

Seattle School District No. 1
Board Resolution
Resolution No. 2020/21-18



A RESOLUTION of the Board of Directors of Seattle School District No. I, King County, Seattle, Washington to commit to transitioning the District to 100% clean, renewable energy with the goal of improving student health and the creation of more sustainable and equitable communities.

WHEREAS, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change Report of 2018, the Fourth National Climate Assessment, climate scientists from around the world, Washington State Governor Jay Inslee, and Seattle Mayor Jenny Durkan have all declared the climate crisis requires a significant reduction of greenhouse gas emissions resulting from the burning of fossil fuels by 2030 and full decarbonization by 2050 in order to mitigate the most catastrophic consequences of climate change; and

WHEREAS, the City of Seattle's climate goals require an intermediate target of reducing total core greenhouse gas emissions 58% below 2008 levels by 2030 and carbon neutrality by 2050, which Seattle is currently not on track to meet,¹ while Washington State's clean energy and climate goals require reducing greenhouse gas emissions 45% below 1990 levels by 2030 and 95% below 1990 levels by 2050 and net zero by 2050;² and

WHEREAS, impacts of climate change will continue to be felt in Washington State in the form of increased temperature extremes, record droughts, ocean acidification, and more volatile wildfire seasons, leading to health impacts from heat and smoke and these impacts will accelerate and intensify the longer we add greenhouse gases to the atmosphere; and

WHEREAS, the use of fossil fuels to power buildings and transportation not only increase greenhouse gas emissions, but also contribute to indoor and outdoor air pollution, such that the Puget Sound Clean Air Agency estimates that 1,100 Washingtonians die each year from outdoor air pollution;³ and

WHEREAS, the impacts of air pollution are disproportionately experienced by Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) communities, such that the 2013 Duwamish Valley Cumulative Health Impacts Analysis found that residents of South Park and Georgetown have an expected lifespan that is eight years shorter than the average Seattle resident and 13 years shorter than the wealthiest neighborhoods in the city, and that 58 percent of the population living within one mile of the Lower Duwamish Superfund boundary are people of color; and

1 City of Seattle Office of Sustainability & Environment. Climate change. Accessed October 10, 2020. <https://www.seattle.gov/environment/environmental-progress/climate-change>

2 Revised Code of Washington 70A.45.020. Greenhouse gas emissions reductions- Reporting requirements. <https://apps.leg.wa.gov/rcw/default.aspx?cite=70A.45.020>

3 Puget Sound Clean Air Agency. Air Pollution & Your Health. Accessed October 20, 2020. <https://www.pscleanair.gov/161/Air-Pollution-Your-Health>

WHEREAS, school districts, cities, and states around the country are making commitments to run on 100 percent clean, renewable energy to improve public health, help address climate change, and capture key co-benefits, such as improved indoor and outdoor air quality; and

WHEREAS, K-12 schools in the United States have an important role to play in reducing carbon and other greenhouse gas emissions given that they are major energy consumers; and

WHEREAS, reductions in emissions from toxic energy sources that cause climate change and contribute to cardiovascular, respiratory,⁴ neurological, and other illnesses and health impacts result in tangible improvements in student health and performance,⁵ particularly among our youngest and most vulnerable children; and

WHEREAS, students riding in diesel school buses breathe in four times as much diesel exhaust as the passengers in a car driving in front of the bus, which leads to an exposure 23-46 times the cancer risk level considered significant under federal law,^{6 7} and that learning outcomes are improved in school districts with reduced diesel exhaust exposure; ^{8 9} and

WHEREAS, the risks of COVID-19 mortality are increased by exposure to air pollution, including exposure to the particulate matter¹⁰ and nitrogen oxide¹¹ found in vehicle exhaust and natural gas combustion; and

WHEREAS, investments in energy efficiency and HVAC systems resulting in better indoor air quality and lighting in schools have been documented to improve both academic performance and student health, ¹² which is particularly important in the COVID-19 era; and

4 Epidemiologic studies have reported associations between ambient levels of traffic-related pollutants and increased childhood hospitalizations, emergency room visits, and reports of asthma symptoms (Delfino et al. 2002; Gehring et al. 2002; Hirsch et al. 1999; Thompson et al. 2001)

