



## **Resolution Encouraging Solidarity and Support for Student Identities**

**WHEREAS**, Oregon state law requires school districts to provide a free appropriate public education to all children between the ages of 5 and 19 who reside within the district (ORS 339.115); and

**WHEREAS**, public schools and school districts in Oregon are subject to all federal and state laws and constitutional provisions prohibiting discrimination; and

**WHEREAS**, the Oregon State Board of Education promotes nondiscrimination and an environment free of harassment based on an individual's race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, national origin, marital status, age or disability; and

**WHEREAS**, the Oregon Legislature has determined that a person may not be subjected to discrimination in any public elementary, secondary or community college education program or service, school or interschool activity or in any higher education program or service, school or interschool activity where the program, service, school or activity is financed in whole or in part by moneys appropriated by the Legislative Assembly; and

**WHEREAS**, it is the policy of the Oregon State Board of Education that all students, employees, and visitors in public schools are entitled to learn, work, and participate in an environment that is safe and free from discrimination, harassment, and intimidation.

**WHEREAS**, the Oregon State Board of Education's mission is to provide leadership and vision for Oregon's schools and districts by enacting policies and promoting educational practices that lead directly to the educational and life success of all Oregon PK - 12 students; and

**WHEREAS**, the Oregon State Board of Education reaffirms its commitment to equity and access to education as a core value,

manifested by a steadfast commitment to creating a welcoming environment for all students and families and direction of the supports and resources needed to eliminate barriers and promote student success; and

**WHEREAS**, the Oregon State Board of Education is committed to ensuring in words and actions that every student has access to the resources and supports they need to thrive in school; and that [Every Student Belongs](#); and

**WHEREAS**, signs, flags, placards, and symbols showing solidarity with those who have shown incredible resilience in the face of institutional and systemic underrepresentation and minoritization can help contribute to a sense of safety and belonging in school settings; and

**WHEREAS**, the U.S. Office of Special Counsel issued an [advisory opinion](#) that it is not a violation of the Hatch Act for federal employees to show support for the Black Lives Matter movement and the Black Lives Matter Global Network while on duty, including wearing or displaying materials related to the cause, because they address issues such as racism, which are not inherently aligned with a single political party; and

**WHEREAS**, in believing that silence and inaction allow racism to remain prevalent in our schools, the Oregon State Board of Education [formally declared in 2020](#) that “Black Lives Matter” in order to reinforce that the lives of Black educators, staff, students, and everyone in school communities are just as valuable as anyone else’s life; and that Black students matter and belong in our classrooms, just like all other students; and

**WHEREAS**, the Oregon State Board of Education has adopted an [LGBTQ2SIA+ Student Success Plan](#) to address barriers to educational success for Oregonian students who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, non-binary, transgender, gender queer, two-spirit, intersex, asexual (+) and establish a framework for creating safe, inclusive and welcoming schools for LGBTQ2SIA+ students and families, and

**WHEREAS**, we recognize that there are people who hold power in education, including on school boards in Oregon, who have taken action or are considering action to limit staff from displaying symbols and signs celebrating student identity and fostering safe and welcoming spaces for students; instead labeling student identity as controversial and divisive; and

**WHEREAS**, we recognize that there are people who hold power in education, including on school boards in Oregon, who have taken action or are considering action to limit the display of signs, flags, placards, and symbols conveying that Black Lives Matter and showing solidarity and safety for LGBTQ2SIA+ students, families, and employees; in opposition to their communities, colleagues, and the values of the Oregon State Board of Education.

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Oregon State Board of Education:

- (1) Renews its commitment to anti-racism, equity, student belonging, and access to education as a core value, manifested by a steadfast commitment to creating a welcoming environment for all students and families and direction of the supports and resources needed to eliminate barriers and promote student success; and
- (2) Urgently requests that all Oregon school districts, public charter schools, and education service districts affirm that “Black Lives Matter” by striving to make space in classrooms and within the school community for dialogue and support for issues of race and equity; and
- (3) Urgently requests that Oregon school districts, public charter schools, and education service districts validate that “Black Lives Matter” through resolutions consistent with this Resolution; and
- (4) Urgently requests that Oregon school districts, public charter schools, and education service districts support educators and others who are making a special effort to let Black students and families know that they belong and are valued members of the school community; and
- (5) Urgently requests that Oregon school districts, public charter schools, and education service districts both protect and encourage the proactive creation of safe spaces for LGBTQ2SIA+ students, staff and families through use of symbolism of pride and affirmation across gender identities and sexual orientations, as well as additional supportive measures beyond symbolism; and
- (6) Urgently requests that Oregon school districts, public charter schools, and education service districts communicate to students, families, employees, and their communities their policies and practices

and their commitment to providing all students with a high quality public education regardless of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, national origin, marital status, age or disability; and

(7) Fully supports all efforts by Oregon school districts, public charter schools, and education service districts to ensure the safety and well-being of all students, regardless of national origin, immigration status, or documentation status by adopting local resolutions consistent with this resolution; and

(8) Fully supports all efforts by the Oregon Department of Education, Oregon school districts, public charter schools, education service districts, and educational leaders to create and nurture an inclusive and welcoming environment for all students, families, and employees, in which [Every Student Belongs](#); and

(9) Calls on the Newberg School Board to reverse course on its clear and continuous effort "...to remove all Black Lives Matter (aka BLM) signs, flags, and placards, apparel, buttons, and all other modes of display, and all instances of the symbol known as the Pride Flag from District facilities," and to validate that student identities are not inherently political or controversial, but welcomed and affirmed; and

(10) Further calls on the Newberg School Board to encourage district staff to celebrate and stand in solidarity with students through the use of signs, flags, placards and symbols, and affirm in words, policy and action that [Every Student Belongs](#) and is welcome, appreciated and ensured an equitable access to a high quality education in Newberg Public Schools regardless of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, national origin, native language, immigration status, documentation status, marital status, age or disability.