



SCHOOL BOARD ACTION REPORT

DATE: January 20, 2021
FROM: Brandon Hersey, Director District VII; Chandra Hampson, Director District III; Zachary DeWolf, Director District V

For Introduction: January 27, 2021
For Action: January 27, 2021

1. TITLE

Adopting Resolution No. 2020/21-17 to declare that the lives of Black students matter; and, that we encourage participation district-wide in the national Black Lives Matter At School Week from February 1-5, 2021 *and* the “Year of Purpose” 2020-21.

2. PURPOSE

This board action adopts the attached resolution, which declares that the lives of black students matter, as well as the lives of all of our underserved students; that we affirm the demands of the Black Lives Matter At School Movement, and that we encourage participation district-wide in the national Black Lives Matter At School Week from February 1-5, 2021

3. RECOMMENDED MOTION

We move that the Board approve Resolution No. 2020/21-17, a resolution of the Board of Directors of Seattle School District No. 1, King County, Seattle, Washington to declare that the lives of Black students matter, as well as the lives of all of our underserved students; that we affirm the demands of the Black Lives Matter At School Movement, and that we encourage participation district-wide in the national Black Lives Matter At School Week from February 1-5, 2021, as attached to this board action report. Immediate adoption is in the best interest of the district.

4. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

a. Background

As the largest public school district in Washington, the Board recognizes that district staff and our labor partners, families and community, are facilitators of the limitless growth potential of human beings, with a charge to guide our youth in finding and achieving their purpose with a belief that every human being deserves to live with dignity and pride. The Board also recognizes that the killing of unarmed Black men and women, including queer and trans persons of color, has left young people and our communities searching for answers to incredibly complicated issues of race, justice and fairness. Throughout our nation’s history, systems of oppression and injustice have led to deepening racial disparities and racism across all sectors of society and have lasting negative consequences for our communities, cities and nation.

Shouting loudly that “Black Lives Matter” does not diminish our commitment to ALL of our students, but rather elevates Black students’ struggle to trust that our society values

them; we must affirm that their lives, specifically, matter. Historically, when Black people have fought for a more democratic society, the lives of all people have improved and, conversely, each time barriers to Black people’s potential have been erected, our whole society has suffered.

This resolution will mark the fourth consecutive year that the Seattle School Board unequivocally declares that the Lives of our Black Students Matter and, along with once again encouraging district-wide participation in the Black Lives Matter At School Week, we also call out and affirm the demands of the Black Lives Matter At School movement:

1. End “zero tolerance” discipline, and implement restorative justice
2. Hire more black teachers
3. Mandate black history and ethnic studies in K-12 curriculum
4. Fund counselors not cops

We note that the district, together with SPS staff and the Seattle Education Association, has been working diligently toward effective, meaningful and sensitive curriculum. This week is recognized by educators nationwide as an opportunity to promote racial justice and identity safety in classrooms.

b. **Alternatives**

Do not approve this resolution. This is not recommended as it would miss an opportunity to promote an event that encourages identity safety in schools.

c. **Research**

None

5. FISCAL IMPACT/REVENUE SOURCE

There is no fiscal impact to this action.

Expenditure: One-time Annual Multi-Year N/A

Revenue: One-time Annual Multi-Year N/A

6. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

With guidance from the District’s Community Engagement tool, this action was determined to merit the following tier of community engagement:

Not applicable

Tier 1: Inform

Tier 2: Consult/Involve

Tier 3: Collaborate

School Board directors consulted and supported members of the community, staff and labor partners in the drafting of the original version of this resolution and most recently our resolution affirming Black students and their safety. Black Lives Matter At School Week and the 2020-21 Year of Purpose will be a nationwide event, with educators in many communities across the country participating.

7. EQUITY ANALYSIS

Research shows that promoting identity safety is critical to student learning.

8. STUDENT BENEFIT

Practices and leadership that foster a culture and promotion of identity safety will promote student learning.

9. WHY BOARD ACTION IS NECESSARY

- Amount of contract initial value or contract amendment exceeds \$250,000 (Policy No. 6220)
- Amount of grant exceeds \$250,000 in a single fiscal year (Policy No. 6114)
- Adopting, amending, or repealing a Board policy
- Formally accepting the completion of a public works project and closing out the contract
- Legal requirement for the School Board to take action on this matter
- Board Policy No. _____, [TITLE], provides the Board shall approve this item
- Other: Board action is required to approve a resolution

10. POLICY IMPLICATION

School Board Policy No. 0030, Ensuring Educational and Racial Equity, begins by stating, “The Seattle School Board is committed to the success of every student in each of our schools” and “We believe that the responsibility for student success is broadly shared by District Staff, administrators, instructors, communities and families.” Within this policy, the Board commits to design and adopt procedures for Policy No. 0030 with intentionality and to using a racial equity analysis to ensure embedded anti-racist and inclusionary practices for schools, departments, the cabinet and School Board.

11. BOARD COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

This motion was discussed at the Executive Committee meeting on January 20, 2021. The Committee reviewed the motion and moved the item forward for consideration by the full Board.

12. TIMELINE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Upon approval of this motion, the resolution will be approved.

