

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**RELEASE DATE:**

December 31, 2020

**ORGANIZATION NAME:**

Open Schools USA (OSUSA)

**CONTACT NAMES:**

Michelle Morales-Walker  
*Co-Founder & Organizer*  
Melanie Gabriel  
*Co-Founder & Organizer*



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**ABOUT OSUSA**

1. Open Schools USA is a grassroots coalition of students, parents and teachers from around the United States working together to get all schools open for all grades, full time while bringing awareness to the current mental health crises with our youth.
2. OSUSA was founded in the Pacific Northwest by thirteen year old Melanie Gabriel with the help and support of [adult] family friend Michelle Morales-Walker after they each found that the school closures and the resulting decline of Melanie and her peer's mental health were a national issue that needed more attention. The group began on Facebook with members only in Oregon and Washington state but has since expanded in the short time since it began, reaching California, New York, Virginia, North Carolina, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Indiana, Florida, Pennsylvania and more.

**AFFILIATES**

1. Unheard Parents of Oregon Facebook Group/Page
  2. Glenda Scherer - *Co-Organizer*
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**Event Details:**

January 3, 2021

1pm PST

Tilikum Crossing Portland, OR

**Children's March to Learning**

*"Children Nationwide March for Their Right to Public Education"*

**PORTLAND, OR January 3, 2021** — Dozens if not hundreds of the Pacific Northwest's children will gather in unison on Sunday, January 3, 2021. Allied state groups across the nation plan to march synchronously with the children around Portland. Following the march towards the closed learning and science museum, OMSI, Michelle and Melanie have planned a vigil and moment of silence for the children who saw no other escape but to take their own lives. Melanie and Michelle will march with the families or a representative of the family for the children that have taken their own life during the school closures of 2020. Following the march, a vigil and moment of silence will be held in their memory and the families will speak publicly at the event.

Melanie and Michelle call on Washington State Governor Inslee, Oregon State Governor Brown and all other State governors to mandate schools reopen. The state governors that have forced school doors shut, then it is they who should force them to reopen.

Governors passing the control/decision to the local districts was cowardice and inequitable as far too many districts will refuse to open. We call on Oregon Education Association, Washington Education Association, American Federation of Teachers and The National Education Association to remove any and all ulterior political motives, to stop all unethical and unrelated negotiations as they do not pertain to the immediate and current events . OSUSA calls to action the local and national teacher unions, to put the needs of millions of children ahead of their own agendas.