5 Allen, J.G., MacNaughton, P., Satish, U., Santanam, S., Vallarino, J., & Spengler, J.D. (2015). Associations of cognitive function scores with carbon dioxide, ventilation, and volatile organic compound exposures in office workers: A controlled exposure study of green and conventional office environments. *Environmental Health Perspectives*. <https://ehp.niehs.nih.gov/15-10037/>

6 Solomon, G.M. et al. (January 2001). No Breathing in the Aisles: Diesel Exhaust in School Buses. National Resources Defense Council. <https://www.nrdc.org/sites/default/files/schoolbus.pdf>

7 Adar, SD, Davey, M, Sullivan, JR, Compher, M, Szpiro, A, Liu, Sally LJ (Oct. 2008) Predicting Airborne Particle Levels Aboard Washington State School Buses. <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/18985175>

8 Austina, W., Heutel, G., & Kreisman, D. (June 2019). School bus emissions, student health and academic performance. *Economics of Education Review*. 70: 109-126. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.econedurev.2019.03.002>

9 Industrial Economics, Incorporated. An Assessment of the Health Burden of Ambient PM2.5 Concentrations in Virginia. 28 Oct. 2020, <https://cee8204b-70a4-44?9567-a8b385f8bd93.filesusr.com/ugd/b42d1316d1da1c63e84d328db4239aea371617.pdf>

10 Wu, X. et al. (2020). Exposure to air pollution and COVID-19 mortality in the United States. medRxiv 2020.04.05.20054502, <https://doi.org/10.1101/2020.04.05.20054502>

11 Liang, D. et al. (2020). Urban Air Pollution May Enhance COVID-19 Case-Fatality and Mortality Rates in the United States. *The Innovation*. 1(3). <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.xinn.2020.10004>

12 Eitland et al. (2017). Schools for Health: Foundations for Student Success. Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health. Healthy Buildings Program. <http://schools.forhealth.org/Harvard.Schools For Health.Foundations for Student Success.pdf>

WHEREAS, according to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), energy-related expenses are only second to personnel as the largest expenditure in school district budgets, and savings from conservation efforts can be redirected into classrooms and student learning; and

WHEREAS, energy improvements can make schools and communities more resilient in the face of climate and natural disasters by serving as emergency hubs that ensure community members have access to heat, light, and clean air when grid power fails or outdoor air quality is unsafe; and

WHEREAS, Seattle Public Schools' 105 school sites and other facilities contribute to climate change from their transportation-related activities and on-site energy needs, which include space heating and cooling, water heating, ventilation, cooking, and equipment; and

WHEREAS, the electricity currently powering Seattle Public Schools is from Seattle City Light and comes from at least 91% renewable sources, with the remaining 9% of its production managed by a carbon offset program; and

WHEREAS, all new buildings constructed by the District beginning with BEX V shall be all-electric and therefore not include fossil fuel infrastructure; and

WHEREAS, the District has already taken actions to address the climate emergency through sustainability and resource conservation efforts as governed by policy (BP6810), procedure (SP6810), and resolutions (No. 2006/2007-18, and No. 2012/13-12), which includes commitments to long-range reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, management of our natural resources and energy conservation efforts, and sustainability standards and goals; and

WHEREAS, the District is dedicated to supporting programs and strategies which aim to make schools more climate-aware, climate-resilient, and safe, and that school buildings, transportation, and facilities can serve as energy-efficient living laboratories that teach children to understand STEM concepts through clean, renewable energy applications; and

WHEREAS, the District is committed to principles of racial, economic and environmental justice, and transitioning to 100 percent clean, renewable energy can help advance these goals by helping to address climate and air pollution, which disproportionately impact low-income communities and communities of color, and by creating STEM and vocational learning opportunities geared toward training and preparing students, especially in underserved, frontline communities, for the impending green jobs economy; and

