

**Seattle School District #1  
Board Resolution**

**Resolution No. 2020/21-4**



**A RESOLUTION** of the Board of Directors of Seattle School District No. 1, King County, Seattle, Washington adopting a reopening plan and remote learning model for the 2020-2021 school year.

**WHEREAS**, Chapter 28A.320 RCW authorizes local school boards to govern their respective districts, including the promotion of effective, efficient, and safe district operations, and RCW 28A.330.100 authorizes local school boards with additional powers, and RCW 28A.150.230 assigns local school boards the responsibility for ensuring quality in the content and extent of its educational program;

**WHEREAS**, on February 29, 2020, Washington Governor Jay Inslee declared a state of emergency in all counties of our state under Chapters 38.08, 38.52, and 43.06 RCW, and directed the implementation of the plans and procedures of the state's Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan in response to the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) and on March 13, 2020, Governor Inslee ordered the closure of all public and private K-12 schools in Washington State until April 24, 2020, to contain the spread of COVID-19, and on April 6, 2020, directed that school buildings remain closed from providing traditional, in-person instruction throughout the remainder of the 2019-2020 school year;

**WHEREAS**, RCW 28A.150.290 authorizes the State Superintendent of Public Instruction to make rules and regulations as necessary to carry out the proper administration of its statutory duties in unforeseen conditions and on June 11, 2020, the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction issued official guidance for reopening Washington schools for the 2020-2021 school year, which included sections on health and safety from the Department of Health and the Department of Labor and Industries, specifying employee and student safety requirements for reopening schools during the COVID-19 pandemic and requiring school boards to adopt and submit reopening plans for the 2020-2021 school year;

**WHEREAS**, Superintendent Juneau and Seattle Public Schools staff have continued to monitor the increasing number of COVID-19 cases in our community; have been in close communication with King County Public Health, OSPI, and the Governor's office; have reviewed new research from around the world on school safety experiences; have reviewed updated health guidelines from national and state agencies; and have heard and considered the concerns of educators and families;

**WHEREAS**, having considered the foregoing information, Superintendent Juneau and Seattle Public Schools staff have concluded that it is not possible to open schools without risking significant transmission of COVID-19 cases among Seattle Public Schools students, families, staff and community;

**WHEREAS**, Superintendent Juneau has recommended that Seattle Public Schools start the 2020-2021 school year remotely, with exceptions for students receiving special education services in alignment with Individualized Education Programs and 504 plans if it is determined on an individual basis that services can be provided safely in-person and services cannot be accessed successfully through remote learning, and has recommended that Seattle Public Schools continue this model until the risk of significant transmission of COVID-19 cases has decreased enough to support in-person instruction;

**WHEREAS**, Seattle Public Schools is focused on centering students furthest from educational justice;<sup>1</sup>

**WHEREAS**, curricular foci in the 2020-2021 school year will include existing Since Time Immemorial Curriculum, Black Studies and additional Ethnic Studies programming;

**WHEREAS**, Seattle Public Schools recognizes that “[o]ur nation’s students of color and their families find themselves enduring a pandemic that disproportionately impacts their health and safety, mired in an economic crisis that disproportionately affects their financial well-being, and living in a country that too often still struggles to recognize their humanity”;<sup>2</sup>

**WHEREAS**, the COVID-19 pandemic, and the ongoing health and safety constraints associated with public school opening and operations, present our country and public education systems with an unprecedented challenge, creating an opportunity to *reimagine* education and *re-center* education on students, *particularly* on students furthest from educational justice;

**WHEREAS**, Seattle Public Schools aspires to respond to the most difficult education challenge of our time not through fear and status-quo thinking, but with courage and creativity, engaging with families, community and nature in co-designed solutions based in hope and connection, drawing on the strengths of our communities and families;

**WHEREAS**, Seattle Public Schools has the opportunity to lead the way and demonstrate that real partnerships can quickly evolve to stand up innovative education models in support of students’ social-emotional *and* academic needs, with care and safety, affording parents the ability to keep their employment and family lives stable and, hopefully, thriving;

**WHEREAS**, during the closure of schools in the spring of 2020, Seattle Public Schools conducted engagement with teams of students, families, community-based organizations, labor partners and school leaders, and from that process emerged common values that should be associated with any prospective adaptive educational model in Seattle Public Schools: an anti-

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.seattleschools.org/district/district\\_quick\\_facts/strategic\\_plan](https://www.seattleschools.org/district/district_quick_facts/strategic_plan)

<sup>2</sup> John B. King, President and CEO of The Education Trust, June 22, 2020 testimony to United States House Committee on Education and Labor, “*Inequities Exposed: How COVID-19 Widened Racial Inequities in Education, Health and the Workforce*” (<https://edtrust.org/press-release/john-b-king-jr-testimony-before-house-committee-on-education-and-labor-concerning-racial-inequity-during-covid-19/>).

