



Black Lives Matter Resolution

October 15, 2020

WHEREAS, Black Lives Matter; and

WHEREAS, the Oregon State Board of Education is charged by students to continue the real work of repairing the damage of racial injustice, brutality, and hatred by bringing messages of understanding, love, and belonging more fully to our schools throughout Oregon; and

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

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

WHEREAS, the 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

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

WHEREAS, the State Board of Education has directed all Oregon school districts, public charter schools, and education service districts review and, where necessary, strengthen relevant policies, procedures, and practices, including those related to addressing racial bias incidents, with attention to non-punitive, remedial approaches (OAR 581-022-2312); 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 do not meet any criteria for a "partisan political group"; and

WHEREAS, we strongly support the declaration that "Black Lives Matter" in the findings sections of several bills enrolled by Oregon's bipartisan Legislature ([HB 4203](#), [HB 4205](#), [HB4207](#)); and

WHEREAS, we acknowledge that throughout Oregon’s history, institutional and structural racism have caused division and fear for our communities, and that we share in the responsibility to respond to these circumstances on behalf of all Oregon school districts, educational professionals, students and families;

WHEREAS, we acknowledge that the authors of Oregon’s constitution declared that no Black people could reside in the state or hold real estate, a law that wasn’t repealed until 1926; and that racist language in the state constitution wasn't removed until 2002, all of these causing lasting negative consequences for Black communities; and

WHEREAS, we acknowledge that across the U.S. Black students are more heavily disciplined and referred to law enforcement than White students, as well as other [critical inequalities](#) that schools will continue to perpetuate without proactive implementation of anti-racist policy and practice ([EdWeek, 2017](#)); and

WHEREAS, an undeniable series of tragic events and crises have unfolded in Oregon and around the U.S., including the COVID-19 pandemic, wildfires, and violence driven by systemic racism that have stacked harm upon harm against Black, Indigenous, Native American, people of color, tribal communities, and tribal governments; and

WHEREAS, we cannot legislate away racism but we can help bring it to light; and

WHEREAS, in believing that silence and inaction allow racism to remain prevalent in our schools, we declare 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;

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

- (1) Renews its commitment to anti-racism, 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
- (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 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
- (4) 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; and

(5) Urgently requests that Oregon school districts, public charter schools, and education service districts consult with local and state community partners to develop, implement, and/or strengthen comprehensive networks of support for students and families who are experiencing increased harassment, violence, bullying, or hatred based on race; and

(6) 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

(7) Commits to supporting efforts by the Oregon Department of Education, Oregon school districts, public charter schools, 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 All Students Belong.