

Public Comment Received by 2:30 p.m. on March 9, 2021

Comment 1:

want to express my support and gratitude to the board trustees, district leaders (especially Dr. Lee), principals, and teachers for their efforts and successes in implementing black history month celebrations and ongoing efforts towards adopting culturally responsive teaching.

I have been closely following the dialogue and efforts of the district to respond to the June resolution to, "improve the understanding of biases and anti-Black racism, and to proclaim the lives of Black students matter." I am convinced that we must empower our children with the skills to address racism, gender inequity, and other forms of injustice and inequality in our communities and world today.

So I was grateful and pleased to see the way that the guidance from the district has been translated into action at my children's school, Raymond elementary. To kick off black history month our principal Centeno enthusiastically and thoughtfully explained the school's plan and reasoning behind it, inviting parents to celebrate at home in support of all that the students were learning. She also led an all-school read aloud that featured student readers and shared a meaningful lesson about the beauty of diversity.

My daughters' two teachers (Maestras Rubalcava and Escobar) also impressed me with the way they created engaging lessons (over zoom no less) that were not just 'one-off' stories but integrated lessons, using Ruby Bridges' story in a math lesson and reading in Spanish about Martin Luther King Jr. I loved hearing my 2nd grader and her friend discuss over zoom, the appropriate and just ways to protest and use their voices to stand for justice! My 4th grader has been learning about historical heroes through virtual museum visits and also current black leaders that inspire young people to take action today. Her teacher shared a lesson about different 'types of smart' using Black Americans as models of different types of intelligence. In the midst of a difficult year our teachers and administrators have challenged themselves to ensure our kids are learning and practicing how to make our communities more just and fair.

Thank you all for your efforts and willingness to be stretched and brave. I look forward to continuing to follow and support these efforts as we seek to integrate innovative approaches throughout the school year.

Sincerely,
Ruthi Hanchett