racist<sup>3</sup> focus prioritizing delivery that is flexible and supports family and community partnerships, while optimizing student safety and well-being;<sup>4</sup>

**WHEREAS**, today's students inhabit a planet dangerously at risk not just because of COVID-19 and civil unrest, but also because of climate change. They face environmental impacts that disproportionately impact low-income black, indigenous and people of color.<sup>5</sup> They enter educational environments where, survey results show, parents of color are worried their students will be subject to racism from other students, staff and unjust police actions;<sup>6</sup>

**WHEREAS**, an education model for the 2020-2021 school year that addresses the health and safety concerns impacting families and educators should be community-delivered and place based,<sup>7</sup> delivered through some combination of (1) remote/distance learning, (2) community schools, (3) in-person provision of some special education services, (4) innovative school models, and (5) outdoor education;

**WHEREAS**, a disproportionate number of families of color are concerned about the safety of sending their students back to school given current health and safety concerns, including the impacts of systemic racism, both in Seattle and nationwide;<sup>8</sup>

**WHEREAS**, remote learning is a new education delivery mechanism in our nation's schools that presents equity concerns,<sup>9</sup> and access to high-speed internet remains problematic for thousands of SPS students;<sup>10</sup>

**WHEREAS**, COMMUNITY SCHOOLS are public schools that partner with families and community organizations to provide well-rounded educational opportunities and supports for students' school success,<sup>11</sup> and a framework for addressing inequities, providing opportunities, and helping students navigate barriers to boost their academic performance and increase their motivation and engagement in learning;<sup>12</sup>

**WHEREAS**, community schools can provide critical supports our students by serving as a place, a hub and a set of partnerships between the school and community resources in which an integrated focus on academics, health and social services, youth and community development

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.theatlantic.com/education/archive/2020/06/how-be-anti-racist-teacher/613138/>

<sup>4</sup> [https://www.seattleschools.org/UserFiles/Servers/Server\\_543/File/District/Departments/School%20Board/19-20%20agendas/June%2030/20200630\\_Agenda\\_Packet\\_Updated%2020200630.pdf](https://www.seattleschools.org/UserFiles/Servers/Server_543/File/District/Departments/School%20Board/19-20%20agendas/June%2030/20200630_Agenda_Packet_Updated%2020200630.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> <https://c360.yale.edu/features/unequal-impact-the-deep-links-between-inequality-and-climate-change>

<sup>6</sup> [https://www.aei.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/UPDATED-Bailey-COVID-Impact-Survey-PP.final\\_.pdf](https://www.aei.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/UPDATED-Bailey-COVID-Impact-Survey-PP.final_.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Place-based\\_education](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Place-based_education)

<sup>8</sup> [https://www.seattleschools.org/UserFiles/Servers/Server\\_543/File/District/Departments/School%20Board/19-20%20agendas/June%2030/20200630\\_Agenda\\_Packet\\_Updated%2020200630.pdf](https://www.seattleschools.org/UserFiles/Servers/Server_543/File/District/Departments/School%20Board/19-20%20agendas/June%2030/20200630_Agenda_Packet_Updated%2020200630.pdf)

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2020/03/23/how-effective-is-online-learning-what-the.html?r=1893536019>

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/disconnected-in-isolation-how-the-coronavirus-pandemic-shed-light-on-the-digital-divide/>

<sup>11</sup> <https://communityschools.futureforlearning.org/>

<sup>12</sup> <http://www.communityschools.org/assets/1/AssetManager/CS%20Equity%20Framework%20-%20Final%20Working%20Draft.pdf>

and community engagement may lead to improved student learning, stronger families and healthier communities;<sup>13</sup>

**WHEREAS**, schools provide the most equitable access point for youth physical activity and active play;<sup>14</sup>

**WHEREAS**, community-based environmental and outdoor education programs exist locally and nationally, and can help to address dire needs and discrepancies through innovative partnerships and educational investments and policies;

**WHEREAS**, a study published by the University of California, Berkeley, and supported by the National Science Foundation, found that to “increase the capacity of schools to educate learners in-person while safely following local government-mandated social distancing guidelines, outdoor science and environmental educators can, in partnership with school districts, engage more learners in outdoor learning, thus expanding the space limits of school classrooms;<sup>15</sup>

**WHEREAS**, OUTDOOR LEARNING, or outdoor education, refers to a broad set of activities that include discovery, experimentation, learning about and connecting to the natural world, and engaging in environmental and recreational activities in an outdoor setting;<sup>16</sup>

