you to support Sharon Kennedy to fill the Board of Trustee vacancy. I have had the privilege of knowing Ms. Kennedy since I was an elementary school. She has played an incredible role in many children's lives and I feel she would be an asset to the board. Not only has she held many positions throughout the district, she has just recently retired and is well versed in everything that is going on in the district and the impact board decisions directly have on the staff and students.

Thank you,
Michaela Tonking