

From Alyson Larkin:

Hello, I am sending this email to continue to show my support for the need for an Antiracism resolution statement done by the McMinnville School Board. Looking at the agenda today, we see that this will be a part of tonight's discussion. We look forward to hearing the resolution and hope that the school board will be transparent with the community during this process. I have kept my original email below with the link of the ongoing petition. The signature numbers on the petition are now at 645 and it continues to grow daily.

Original Email from last month:

To the Board of Directors of the McMinnville School District,

We are asking McMinnville School District board members to adopt an anti-racism resolution that will condemn racism and declare a commitment to dismantling systemic racism within our school district. As you know, nearly 40% of the student body at McMinnville High School is Latinx, Asian, Black, and/or Indigenous. Systemic racism and oppression has plagued our nation for too long, and has led to disproportionate access within the educational system, and beyond.

In June of this year, Superintendent Maryalice Russell released a racial equity statement. Superintendent Russell ends the statement with bulleted plans to commit to certain actions that would address racial equity, for example, to "train and improve upon, as needed, the district's Anti-Discrimination Policy," and so on. This policy, Superintendent Russell, spoke about is not an "Anti-Discrimination" policy, but a general "Nondiscrimination" policy. The only place it goes beyond merely recognizing compliance with existing Federal nondiscrimination statutes is when it states, "The Board encourages staff to improve human relations within the schools, to respect all individuals and to establish channels through which patrons can communicate their concerns to the administration and the Board." This is not sufficient. The Board must implement opportunities where staff can learn from their marginalized students and communities and become an anti-racist school district. As board members, you have the ability to adopt new board policies. The existing Nondiscrimination Policy is not enough. You must adopt an anti-racism resolution that will condemn racism and declare a commitment to identifying and dismantling systemic racism within our school district.

We need to not only hear from Superintendent Russell, we need to hear a commitment from all board members on this issue. We need the entire district to be committed to actively working on racial equity. The school district as a whole must take actions to actively strive towards implementing anti-racist policies.

As community members we have eagerly been waiting to hear from the McMinnville School District's board members on what actions they will be taking to condemn racism and commit to becoming an Anti-Racist school district. The silence from the school board speaks volumes. We

urge you to make a statement and create an actionable policy. Our students deserve to feel safe and equal each day they come to school. This starts with you!

Thank you for your time and most importantly each of your commitment, expertise, and service to our community, including Dr. Russells long term service.

Warmly,  
Alyson Larkin with  
Stand Up Yamhill County

[https://www.change.org/p/board-of-directors-of-the-mcminnville-school-district-anti-racism-resolution-commitment-to-dismantling-systemic-racism-within-our-school-dist?utm\\_source=share\\_petition&utm\\_medium=custom\\_url&recruited\\_by\\_id=e12de7a0-c3f4-11ea-b964-fbe83764346f](https://www.change.org/p/board-of-directors-of-the-mcminnville-school-district-anti-racism-resolution-commitment-to-dismantling-systemic-racism-within-our-school-dist?utm_source=share_petition&utm_medium=custom_url&recruited_by_id=e12de7a0-c3f4-11ea-b964-fbe83764346f)

**STAND UP Yamhill County** <standupyamhillcounty@gmail.com> 10:45 PM (58 minutes ago)

to Ivollmer, cbenner, bcarter, phaddeland, gpartida, troberts, MRussell, SchoolBoard

To the Board of Directors of the McMinnville School District,

We have yet to receive any sort of email or communication back about our letter and petition. It has been nearly a month. We understand that during tonight's meeting, an Anti-racism resolution will be discussed, and we will be in attendance to hear what the board has to say about this. The petition is still live since the last email we sent, and continues to grow in signatures. We ask that the school board be transparent to the community as you navigate adopting an anti-racism resolution. Here is our letter again:

Stand Up Yamhill County is an organization of BIPOC and allied residents interested in transforming the community so that all BIPOC feel safe and welcomed, and making social justice an integrated part of civic and day-to-day life in Yamhill County. To that end, we are asking McMinnville School District board members to adopt an anti-racism resolution that will condemn racism and declare a commitment to dismantling systemic racism within our school district. As you may know, nearly 40% of the student body at McMinnville High School is Latinx/Hispanic, Asian, Black, and/or Native American/Indigenous. Systemic racism and systemic oppression has plagued our nation for too long, and has led to disproportionate access within the educational system, and beyond. Inequities found specifically within the educational system include, but are not limited to:

- unequal access to academic opportunities
- disproportionately higher disciplinary action (e.g. higher rates of referral to law enforcement, expulsion, in-school and out-of-school suspensions, etc.)
- the negative effects of zero tolerance policies
- referrals to special education
- lack of representation in gifted and talented programs
- lack of school resources and access to materials.