**WHEREAS**, Washington law supports the development of curricula that “links student learning with engagement in seasonal or nonseasonal outdoor-based activities,”<sup>17</sup> and supports the expansion and inclusion of outdoor education and environmental education as a mandatory area of study;<sup>18</sup>

**WHEREAS**, on June 25, 2020, the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) stated that it “strongly advocates that all policy considerations for the coming school year should start with a goal of having students physically present,” *and* to “utilize outdoor spaces when possible” as a high-priority for all age groups and necessary for activities, since “outdoor transmission of virus is known to be much lower than indoor transmission”,<sup>19</sup>

**WHEREAS**, on July 10, 2020, the AAP issued a follow-up statement, advocating that decisions about reopening schools should be based on “evidence, not politics” and that “[w]e should leave it to health experts to tell us when the time is best to open up school buildings, and listen to educators and administrators to shape how we do it,” while continuing to recognize that “children learn best when physically present in the classroom”<sup>20</sup> and the August 4, 2020

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<sup>13</sup> [http://www.communityschools.org/aboutschools/what\\_is\\_a\\_community\\_school.aspx](http://www.communityschools.org/aboutschools/what_is_a_community_school.aspx)

<sup>14</sup> King County Play Equity Coalition (<https://kcplayequity.org/>)

<sup>15</sup> [https://www.lawrencehallofscience.org/sites/default/files/EE\\_A\\_Field\\_at\\_Risk\\_Policy\\_Brief.pdf](https://www.lawrencehallofscience.org/sites/default/files/EE_A_Field_at_Risk_Policy_Brief.pdf)

<sup>16</sup> <https://naaee.org/ecpro/research/ecworks/student-outcomes>

<sup>17</sup> RCW 28A.320.173

<sup>18</sup> <https://www.k12.wa.us/student-success/resources-subject-area/environment-sustainability>

<sup>19</sup> <https://services.aap.org/en/pages/2019-novel-coronavirus-covid-19-infections/clinical-guidance/covid-19-planning-considerations-return-to-in-person-education-in-schools/>

<sup>20</sup> <https://services.aap.org/en/news-room/news-releases/aap/2020/pediatricians-educators-and-superintendents-urge-a-safe-return-to-school-this-fall/>



guidance from the Washington State Department of Health<sup>21</sup> states that “outdoor activities are safer than indoor activities” and that schools consider distancing strategies that includes, “Keep students outside more, as weather and space permit”;

**WHEREAS**, outdoor education is demonstrated to have substantial benefits for student well-being, and a systematic review of published research of regular compulsory school- and curriculum-based outdoor education programs found that they promote students’ social, academic, physical and psychological development;<sup>22</sup>

**WHEREAS**, inclusive education models benefit children with and without disabilities, and accessibility and inclusion champion organizations and Seattle and King County parks can be local resources and partners for developing best practices for inclusive outdoor education; and

**WHEREAS**, physical activity and play are conduits for community centered healing and learning; the benefits of movement for youth are well-studied and can be deeply healing, promote resiliency and mitigate the effects of trauma; and physical activity can enhance students’ readiness to learn, attention, and behavior, and serve as a protective mechanism against illness and infection.<sup>23</sup>

**WHEREAS**, the Joint Use of Facilities Agreement (JUA) between Seattle Public Schools and the City of Seattle Department of Parks and Recreation (SPR) provides benefits including giving first priority between SPS and SPR in reciprocal scheduling of each other’s facilities, encouraging school principals and community center coordinators to work together, and providing opportunities for joint planning, problem solving and information sharing;

**WHEREAS**, the JUA’s purpose is to maximize use of Seattle Public Schools and SPR facilities for mutual and offsetting benefit, with the understanding the approximate cost of use of the facilities offset each other’s use and provides our students priority use of Parks facilities, expanding resources and opportunities for participation;

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that Board of Directors of Seattle School District No. 1 (the Board) has reviewed and hereby adopts its reopening plan for the 2020-2021 school year, which addresses the mandatory health requirements, statutory education requirements, and additional expectations, as identified by the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction’s June 11, 2020 official guidance for reopening Washington schools.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Board has reviewed and hereby adopts Superintendent Juneau’s recommendation that Seattle Public Schools start the 2020-2021 school year remotely, with exceptions for students receiving special education services in alignment with Individualized Education Programs and 504 plans if it is determined on an individual basis that services can be provided safely in-person and services cannot be accessed successfully through remote learning, and has recommended that Seattle Public Schools continue this model until the

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<sup>21</sup> <https://www.doh.wa.gov/Portals/1/Documents/1600/coronavirus/FallGuidanceK-12.pdf>