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors of Seattle School District No. 1 hereby commits to transitioning the District off fossil fuels for all of its operations including heating, cooking, and transportation no later than 2040 and sooner if the Board deems it possible; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the District shall run on 100% zero-carbon electricity, with the combined use of energy from Seattle City Light and renewable energy sources installed on District property, no later than 2027; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board directs the Superintendent to oversee and assemble a task force no later than April 30, 2021 to develop an implementation plan and accountability process to meet the goals of this resolution which shall be presented to the Board no later than January 31, 2023. In November 2021 or earlier, the task force shall present to the Board and the public a preliminary scope of implementation for feedback and refinement and provide subsequent quarterly updates to the Board until the final implementation plan is presented for approval. The task force shall be in place until the resolution is fully implemented; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the task force shall include District resource conservation, budget, facilities, transportation, custodial, and equity professionals; student, teacher, and parent representatives; community stakeholders, clean energy experts, labor partners, tribal nation representatives including, but not limited to, representatives from the Muckleshoot Nation and Suquamish Nation, and others deemed helpful to realizing the long-term goals of the resolution, including members of the BEX and BTA oversight committees involved with forward-looking master planning for the District. The task force shall meet at least six times per year and present updates to the Board in public meetings at least two times per academic year, over the life of the resolution; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the implementation plan shall consider finance options, including third-party finance, aimed at minimizing costs and maximizing long-term benefits to the District; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the implementation plan shall also include measures that advance racial, environmental, and economic justice by prioritizing infrastructure investments in the highest-needs students and schools, and by supporting strong labor and community workforce agreements that create employment opportunities in frontline and underserved communities; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the implementation plan shall explore ways to make neighborhoods and communities more resilient by considering solar-plus battery storage options, which can keep schools running during power outages, and turning schools into community hubs, especially in areas that don't already have emergency shelters; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the implementation plan shall include recommendations for integrating climate science and climate justice into curriculum, incorporating school facilities resource conservation efforts into project- and place-based learning, professional development

opportunities for teachers, and student learning opportunities in STEM that leverage Career and Technical Education career pathways; and

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BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the implementation plan shall explore ways each District school can meaningfully participate in the process by developing yearly Continuous School Improvement Plan goals related to resource conservation targets; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the task force may also explore additional aspects of climate sustainability, including carbon-intensive food and materials consumption, waste, embodied carbon emissions of buildings and renovations, and water use; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the facilities staff will provide updated benchmarking of progress in implementing the resolution every three years, including an emissions inventory and an assessment of whether the 2040 deadline for ending fossil fuel use can be achieved faster; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that any fossil fuel-powered equipment identified for replacement from the date of April 10, 2021 shall be replaced with equipment powered by clean electricity, recommendations for which may be further informed by the task force's implementation plan; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that any new District buildings or renovations that commence planning after April 10, 2021 shall prohibit fossil fuel infrastructure and prioritize zero carbon energy sources; and


BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that any new vehicles purchased by the District beginning April 10, 2021 will prioritize the selection of zero-emission vehicles wherever: (a) a suitable zero-emission vehicle exists for the District need, (b) life-cycle cost analysis shows the premium at less than 10%, and (c) suitable EV-charging infrastructure to recharge the vehicle(s) is in place, or anticipated to be, preferably at the vehicle's assigned stationary location. The District will select vehicles with the lowest-possible emissions if these conditions are not met; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that Seattle Public Schools will leverage buying power when negotiating and renegotiating contracts with all vendors to encourage that they employ clean energy; and

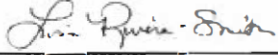
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board supports a statewide legislative agenda that improves the District's ability to advance decarbonization through increased electrification of energy use, including authority to facilitate Seattle City Light's ability to work on building decarbonization and electrification; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board calls on city, state, and federal officials and agencies to work alongside the District in taking swift, effective action on the climate emergency to protect current and future students, their families, and the communities in which they live.

ADOPTED the 10th day of February, 2021 and CORRECTED this 19th day of May, 2021




Chandra N. Hampson, President

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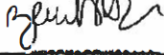
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Lisa Rivera-Smith, Member-at-Large

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Director Leslie S. Harris

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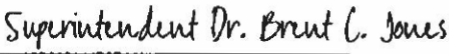
Brandon K. Hersey, Vice President

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Dr. Brent C. Jones, Interim Superintendent
Secretary, Board of Directors
Seattle School District No. 1
King County, WA