Students who experience racism and are constantly confronted with systemic racist systems have been shown to have lasting impacts to their physical health. The inequities that negatively affect the health and well being of students within our community - suppressing an individual's opportunity for future growth through socioeconomic factors, housing, and justice - are further linked to social and psychological factors which affect public health. It is without question that the health and well being of every individual collectively affects the growth of this community and nation as a whole.

In June of this year, Superintendent Maryalice Russell released a racial equity statement. Superintendent Russell ends the statement with bulleted plans to commit to certain actions that would address racial equity, for example, to "train and improve upon, as needed, the district's Anti-Discrimination Policy," and so on. To Superintendent Russell's mistake, the policy is not an "Anti-Discrimination" policy, but a general "Nondiscrimination" policy. We have reviewed the district's Nondiscrimination Policy and find it lacking in what actions, training, and further education staff and other employees of the school district are subjected to. The only place it goes beyond merely recognizing compliance with existing Federal nondiscrimination statutes is when it states, "The Board encourages staff to improve human relations within the schools, to

respect all individuals and to establish channels through which patrons can communicate their concerns to the administration and the Board.” This is not sufficient. The Board must implement opportunities where staff can learn from their marginalized students and communities and become an anti-racist school district. While we recognize and appreciate this statement from the Superintendent, it is simply not enough. As board members, you have the ability to adopt new board policies. The existing Nondiscrimination Policy is not enough. You must adopt an anti-racism resolution that will condemn racism and declare a commitment to identifying and dismantling systemic racism within our school district.

Furthermore, as members of this community, we need to not only hear from Superintendent Russell, we need to hear a commitment from all board members on this issue. While we understand that the Superintendent’s “Authority and Responsibility” is that of being “the chief executive officer of the district School Board and, as such, shall have the complete administrative responsibility for the management and direction of the school system,” we need the entire district to be committed to actively working on racial equity. It is not enough to simply have a discrimination policy. It is not enough to only hear from one person from your administration. The school district as a whole must take actions to actively strive towards implementing anti-racist policies.

As community members, parents of current MSD students, alumni, and parents of future students, we have eagerly been waiting to hear from the McMinnville School District’s board members on what actions they will be taking to condemn racism and commit to becoming an Anti-Racist school district. The silence from the school board speaks volumes. We urge you to make a statement and create an actionable policy. Our students deserve to feel safe and equal each day they come to school. This starts with you!

Stand Up Yamhill County

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Below is a link to a live petition we have created signed by community members who support and urge the board to release a statement and create a policy to become an anti-racist school district. You will find the number of community members who have signed in support so far, and the petition is still going. We highly suggest reading over the comments in the petition as well.

<https://www.change.org/p/board-of-directors-of-the-mcminnville-school-district-anti-racism-resolution-commitment-to-dismantling-systemic-racism-within-our-school-dist>

Warmly,

Stand Up Yamhill County

<https://lnk.bio/qm1n/>

**Val Blaha <music@valblaha.com>**

1:23 PM (16  
minutes ago)

Dear McMinnville School Board-

Regarding Fall Comprehensive Distance Learning, and teachers-

I know that there has been concern from teachers around the state about the possibility being required to teach CDL from inside school buildings. I highly encourage the McMinnville School District to adopt a flexible policy regarding teachers' work locations, for several reasons:

- teachers may be at high risk for Covid-19, or may have family members who are high risk, and should not be forced to work in a location that would increase their risk
- teachers may have daycare issues, and may need to work from home for those issues to be addressed.
- if teachers are exposed to Covid-19 at work or elsewhere and need to quarantine, they should still be able to teach (assuming they are healthy enough to do so). To reduce/eliminate disruption from having to change locations, teachers should be allowed or encouraged to work from home from the start of the CDL

If it's a question of accountability, I have full faith in our teachers that they can perform their job duties from outside a school building, and should be given the opportunity to do so.

Separately, I also would like to encourage the School Board to look at the role of schools as daycare providers, and to examine how that function can be separated from the role of schools as education providers. I understand that many parents rely on their children being in schools so that the parents can be gainfully employed at home or elsewhere. (This seems to be one of the driving forces behind the national push to send students and teachers back to school despite the apparent risks we are currently facing.) But I would argue that schools and teachers should not bear the burden of supporting our economy in this way.

I encourage the school board to research the needs for daytime daycare in our community (perhaps partnering with other organizations to do so), and to look and think creatively about how we could use our school buildings as centers for daycare (along with comprehensive distance learning) for those students without other options during this period when the schools cannot be used for their primary purpose of education. Given the chance that virus rates may not reduce enough to go back to in-person

learning any time soon, addressing this separate need would be a beneficial public function.

Thank you for your attention to these comments.

Sincerely,

Val Blaha

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