<sup>22</sup> <https://naaee.org/cepro/resources/ceguidance-reopening-schools>

<sup>23</sup> King County Play Equity Coalition, COVID-19 Coalition Response (<https://kcplayequity.org/covid19/>)

risk of significant transmission of COVID-19 cases has decreased enough to resume in-person instruction.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that in the implementation of remote learning in the 2020-2021 school year, online instructional spaces should not be limited to geographic school catchment or building enrollment but rather open to reimagination and reconfiguration as determined through direct family and community engagement. With specific foci on students furthest from educational justice Seattle Public Schools should seek to support family and community hubs, whether geographic or virtual. In alignment with the Strategic Plan, Seattle Public Schools shall strive to foster virtual affinity school(s) environments where black, brown and students furthest from educational justice may opt in to learn with peers and educators who share the same identity.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Board directs that the reopening plan be posted on the district's website two weeks prior to the reopening of school. The Board recognizes that the circumstances related to reopening schools safely are mutable, and both the reopening plan and the decision to start the 2020-2021 year remotely will require monitoring and possible revision. Therefore, the Superintendent will monitor the reopening plan and remote learning model throughout the 2020-2021 year, and the district will revise and update the reopening plan and remote learning model as needed with approval from the Board.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Board directs the Superintendent to convene a Task Force comprised of students, family members, educators and other Seattle Public Schools staff, and community members to monitor progress, implementation and efficacy of the reopening plan and remote learning model, and to advise the Board and Superintendent throughout the 2020-2021 school year on possible revisions and continuous improvements. The Board directs the Superintendent to present a Board Action Report creating this Task Force for introduction no later than September 2020.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Board directs the formation of a separate Board Task Force, comprised of students, family members, educators (including outdoor education providers), Seattle Public Schools staff, community-based organizations, labor partners, and educational foundations to study with urgency the feasibility of, and make recommendations related to, the implementation of community schools and outdoor education in Seattle Public Schools. The work of the Task Force will be centered in the Seattle Public Schools Strategic Plan and in the principles of being an anti-racist organization, and will specifically focus on the interests of students furthest from educational justice. The Board resolves to prepare for introduction a Board Action Report creating this Task Force.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Superintendent is directed to begin a process of collaboration with state and local government agencies to explore development of curricula focused on outdoor-based activities, on applicable health and safety measures, and on the ability of Seattle Public Schools to use public outdoor spaces for educational purposes.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> [https://www.google.com/maps/d/viewer?mid=1SkhM0-xWQGJfrjM-E0LBPX\\_TvR7uZpAg&ll=47.61497811608162%2C-122.33608840000001&z=11](https://www.google.com/maps/d/viewer?mid=1SkhM0-xWQGJfrjM-E0LBPX_TvR7uZpAg&ll=47.61497811608162%2C-122.33608840000001&z=11)

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that Seattle Public Schools will use its best efforts to make all historically Community Alignment Initiative spaces available for full-day childcare, with consideration for expansion as student need warrants and alternative spaces are unavailable.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that Seattle Public Schools will support, with necessary health and safety protocols, beginning of the year pilot programs for blended outdoor and/or community schools or class models, with priority for K-2 and rising years (6<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, and 12<sup>th</sup> grades), determined in collaboration with community, building leadership and educators.

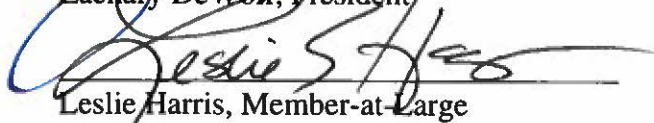
**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Superintendent is directed to continue to pursue a revised JUA with SPR, subject to Board approval, that will includes appropriate clauses related to student and staff safety in shared facilities, is consistent with the Seattle Public Schools Strategic Plan, and provides flexibility and maximized opportunity to expand safe spaces so that Seattle Public Schools students and families can access outdoor education and physical and mental well-being.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that execution of this Resolution is conclusive evidence of the Board's approval of this action and of the authority granted herein. The Board warrants that it has, and at the time of this action had, full power and lawful authority to adopt this instrument. This resolution pertains exclusively to the 2020-2021 school year and sunsets no later than that time.

ADOPTED this 12th day of August, 2020



Zachary DeWitt, President




Leslie Harris, Member-at-Large



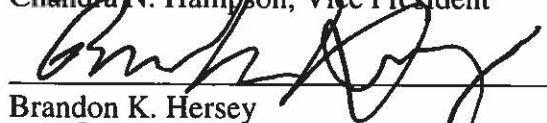
Eden Mack



Lisa Rivera-Smith



Chandran N. Hampson, Vice President



Brandon K. Hersey



Liza Rankin

ATTEST: 

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