13. ATTACHMENTS

- Resolution No. 2020/21-17 (for approval)

**Seattle School District #1
Board Resolution**

Resolution No. 2020/21-17



A RESOLUTION of the Board of Directors of Seattle School District No. 1, King County, Seattle, Washington to declare that the lives of Black students matter, as well as the lives of all of our underserved students; that we affirm the demands of the Black Lives Matter At School Movement, and that we encourage participation district-wide in the national Black Lives Matter At School Week from February 1-5, 2021 and Year of Purpose 2020-21.

WHEREAS, as a public-school district, we are facilitators of the limitless growth potential of human beings, with a charge to guide our youth in finding and achieving their purpose with a belief that every human being deserves to live with dignity; and

WHEREAS, nationally, the education system uses harsh discipline policies that push Black students out of schools at disproportionate rates; denies students the right to learn about their own cultures and whitewashes the curriculum to exclude many of the struggles and contributions of Black people and other people of color; and

WHEREAS, here in the Seattle area, the deaths of Leonard Benjamin Thomas, Desseria Whitmore, Che Andre Taylor, Shawn Jerel Maxwell, DeOntrel Davis, Damarius Butts, Martin Anwar Duckworth, Andre Waldon, Christopher Aaron Wright, Charleena Lyles, Lawrence Owens, Samuel Stephon Curry, Henry Frankie Lee Sr., Russell Lydell Smith, James David Anderson, Aaron Roberts, David John Walker, Kenneth Dion Williams Jr., Giovonn Joseph-McDade, Eugene Nelson, Mi'Chance Dunlap-Gittens; and countless unarmed Black men and women across our nation, including queer and trans persons of color, has left young people searching for answers to incredibly complicated and infuriating questions; and

WHEREAS, In the wake of the murders of George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor, Tony McDade, and too many other others named and unnamed, Black Lives Matter in Schools has called for a "[Year of Purpose](#): a great Uprising for Black Lives has swept the nation and the world, inciting new urgency and radical possibilities for advancing abolitionist practice and uprooting institutional racism. ...The centerpiece of the Year of Purpose is asking educators to reflect on their own work in relationship to antiracist pedagogy and abolitionist practice, persistently challenging themselves to center Black lives in their classrooms."

WHEREAS, throughout our nation's history, institutional and structural racism and injustice have led to deepening racial disparities across all sectors of society and have lasting negative consequences for our communities, cities, and nation; and

WHEREAS, historically, when Black people have fought for a more democratic society, the lives of all people have improved and, conversely, each time barriers to Black people’s potential have been erected, our whole society has suffered; and

WHEREAS, School Board Policy No. 0030, Ensuring Educational and Racial Equity, begins by stating, “The Seattle School Board is committed to the success of every student in each of our schools” and “We believe that the responsibility for student success is broadly shared by District Staff, administrators, instructors, communities and families;” and

WHEREAS, Seattle Public Schools passed resolution [2019/20-38](#) to affirm Seattle Public Schools’ commitment to Black students’ safety in the wake of the murder of George Floyd; and

WHEREAS, Seattle Public Schools recognizes the importance of identity safety and has adopted a strategic plan that aims to directly support and uplift African-American boys, and all students furthest away from educational justice, and

WHEREAS, Seattle Public Schools has implemented programs to foster a culture of safety and affirmation of our students of color in the development of an Ethnic Studies curriculum, the Since Time Immemorial curriculum, the formation of the Office of African American Male Achievement, and Racial Equity Teams at more than 50 schools; and via mentorship partnerships with organizations such as Credible Messengers, ACE and many others, and implicit bias work through the Partnership Committee with the Seattle Education Association, Principals’ Association of Seattle Schools, and Seattle Public Schools training around trauma-informed practices; and

WHEREAS, shouting loudly that “Black Lives Matter” does not diminish our commitment to ALL students, but rather, affirms that Black lives specifically matter, recognizing that Black students struggle to trust that our society values them; and

WHEREAS, the problems of society are mirrored in schools, and these problems can only be fully addressed with a united effort of community and school coming together for the betterment of our students’ future; and

WHEREAS, while the arc of justice is long, and we will experience pain and setbacks, the pursuit of racial justice in public education is core to our becoming a more free, equal, and democratic society; and

WHEREAS, educators nationwide – including Seattle Public Schools educators – are organizing a week of action and education to promote the message that Black Lives Matter at school;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT

RESOLVED, that the Seattle School Board declares that the lives of black students matter, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Seattle School Board affirms the demands of the Black Lives Matter at Schools movement:

- 1) End “zero tolerance” discipline, and implement restorative justice
- 2) Hire more black teachers
- 3) Mandate black history and ethnic studies in K-12 curriculum
- 4) Fund counselors not cops

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the School Board encourages district-wide participation in the Black Lives Matter At School Week from February 1-5, 2021, through discussions in classrooms and in homes.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the School Board encourages district-wide participation in the Black Lives Matter Year of Purpose 2020-21, not just in February, but via discussions, and reflections throughout the school year.

ADOPTED this 27th day of January, 2021

Chandra N. Hampson, President

Brandon K. Hersey, Vice President

Lisa Rivera-Smith, Member-at-Large

Zachary DeWolf

Leslie Harris

Liza Rankin

ATTEST: _____
Denise Juneau, Superintendent
Secretary, Board of Directors
Seattle School District No. 1
King County, WA